



Kathmandu

01 / POP 1 MILLION / ELEV 1337M

Includes

History	48
Sights	48
Activities	50
Tours	50
Festivals & Events	52
Sleeping	52
Eating	54
Drinking & Nightlife	56
Shopping	58
Information	58
Getting There & Away	60
Getting Around	61

Best Places to Eat

- Gaia Restaurant (p55)
- Third Eye (p55)
- Kaiser Cafe (p55)

Best Places to Stay

- Hotel Ganesh Himal (p53)
- Dwarika's (p54)
- Kantipur Temple House (p53)

Why Go?

For many, stepping off a plane into Kathmandu is a pupil-dilating experience, a riot of sights, sounds and smells that can quickly lead to sensory overload. Whether you're barrelling through the traffic-jammed alleyways of the old town in a rickshaw, marvelling at the medieval temples or dodging trekking touts in the backpacker district of Thamel, Kathmandu can be an intoxicating, amazing and exhausting place.

The 2015 earthquake brought devastation to parts of the city – including Kathmandu's Unesco-listed Durbar Square – but many areas emerged unscathed, and the soul of the city endures. Stroll through the backstreets and Kathmandu's timeless cultural and artistic heritage will reveal itself in hidden temples overflowing with marigolds, courtyards full of drying chillies and rice, and tiny hobbit-sized workshops.

This endlessly fascinating, sometimes infuriating city has enough sights to keep you busy for a few days, but you'll soon be longing to breathe some fresh mountain air. When you come back after your trek, the backpacker comforts will feel like heaven.

When to Go

- Autumn (October to November) is the most popular time to visit, with fine mountain views and warm days but also peak-season crowds, so reserve hotels and restaurants ahead. Trekkers will be interested in December's Kathmandu International Mountain Film Festival.
- Spring (March to May) brings comfortable temperatures, though days can be hot in May. Time a March trek with Kathmandu's Seto Machhendranath festival or Nepali new year celebrations in Bhaktapur.
- Winter (December to February) is a quiet time but nights can be chilly. Pashupatinath's Maha Shivaratri Festival attracts thousands of *sadhus* (Hindu holy men) in February/March.
- The monsoon months (June to September) are considered low season but include September's Indra Jatra festival.



Kathmandu Highlights

1 Admiring the amazing architectural monuments that defied the earthquake in **Durbar Sq** (p48), whose artistic and architectural legacy rivals the great cities of Europe.

2 Dining on momos (dumplings) and wild boar to the beat of *madal* (drums)

and *bansari* (flutes) at one of the city's classy **Newari restaurants** (p55).

3 Ensuring the love of friends and family by snapping up the bargains in **Thamel's shops** (p58).

4 Chilling out in one of **Thamel's garden restaurants** (p54) with a good book, a pot

of masala tea and a slice of chocolate cake.

5 Taking a day trip to the nearby Unesco World Heritage Site of **Swayambhunath** (p52).

6 Escaping the traffic in the peaceful and beautifully restored Rana-era **Garden of Dreams** (p50).