



# GUIDE TO KATHMANDU

## Abstract

We at the World Bank Group Family Network (WBGFN) Kathmandu have put together this short guide to help you with all the basic needs. The information provided on this guide is of personal experience and tips given from friends. If you need any more help, feel free to contact the author or any of the other members listed in this guide.

WBGFN Kathmandu Nepal

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**Residential areas:** Kathmandu valley comprises of 3 districts; Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur. Most expats live in the Sanepa area in Patan and various areas in Kathmandu (KTM). The World Bank office is in the heart of KTM, Durbar Marg which falls in the center from Sanepa or Lazimpat, Bishalnagar, Dhumbrahi areas in KTM. Budanilkantha is also a nice area to live in, but it will be far from the office.

**Climate:** The Kathmandu Valley is a warm, temperate zone that has a mild climate most of the year, and the city of Kathmandu is situated at an altitude of 1,310m, has a mild, subtropical climate.

Spring: March to April (17c- 24c)

Summer- May to August (19c-27c)

Monsoon- June to August (19c-25c)

Winter- November to February (2c-20c)

**Language:** Nepali is the official language as well as lingua franca in Kathmandu city, which is being used widely for official, business, and other purposes. Hindi and English are also understood within the city.

### Time Zone

The time in Kathmandu is NPT (GMT +5:45) **Currency**

National currency of Nepal is Nepalese Rupee (NPR). The currency equivalency to NPR against various currencies is as follows as of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022.

- 1 US Dollar = 126 NPR
- 1 British Pound = 147 NPR
- 1 European Euro = 126 NPR
- 1 Indian Rupee = 1.60 NPR
- Rates of Foreign currency and the NPR are issued by the Central Bank in daily basis.

There are several currency exchange available and it is easy to get the local currency from Currency Exchange Centre. Almost all the commercial banks are also authorized to convert the international currency and give to local currency.

### Hospitals:

There are few good hospitals which are recommended by the World Bank office:

- CIWEC Hospital: +977-1-4435232
- NORVIC: +977-1-4258554,
- Nepal MEDICITI: +977-1-4217766,
- Grand International Hospital: +977-9801202545,
- Emergency Numbers: Nepal Ambulance Service: 102, Fire 101 : Police: 100-103



## Schools:

- The British School: The International Primary Curriculum is followed alongside English National Curriculum Mathematics and English from Foundation 1 to Year 6. Cambridge International Examinations and Edexcel syllabi are followed for IGCSE and A Level examination (CIE is a part of the UCLES Examinations Board).
- Lincoln School: Lincoln School offers an American curriculum with an international perspective. The program is college preparatory with a wide selection of electives and extracurricular activities leading to an American high school diploma.
- International French School of Kathmandu: This school provides classes to Secondary level's students: in Middle School (from Grade 6 to 9) and in High School (from grade 10 to 12). In both Middle and High School, EFK offers a rigorous education following the French National Curriculum established by the French Ministry of Education through the course materials of the CNED (Centre National d'Enseignement à Distance – National Centre for Distance Education).
- Kathmandu International Study Centre: Is a culturally diverse, not-for-profit educational organization that provides an excellent education for primary and secondary students.
- Kathmandu Waldorf Kindergarten: There are nearly over 2000 Waldorf Kindergarten in more than 60 countries on 6 continents that offer a holistic inspired approach to education that cultivates a lifelong love of learning, Kathmandu Waldorf Kindergarten being one of them.

## Activities

- Hiking or Trekking: Hiking is a common activity on the weekends on the hills surrounding the valley. Shivapuri, Godavari and Sundrijal have several hiking trails. It is recommended to hike with a group. The World Bank staff organizes hiking trips and are able to advise on trekking expeditions.
- Rock Climbing and Bouldering: Astrek Climbing Wall and Kathmandu Sport Climbing Centre are both located in Thamel. They are well equipped, and it is a great way to socialize with other climbers. Level of difficulty ranges from beginner to advanced.
- Futsal: Kathmandu Valley is full of futsal pitches as it is one of the most popular social sports played casually and competitively in Nepal. The WBG has a futsal circle which meets twice a week to play.
- Heritage Tours: Kathmandu Valley is rich with history and culture. The WBG Heritage Club organizes tours which provide layers of knowledge about the history in Nepal
- American Mission Association (AMA- PHORA): AMA or PHORA is a recreational club operated by the American Embassy. It consists of a gym, swimming pool, squash and tennis courts, restaurant & bar, spa & salon, dog park, baseball pitch, yoga hall, kids play area and a commissary (Duty-Free Goods). The membership to PHORA is limited. However, if you or your spouse/partner is UNLP holder, it will be easy for you to get the membership. You may check from AMA with regards to your eligibility for membership. PHORA is within walking distance from the World Bank office and conveniently located from the famous Thamel.



## Entertainment

- Museums:
  - Narayanhiti Palace Museum,
  - Patan Museum,
  - National Museum of Nepal,
  - Taragaon Art Museum
- Ayurvedic Spa:
  - Marriott
  - Avata Wellness Centre
- Cinemas: *QFX* and *Big Cinemas* provide the best cinema experiences in Kathmandu. QFX in Chhaya Centre, Labim Mall and Durbar Mall are the newest. QFX in Durbar Mall on Durbar Marg provides a luxurious cinema experience with recliners, food and beverages service available inside the auditorium.
- Weekend Bazaars:
  - Farmers Market at Le Sherpa (Saturday 7:30am to 12:30pm)
  - Labim Mall Bazaar (Saturday 10am to 3pm)
  - Chhaya Centre Ma Bazaar (Friday 2:30pm to 7:30pm)
- Nightlife: While majority of the city closes by 8pm, Thamel is wide awake with its vibrant night life consisting of a range of bars and clubs.

## Dining:

We have made a list of our favourite restaurants. Click the link or scan the QR code to view it. We would love for you to add your favourite restaurants in the list so we could all try them. Bon Appétit!



<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1WQAtNSzl1EWAL6yXK6dVwGvQUaMieCr7v8us9Arkyc/edit?usp=sharing>



## Shopping:

- A few places for a shopping stroll to find clothes, shoes, electronics, souvenirs, Etc:
  - Civil Mall,
  - Chhaya Centre
  - Labim Mall
  - City Centre Mall
  - KL Tower Mall
  - New Road
  - Thamel (souvenirs)
  - Patan (souvenirs)
  - Durbar Marg
- Grocery:
  - Supermarkets:
    - Bhatbhateni Supermarkets located in different areas within KTM Valley and outside. It is a one-stop centre for buying groceries, kitchenware, clothes, luggage, furnishing etc.
    - Salesberry
    - Big Mart
    - Nina & Hager Grocer
  - Wholesale markets:
    - Kalimati veg market
    - Balkhu fruit market.
- Bakery:
  - La Mari (Ambassador Hotel, Lazimpath)
  - Kirishna bakery (Pashupati Rd)
  - Taza Treats Syrian Sweets (Jhamsikhel & Lazimpath)
  - Angan Sweets, Indian Street Food, Sweets & Bakery
  - TIP TOP, Indian Street food, Sweets & Bakery
  - Hermann bakery (Pulchowk)
  - European Bakery (Baluwatar) Ktm.
  - Café Imago, best cheesecake.
- Drinking water: Do not drink water out of the tap directly. Either use a RO filter or get bottled water. *Aqua Hundred* and *Ma-Paani* are the only two trusted brands. They will start delivering after a phone call.
- Furniture: If you must buy furniture, try *Furniture Land store* which has a variety of compressed wood and hardwood furniture and not very expensive. Local furniture shops which are cheap and reliable for temporary purposes is in a street called '*Char khaal adda*'. Another store for decent furniture is *Homemaker store* in Maitighar.
- Chemist: There are several Pharmacies located around various hospitals. The most trusted is *TESLA Pharmacy* which is located at Baluwatar in between Russian Embassy and the PM Houses. TESLA Pharmacy has also a well-established diagnostic centre.



### Places to visit In or nearby Kathmandu:

- Inside Kathmandu:
  - There are two historical capitals which are UNESCO heritage sites:
    - I. Basantapur (Kathmandu Durbar Square). Basantapur is home to the living goddess Kumari and local wood handicraft is dominant in this area.
    - II. Patan Durbar Square is prominent with its brass work and it is where the blockbuster Marvel Cinematic Universe Dr. Strange movie was filmed.
  - Babar Mahal Revisited is a restored Palace which houses sophisticated restaurants, bars, shops, and an art gallery.
  - Bouddha, also known as Boudhanath, Khashi Chaitya and Khāsa Chaitya is a stupa in Kathmandu, Nepal. Located about 11 km from the centre and north-eastern outskirts of Kathmandu, its massive mandala makes it one of the largest spherical stupas in Nepal and the world.
  - Swayambhu (monkey temple) is an ancient religious complex atop a hill in the Kathmandu Valley, west of Kathmandu city. The Tibetan name for the site means 'Sublime Trees', for the many varieties of trees found on the hill.
  - Pashupatinath Temple is revered as one of the most important & sacred holy pilgrimages sites for Hindu devotees all around the world. The temple lies in Gaushala of Kathmandu. According to the Hindu religion, Pashupatinath is considered as the protector of the universe and the patron deity of Nepali people.
- Outside Kathmandu City:
  - Nagarkot: Hiking trails and a view of the Mt Everest range on a clear day
  - Dhulikhel: Great views very close to the city
  - Chandragiri Hills: A scenic ride on a cable car on top of a hill looking over the valley. Atop is a temple, ziplines and a resort.
  - Bhaktapur: Ancient capital which is a UNESCO Heritage Site. Give pottery making a try and have delicious king yogurt
  - Godawari: A well curated botanical garden which is home to several species of plants and trees.

### Utilities:

- Cooking gas supply is through cylinders. Usually keep minimum of 2 cylinders at home.
- Local mobile networks are NTC (government owned) and NCell (privately owned). Recommend getting pre-paid sims.
- For electricity bills, a person from the Nepal electricity authority comes to read your meter and the bill is generated as per your consumption.
- All bills can be paid online through your local bank accounts or via E-Sewa or Khalti digital apps.

### Internet and TV Cable:

In Kathmandu Internet comes with a TV cable connection and vice versa. Internet is on a fibre optic broadband connection. There are several service providers amongst them the following have good reputation for better service:

- Vianet
- Subiso
- Dish Home