



## TRAVEL INFORMATION

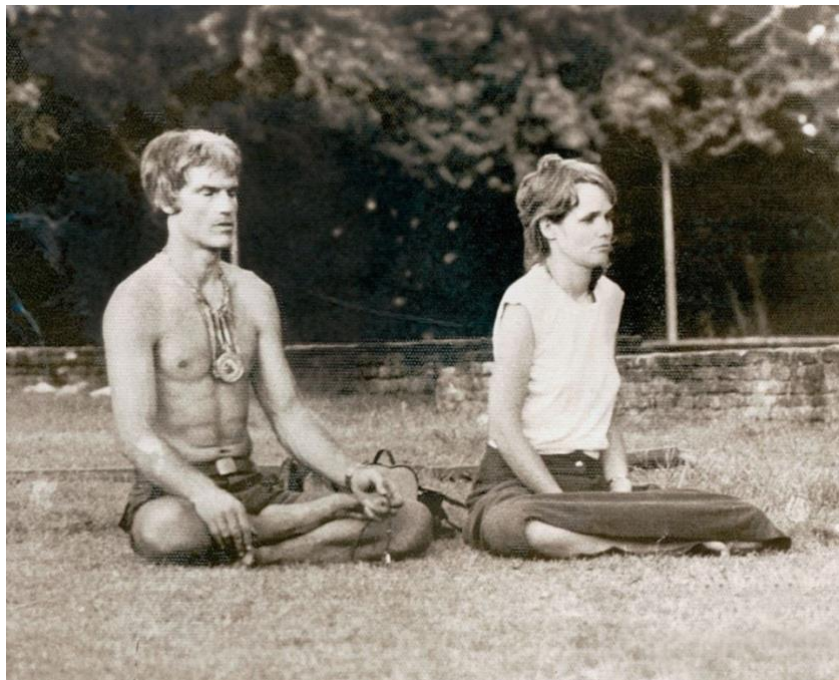
Diamond Way Pilgrimage Autumn 2023

28.10. – 11.11.2023

India/Nepal

*"Although the truth-nature, like space, permeates everything, places and things can hold power-fields that can change the level of consciousness of beings. Since Buddha's only aim was to remove the illusions of beings, all the places he blessed with his enlightened wisdom are exceedingly powerful."*

*Lama Ole Nydahl*



Hannah and Ole in Sarnath, India

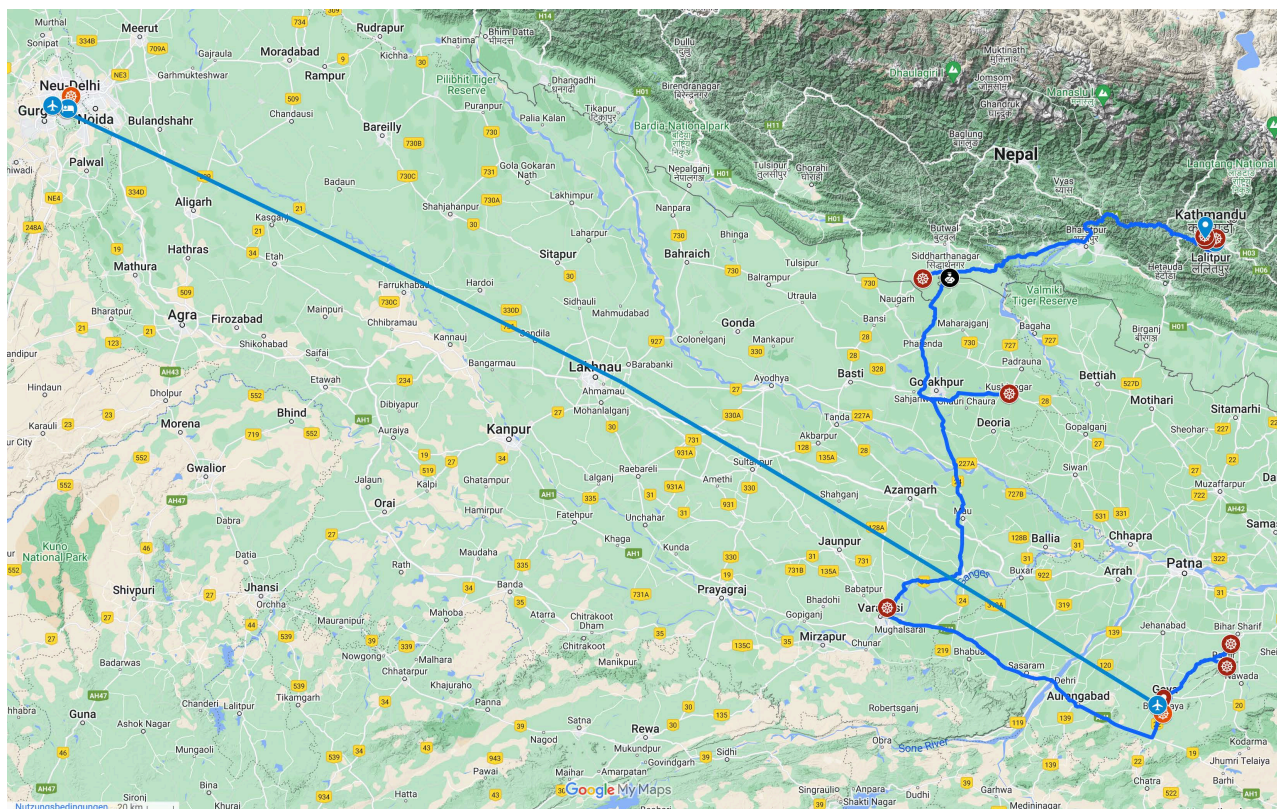
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# Itinerary

Dates: 28.02.2023 - 11.03.2023



Day	Date	Weekday	Places / Routes	Accommodation (or similar)
1	28.10.23	Saturday	Start in Delhi	KIBI
2	29.10.23	Sunday	Delhi	KIBI
3	30.10.23	Monday	DEL-GAY/PAT (Flight)	Hotel Karma Temple
4	31.10.23	Tuesday	Bodhgaya	Hotel Karma Temple
5	01.11.23	Wednesday	Bodhgaya	Hotel Karma Temple
6	02.11.23	Thursday	Bodhgaya	Hotel Karma Temple
7	03.11.23	Friday	Bodhgaya / free for Mediation	Hotel Karma Temple
8	04.11.23	Saturday	Bodhgaya - Sarnath	Pallavi International
9	05.11.23	Sunday	Sarnath-Kushinagar	Lotus Nikko (tbc)
10	06.11.23	Monday	Kushinagar-Lumbini	Buddha Maya (tbc)
11	07.11.23	Tuesday	Lumbini (Nepal)	Buddha Maya (tbc)
12	08.11.23	Wednesday	Lumbini – Katmandu (Bus)	Shambalah Home Guesthous
13	09.11.23	Thursday	Kathmandu	Shambalah Home Guesthous
14	10.11.23	Friday	Kathmandu	Shambalah Home Guesthous
15	11.11.23	Saturday	End of the Pilgrimage	

**Note:** Please note that there may be changes due to weather and organizational reasons. Your tour guide will discuss the current schedule with you on-site.

**DAY 1: Arrival in Delhi**

Arrival in Delhi and transfer to either our Hotel or the Karmapa International Buddhist Institute (KIBI). Dinner at KIBI and Welcome by our organizers, Désirée Reder and Anton Förster and our tour guide, Lena Leonteva.

**DAY 2: Delhi**

After breakfast in KIBI, the bus picks us up, and we drive to the National Museum, where we see the relics of Buddha Shakyamuni. We will then return to KIBI where we can buy lunch and have time for meditation. Dinner at KIBI.

**DAY 3: Journey to Bodhgaya**

After breakfast, we fly to Gaya or Patna, from where the bus will take us to our hotel in Bodhgaya. Dinner at the hotel. Afterwards, there will be a lecture by Lena on various Buddhist topics especially related to the pilgrimage sites. At this most important pilgrimage site of Buddhism, where Buddha attained enlightenment, we will take a few days to meditate, listen to explanations and make excursions to the surrounding area.

**DAY 4: Bodhgaya**

Today we will get to know the main site around the Mahabodhi temple, and our tour guides will explain what Buddha experienced at this place. After that, lunch will be organized spontaneously, or we will go individually to small restaurants. The afternoon is free, and we will meet again for dinner at the hotel. Afterwards, there will be the possibility for further explanations and opportunities for questions with Lena.

**DAY 5: Excursion to the Mahakala Cave**

After breakfast, we will go by bus to the Mahakala Cave. There, we will walk up a small hill and visit the place. Around noon we will be back to Bodhgaya and will again be able to enjoy lunch individually in one of the restaurants. In the afternoon, we visit some of the many monasteries in Bodhgaya by foot. Dinner at the hotel, then more information and questions if needed.

**DAY 6: Excursion to Rajgir and Nalanda**

After breakfast, we are going on a day trip by bus. First, we will visit the archaeological excavations of the famous monastic university of Nalanda. Here we will have a small lunch on demand. We may visit the Nalanda Museum before driving to Rajgir if we have enough time. In Rajgir, we will walk a short distance uphill to the Vulture Mountain, where we will meditate. Dinner at the hotel in Bodhgaya.

**DAY 7: Bodhgaya**

Breakfast, the day is free for meditation. After dinner at the hotel, there will be a lecture by Lena on various Buddhist topics especially related to the pilgrimage sites.

**DAY 8: Bodhgaya – Sarnath**

After breakfast, we take the bus and start our 3-day tour to the south of Nepal. On our first day, we will drive all day and arrive at our hotel in Varanasi in the evening. Dinner at the hotel.

**DAY 9: Sarnath - Kushinagar**

After breakfast, we visit Sarnath, an archaeological site north of Varanasi. This is where the Buddha gave the first teachings to his followers. The site contains a stupa and the famous lion-capital memorial pillar, which was erected by the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC Mauryan emperor Ashoka and is now the state emblem of India. After that, we will drive to Kushinagar and try to arrive before sunset to see part of the pilgrimage site. Dinner at the hotel in Kushinagar.

**DAY 10: Kushinagar-Lumbini**

After breakfast, we will visit the main site at Kushinagar, the place where Buddha died and entered a state beyond conditional existence (parinirvana). Then we will cross the border into Nepal and will reach Lumbini in the evening. Dinner at the hotel in Lumbini.

**DAY 11: Lumbini**

Today we visit the wide pilgrimage site in Lumbini, Buddha's birthplace. In the morning, after breakfast, we will see the archaeological site of the Mayadevi temple – the place where Buddha was born 2600 years ago. Our tour guide Lena will give us explanations on the place and meditate with us. After a private lunch break, we might visit Kapilavastu if there is enough time.

**DAY 12: Lumbini - Kathmandu**

After breakfast, we take the bus to Kathmandu, following the footsteps of Lama Ole and Hannah. It will be a long and exciting ride, around 300 km. After arrival we will check in at our hotel and rest. Depending on the time we will have dinner at the hotel and a lecture by Lena about the highlights of Kathmandu (stupas, statues, etc.).

**DAY 13: Kathmandu**

After breakfast, we will visit one of the most powerful sites related to the transmission of Diamond Way Buddhism to the West: the Swayambhu Stupa. Here Lama Ole and Hannah had first met the 16<sup>th</sup> Karmapa. From there, we will walk to the monastery of Lopön Tsechu Rinpoche – “the transparent Lama”, Hannah's and Lama Ole's first Buddhist teacher. Most likely, a simple lunch will be prepared for us here. We will try to visit Sherab Gyaltzen Rinpoche on this or the following day. Dinner at the hotel.

**DAY 14: Kathmandu**

After breakfast, we will visit the Sharminub Institute, which was founded by the late 14<sup>th</sup> Shamar Rinpoche. There might be the possibility to have lunch together with the young monks. In the afternoon, we drive to Bhaktapur to visit Sherab Gyaltzen Rinpoche's monastery, the Nala Gumpa, where we might meet him in person. In the evening, dinner at the hotel. If possible, we will invite a statue-maker to show us his finest pieces of art.

**DAY 15: End of pilgrimage**

The pilgrimage will end with a final breakfast. Individual flights back home.

## General Travel Information

Dear Diamond Way Travel Pioneers!

Like our teachers, Lama Ole and Hannah did in the 60s and 70s, we will together follow the footsteps of the historic Buddha in India and Nepal, meditate together on the 16<sup>th</sup> Karmapa and evoke our protectors every day. Everyone who has read Lama Ole's book *Entering the Diamond Way* knows that those powerful places will bring us to the edge of our comfort zone in one way or the other. Of course, the DW Travel Team will do their best to meanwhile make the outer conditions as pleasant as possible ;)

Lama Ole recommends everyone to read his book *Entering the Diamond Way (Buddhas vom Dach der Welt)* before going on a pilgrimage.

The international foundation has been opening a new chapter for the Diamond Way Pilgrimages by founding its own tour operator – Diamond Way Travel gGmbH. Of course, in the Diamond Way style, all of us are working on this voluntarily without salaries. This endeavour aims at ensuring DW pilgrimages for the longest time. At the same time, we are going back to the roots, being pioneers, if you want to say so. So, all of you joining this pilgrimage should bring some pioneer spirit.

The past years have taught us about new uncertainties, and in particular, how unpredictable circumstances and regulations concerning travelling can be. A former pilgrimage with Hans, Manfred and Eva was affected by national lockdown regulations in 2020. Afterwards, no DW pilgrimages could take place for two years. We, Diamond Travel gGmbH, are taking all possible measures to minimize any risks, and we do not expect the countries to act in a similar way again, e.g. closing their borders, as they did in 2020, though we cannot be certain. In such case, as a tour operator, DW Travel would be obliged to reimburse the travel price, including the down payment to the travellers. That would break the neck of the foundation's young company since it has to pay the local partner in advance. We cannot assume that all advance payments made by DW Travel will be returned. Therefore, in the unlikely event of complete trip cancellation, due to outer unforeseeable reasons, we kindly ask you to refrain from asking to get the repayment of the deposit back, if DW Travel cannot get it back from its partners in Asia.

### Accommodation

We will be staying in Hotels, Guesthouses, and at KIBI during the trip. In most cases, you will be sharing your room with other people of the group (2 – 4 friends per room). If you have a special person you would like to share a room with, please indicate this during the registration (travel buddy). At KIBI we might also be sleeping in dormitories, it is recommended to bring a small sleeping bag. Please be aware that we are travelling in Asia and room standards will be basic. Of course, Diamond Way Travel and our local partners will reserve clean and safe rooms. In some cases, different rooms in the same hotel vary in standard and beauty. It is more

important to us that the entire group is staying in one hotel so we can share with our friends on the tour.

### **Food**

During the tour, breakfast and dinner are included in the package. In the registration form, we'll ask you about food preferences (vegetarian or meat). Please inform us (in your registration) about allergies so we can inform the restaurants/hotels. Please also take care of yourself and double-check with the restaurants. Please be aware that not all wishes can be considered all the time. This applies, for example, to very individual catering wishes and or food intolerances. Here, every travel guest should be clearly aware that by no means the standards from home can be set and expected.

### **Language on the tour**

The DW Pilgrimage is an international tour for an international group. Thus, the travelling language is English. In case that some friends are not proficient in English, we hope that as a group together, we can provide translation. This, of course, is entirely voluntary and depends on the surplus.

### **Group size (max. 35, min. 25 participants)**

In 2023, we plan to travel with a group of 30 friends + our tour guide (Lena), 1-2 DWT organizers (Anton and Désirée), and 1 local organizer (Sangpo). The minimum number of participants for the trip to take place as planned is 25. If the number of registered participants is smaller, we will check the options for a smaller group or cancel the trip if prices would be too high.

In the different language versions of Buddhism Today, you can also find some beautiful articles on pilgrimages e.g.

Pilgerreise 2002 mit Hannah Nydahl und Manfred Seegers:

[https://www.buddhismus-heute.de/archive.issue\\_35.position\\_5.de.html](https://www.buddhismus-heute.de/archive.issue_35.position_5.de.html)

Buddhistische Pilgerreisen:

[https://www.buddhismus-heute.de/archive.issue\\_35.position\\_5.de.html](https://www.buddhismus-heute.de/archive.issue_35.position_5.de.html)

Das Verlassen der Komfortzone. Pilgerreise zum Berg Kailash:

[https://www.buddhismus-heute.de/archive.issue\\_50.position\\_21.de.html](https://www.buddhismus-heute.de/archive.issue_50.position_21.de.html)



## **Travel Package**

### **Included travel services**

- Accommodation, as mentioned in the itinerary table above, or similar hotels
- Breakfast and dinner (primarily typical local cuisine)
- All transfers and sightseeing by busses (please note that AC might not be available at all times)
- Flight from Delhi to Gaya or Patna. Potential conducting airlines are IndiGo, VisTara, AirIndia, GoAir.
- Entrance fees as described in the itinerary
- All taxes, parking charges and driver allowances
- Tour guides

### **Excluded travel services**

- Any air or rail travel or other transportation not mentioned in the itinerary, as your transportation to the starting point of the DW pilgrimage (Delhi) and your flights back home (from Kathmandu)
- Taxi from and to the airport, if required
- Tips and portorage
- Meals (lunches, snacks) besides those mentioned in travel includes
- Additional entrance fees, camera fees, guide charges
- Personal expenses and incidentals (e.g., coffee, soft-drinks, internet, phone calls, laundry...)
- Passport and Visa fees
- Fees for Covid-tests
- Increase in VAT or other tourism taxes
- Excess baggage charges, departure fees, and airport taxes
- Insurances: travel health insurance, trip cancellation, travel delay, and baggage loss insurance
- Charges incurred as a result of delays beyond the control of Diamond Way Travel gGmbH

## Self-organized flights to India and back from Nepal

What to keep in mind when booking your personal flights:

### Find GOOD Rates:

You may find good rates using the following search engines. It is recommended to use private mode on your browser when looking for flights. Please remember that low ticket prices will be an indicator for high ticket change fees or non-change policies.

<https://www.momondo.com/>

<https://www.swoodoo.com/>

<https://www.skyscanner.com/>

### Flying from Germany:

You may check direct flights with Vistara from Frankfurt. Vistara usually has better service than AirIndia. In addition, compared to Lufthansa's direct flights, both airlines often offer cheaper fares.

### Save cash with a round-trip:

Instead of booking separate or multiple-stop trips, you can try booking a round-trip to and from Delhi and booking a flight from Kathmandu to Delhi separately. This option is a bit risky, because if you miss the flight in Delhi, you may need to buy a new ticket. So, you may want to plan a buffer day in Delhi in case of flight delays. If you plan to re-enter India after Kathmandu, make sure to have double entry granted on your Indian visa.

### When arriving at Delhi Airport:

After departing the plane, you need to pass the emigration checkpoint. Here you have to fill out a form, and it is recommended to bring your own pen. Next, you will get your luggage and may have to clear customs. In this area there are counters where you can change foreign money (EUR, USD, and others into Indian rupees). If you want to get an Indian SIM Card, you will find selling booths at the airport. Be aware that you cannot re-enter the building once you leave the airport. When leaving the airport, many people will approach you offering their services (e.g., carrying your luggage). We recommend not to do this.

### How to get to the hotel/KIBI:

Individual arrival: We do not recommend using the caps offered at the airport.

Pre-paid caps or the apps Uber and Ola are good options for individual transfers from the airport to KIBI. For pre-paid caps, we recommend Delhi Traffic Police (a cheap option). You pay the pre-paid caps in advance at their booth in the airport or outside at the waiting spot. In any case, make sure to check if the driver really knows how to get to your destination. The KIBI is situated in the: QUTAB INSTITUTIONAL AREA, near Rockland Hospital, near **Katwaria Sarai**.

KIBI Contact data:

Karmapa International Buddhist Institute

B-19/20 Qatab Institutional Area

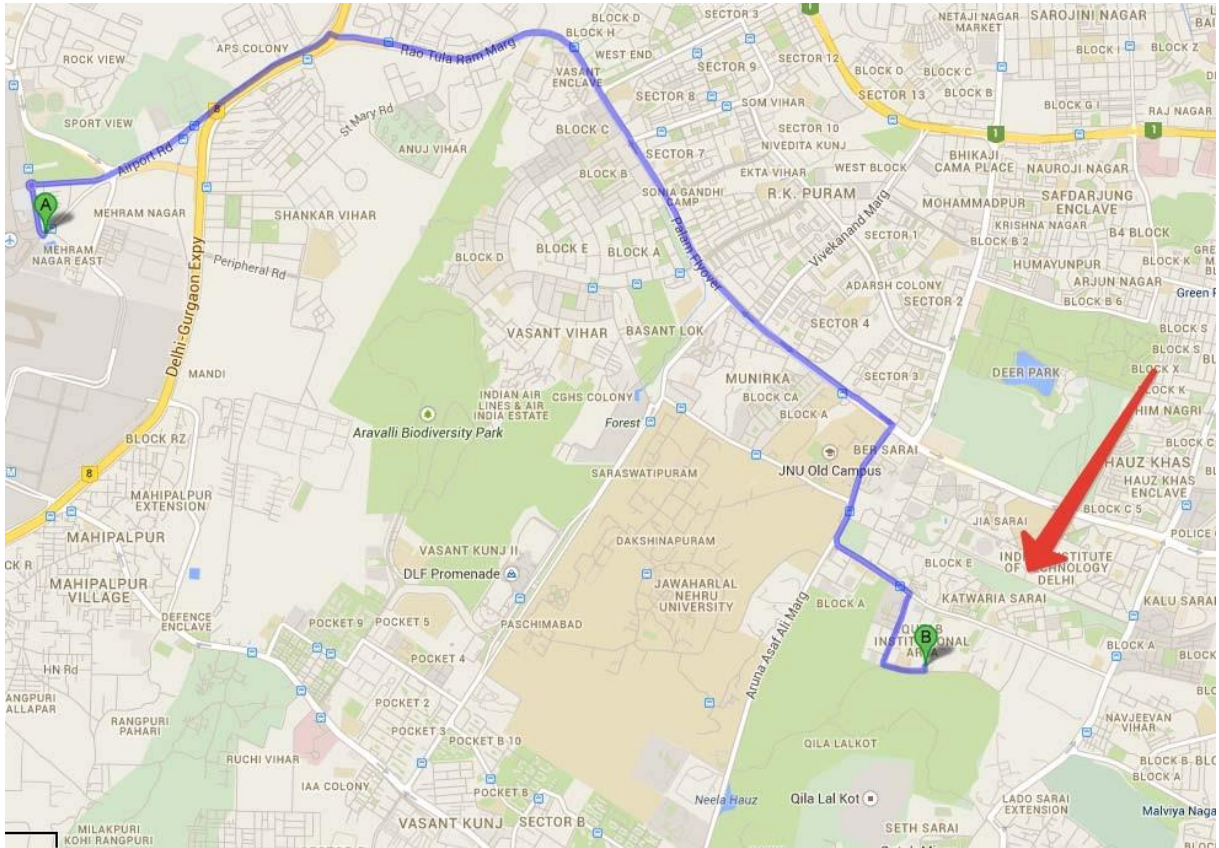
New Delhi 110016

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Office Tel: 0091-11-41087859 (9AM to 5PM) Information Tel: 0091-11-40571355

Mobile 091-8800126115

Coordinates for your GPS devices or smartphone maps 28.53654, 77.18412



Shortly before the pilgrimage, you will receive an E-Mail asking for your flight details and your arrival time. We will try to connect you with friends arriving the same time. In case many of you arrive at the same time, we might organize a bus from the airport to KIBI.

## **Paperwork/Entry Requirements India and Nepal**

### **Passport**

Make sure that your passport is valid for at least six months at the time of travel and has at least four blank pages (Indian and Nepali Authorities sometimes insist on putting their stamp on a blank page, although there might still be space on other pages).

### **Visa**

You need to apply for a tourist visa for both countries, India and Nepal. Please check on the respective embassy in your home country or on the official pages of the Indian and Nepali Visa authorities for the specific regulations for the country of your passport.

For both countries, you will need a tourist visa (paper-Visa or e-Visa).

There are three ways you can get your visa:

- Via a visa provider
- Via the embassy/consulate of India and Nepal in your home country
- Online via the official page (see links below)

### **India**

You will need a tourist visa which can be a Tourist paper-Visa or a Tourist e-Visa. Please print your e-Visa and have a copy always with you.

Please be aware that the paper-Visa can take up to 30 days to be issued, e-Visa generally takes about five working days.

You can apply for your Tourist Visa for India via all three methods described above, including the official page of the Indian Government (<https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/>), which offers paper-Visa and e-Visa.

We recommend the e-Visa, which in many cases is cheaper and the process is easier than for the paper one. We do not recommend using Visa-Agencies but apply for the e-visa directly with the Indian authorities (links below) or get the paper visa from the embassy/consulate.

Depending on the type of visa you choose and your country of origin, an Indian e-Visa costs 25 US\$ (30-day visa), 40 US\$ (1-year visa) and 80 US\$ (5-year visa) (please check here: [https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/images/Etourist\\_fee\\_final.pdf](https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/images/Etourist_fee_final.pdf)).

Be aware that the one-month tourist e-Visa for India is valid only for 30 days. Please make sure to enter the correct travel dates, if you plan to arrive earlier or stay longer (exceeding 30 days), you might want to choose the one-year option. The 1-month tourist e-Visa allows double entry (one-year visa multiple entries), which is important if you book a return flight via Delhi. For paper-Visa, you need to specify whether you want single, double or multiple entries.



In the application process, you will need to upload a scan (pdf) of the bio page of your passport, showing the photograph and personal details. Further, you will be required to upload a square passport-size photo (specifications for the photograph are made in the application process). Purpose of our trip is "tourism/pilgrimage". When asked about your E-Mail ID, you need to enter your E-Mail Address. You might be asked about your parents' nationality and profession, although it might appear strange to us please enter the information.

You will be asked about an address in India, please enter the KIBI address:

Karmapa International Buddhist Institute  
B 19/20, Qutab Institutional Area, New Delhi 110016  
Phone +91 11 4108 7859

If you prefer a good old **paper visa**, please check details on the process at the closest Indian consulate or embassy. For some countries, it is also possible to apply for a paper visa on this page and then pick it up at the Indian mission in your country or have it sent by post: <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/visa/index.html>

In the paper-visa process, some friends have been asked to submit a printout of the Hotel reservation or booking with an Indian Agency when applying for the paper visa. If this is the case for you, please let us know and we will send you a personalised letter by our partner-agency Shambala Travels.

## Nepal

Although Visa-on-site is sometimes possible for Nepal, we strongly urge you to **get your visa before the travel**, as visa-on-site at the land-borders has caused difficulties in the past, may take very long or might not be issued at land-borders at all.

For getting your pre-arrival-visa, please check with the closest Nepali embassy/consulate, how much time it takes (generally 3-5 working days). In most cases you are asked to fill this [form](#), before sending your passport (<https://nepaliport.immigration.gov.np/online>).

If you decide to get an **e-visa**, please fill this form max two weeks before we arrive in Nepal: <https://nepaliport.immigration.gov.np/online>. Make sure to bring 2 passport sized pictures, the visa fee in flawless US-Dollar notes (any notes with stains or rips will not be accepted) to the border.

You need to upload a scan of your Passport (pdf) and a passport-size photo. You might be asked about the planned Entry-Point, which in our case is the **Immigration Office Belahiya (Bhairahawa)**.

For our pilgrimage, the 15-days visa suffices (despite you plan to stay longer). The visa for Nepal costs 30-50 US\$, and it can take up to 10 days for an e-Visa to be issued (for paper-Visa, please check with the embassy in your home country).

## **Insurances**

Everyone joining the tour is recommended to have an insurance which is covering costs caused by cancellation before the start of the trip (Cancellation Fees), and additional costs in the event of a trip interruption caused by personal reasons.

Furthermore, we urge all travellers to have a comprehensive travel-insurance package including, **travel cancellation insurance**, international **health insurance** including return transport in the event of accident, illness or death (including Covid-19 related coverage, which is often supplementary). By German law we are obliged to make a recommendation for travel insurance. HanseMerkur Reiseversicherung has passed numerous consumer tests with top marks: <https://www.hansemerkur.de/reiseversicherungspakete>. Allianz Insurances have offers for many countries worldwide: <https://www.allianztravelinsurance.com/>

We ask for your understanding that we cannot provide recommendations for all your countries, but we are sure that you know the market in your respective countries much better than we do.

## **Covid-related regulations**

Be aware that national regulations are subject to change and might evolve swiftly. We will regularly consult the updated regulations.

Due to the pandemic situation and the effects of virus variants, national and/or, regional frameworks and regulations may change dynamically. Therefore, we cannot guarantee that all facilities and common areas, e.g., bars, restaurants, etc., will be available without restrictions. We will keep you posted on the developments. Please also inform yourself on the regulations applying to your citizenship concerning entry regulations and quarantine regulations.

For foreign travellers like us, special regulations may apply. For entry it might be required to fill out an online form as a pre-registration and a valid Covid-19 test by Indian and Nepali authorities.

Please also check for yourself which regulations might apply to you when returning to your home country/final destination.

Updated information for India from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare: <https://www.mohfw.gov.in>

## **Nepal: Covid-related regulations**

Currently, all travellers to Nepal need to submit a paper copy of their valid vaccination certificate (two vaccinations) or a negative PCR Test not older than 72 hours. We will try to stop at a test facility before crossing the border.

Covid-related travel information for Nepal can be found on the websites of the Covid-19 Crisis Management Coordination Center (CCMCC) and the Department of Immigration: <https://ccmc.gov.np/> and <https://www.immigration.gov.np/>

## **Money**

### **Currencies and Exchange rates (as of June 2023)**

- 1 EUR = ca. 89 INR (Indian Rupee)
- 1 EUR = ca. 141 NPR (Nepali Rupee)

### **Credit cards**

Withdrawal with international credit and debit cards at ATMs is possible in larger cities. Please make sure that your card is marked "Maestro". V-Pay cards are not accepted in India. Payment with credit cards is increasingly accepted, but there is often a surcharge of up to 5% for payment by credit card. Please check with your bank before you travel to see if your cash cards are approved for use abroad and what fees will be charged.

### **Withdrawals/ money exchange**

At the airport, as mentioned above, there is a counter where you can change foreign money (EUR, USD, and others) into Indian rupees. During the trip, there will be some more possibilities to change money. Please note that tourists are instructed to exchange their cash only at banks or authorized money changers and to have this confirmed on the Currency Declaration Form. This will also allow for the re-exchange of Indian currency upon departure. We recommend that you only exchange limited amounts of cash at a time, as the re-exchange is sometimes associated with higher losses.

**Traveller Checks** are not recommended as acceptance is very low.

### **Pocket Money**

How much money do I need?

We estimate that around 250 to 500 EUR/USD should be enough depending on your personal needs. You will need more if you want to buy statues or thangkas in Nepal.

You can bring your money in cash and change it there or withdraw money with your credit card in Delhi or Kathmandu. Be aware that not all destinations on our route have an infrastructure, including ATMs.

# Health

## Personal medication

If you rely on any medication, please make sure to bring enough with you. It is not always possible to get your specific drugs in Asia.

In general, it is recommended to bring medication for diarrheal diseases (e.g., charcoal tablets, healing clay/Heilerde, electrolytes), sore throats, colds, bronchitis, headache, and wound care. Some travellers swear on ginger pills, swallowed before and after meals. In addition, you might want to bring some minerals or vitamins.

In both countries' mosquitos can transmit diseases, so bring a mosquito repellent (e.g., NoBite).

## Food poisoning

By maintaining food and drinking water hygiene, diarrheal sicknesses can often be avoided: Do NOT drink tap water. Only drink bottled water and only use bottled water to brush your teeth. When opening a bottle, make sure it is closed properly (sealed).

You might be offered water in hotels or restaurants, often, this is tap water, and you might want to avoid drinking this.

Avoid raw vegetables, salads, mayonnaise, ice cream or ice cubes in your drinks. It is recommended to eat only fruit you have peeled yourself (if you cannot withstand, it's at your own risk ;)).

## Vaccinations

### - Required vaccinations

For flights from Europe, no vaccinations (besides covid-19 vaccination, see below) are required by law in India or Nepal. If you fly to India from a yellow fever region, you need to show a valid yellow fever vaccination certificate.

For entry into Nepal, a valid Covid-19 vaccination certificate **or** a PCR test, no older than 72 hours, is required. We will try to organize a stop at a test centre prior to crossing the border to Nepal.

### - Recommended vaccinations

Vaccinations against rabies (because of stray dogs), typhoid, and hepatitis A are recommended by the Robert-Koch Institute. For additional information on recommended vaccinations or travel health, please consult your physician or a National Health Center (e.g., Robert-Koch-Institute: [www.t1p.de/reisemed](http://www.t1p.de/reisemed), or [www.crm.de](http://www.crm.de)).



## **Personal Fitness**

Please ensure that you are in good health when joining the pilgrimage tour. Although busses are used for transportation to the sights (it is not a hiking tour), the group might have to take a walk from the parking lot to the destination. Be aware that weather conditions may be challenging (heat, temperature differences due to A/C, humidity). When in doubt, please consult with your physician.

## **Additional Information/Recommendations**

As everywhere in Asia, air conditioning in buses, hotels and restaurants is prevalent. The Indian spring can also be changeable, in recent years, it has usually rained 2-3 days at this time. Therefore, in addition to a rain jacket, we recommend that you take a light, windproof vest with you. This vest and a light scarf (always have both with you in your daypack) are a great way to prevent a possible cold. Please bring a set of warm clothing, e.g., a down vest and warm socks. Anyone who freezes at night should take a light blanket or a summer sleeping bag. There are pillows and blankets, including bedding, everywhere, but the hotels have no heating. This applies above all to the beginning of the journey. It's going to get warmer every day, and we can work up a sweat during the day. In Kathmandu, it is getting a bit cooler again.

One remark concerning clothes: women with a low décolleté (bare chest), bare shoulders, and calves still attract attention (but bare bellies do not). Therefore, please cover your shoulders and skirts/pants that reach over the knee. Men should also wear appropriate trousers and t-shirts and not walk around half-naked ☺ Take a nice clean piece of clothing with you for possible Rinpoche visits.

When visiting monasteries, the shoulders should be covered. When taking pictures, be aware that flash is usually not allowed in monasteries as it harms the ancient murals.

Bargaining is part of the daily business in India and Nepal. Especially tourists are often charged 2 to 3 times the price.

Children and beggars should not be given money despite much compassion. Basically, one should only give something to those who cannot feed themselves, e.g., the sick and disabled. In Bihar (especially the area around Bodhgaya) it is forbidden by law to give money to beggars. Better to collect money and support a school or hospital if you want to be generous.

Electricity and plugs: Euro plug C, and plug types D and M work in India and Nepal.

## Checklist: What shall I bring?

- Passport and Visa
- Cash/Credit card
- Copies of your important documents
- 3 Pass-photos
- Day bag pack
- Towel (for KIBI)
- A sleeping back for KIBI
- Personal medication supply
- Good shoes for walking around
- Insect repellent
- Sun protection
- Rain protection
- Cloth for warm and cold weather (sun cap, scarf, softshell vest)
- Personal medication
- Seat pad, medication cushion
- Chargers and plugs for your needs (EURO System works)

This is only an example packing list. You may need additional equipment.

As it occasionally happens that baggage is delayed delivered to the destination area, we strongly recommend that you take your main belongings with you in the hand luggage.

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Hannah and Lama Ole in Boudha, Kathmandu, Nepal

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