



PokharaIV Information Pack

Many thanks for deciding to join us at this year's PokharaIV event. Below you will find some information you may require making your stay and race in Nepal, safe and enjoyable.

Nepal

Time Difference:

Nepal is 5 and three-quarter hours ahead of GMT.

Language:

Nepali is the official language of Nepal and spoken by approximately 90% of the population. There are many other languages and about 30 major dialects. English is also widely spoken. Learning and using just a few words such as hello, please and thank you is much appreciated by the locals.

Visas:

Visas can be obtained on arrival at Kathmandu International Airport or can be made in advance through your local Nepali embassy.

If you are intending on getting a visa on arrival, you will need 1 passport sized photograph, a pen and foreign currency to pay for your visa (USD, AUS, Euro or GBP is the better option). The necessary documents will be given to you either on your flight or are obtainable in the airport.

Once you land, take the completed visa form along with your passport photos and foreign currency to purchase your visa at the appropriate counter before heading through to immigration. On a busy day, it can take well over an hour to pass through passport control, especially if you do not have a pen to complete the forms.

A 15-day visa is \$25 USD, a 30 day visa is \$40 USD or a 90 day visa is \$100 USD.



Passport Validity:

Please ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months from the time you intend to enter Nepal as this could result in your entry to Nepal being refused.

Airport: Tribhuvan International Airport, Kathmandu.

The baggage claim hall can be, at times, hectic and there is usually no indication which belt your luggage should appear on!! Contrary to what you might be told trolleys are free, but if you enlist the help of an airport porter then they will expect to be paid for their services. In the unlikely event that your luggage doesn't turn up, there is an official desk dealing with these issues situated in the left-hand side (as your heading out) of the arrival / baggage claim hall. It is a good idea to have a photograph of your luggage so that it is easily identifiable if it should be delayed or lost.

Taxis into Kathmandu can be booked at the desk situated in the corridor exiting the airport or, if you have pre-booked a hotel, many have courtesy mini buses waiting for you outside the airport terminal but please check this at the time of booking; it is always best to check with the guesthouse that they will be meeting you following your flight.

Money:

The local currency in Nepal is the Nepalese Rupee (NPR) which you cannot exchange in any country other than Nepal.

If you are bringing all of your spending money from your home country, it makes good sense to bring the majority in the form of travellers' cheques in either USD (\$) or GBP (£). You can also bring cash and exchange it into NPR whilst in Nepal (the largest amount you can bring in to Nepal without declaring it is US \$5000). There are many places in both Kathmandu and Pokhara to exchange money, with their being a fixed fee advertised on a board outside. Alternatively, you can bring an ATM card and withdraw small amounts of money as and when you need it.

Expect to spend on average 3000-5000 NPR (approx. US \$30-50) a day on food, drinks etc. (depending on appetite!!), as these are not included in your race entry fee.



Passport Photos:

If you are planning on doing any trekking, buying a Nepali sim card or anything else that requires a form, it is advisable to bring with you some extra passport photos. For each form that needs to be filled in, there is usually a minimum of 2 passport photos required and a copy of your passport.

Electricity:

The standard Nepalese electrical outlet is a three-pronged triangle, but some have been retrofitted to accept US and European plugs. Simple adapters can be purchased inexpensively.

The output voltage from the wall outlet is 220V AC and frequency is between 50-60Hz. People visiting from countries using different voltage and frequency should make sure that their adapter or charger is capable of operating in this range.

Vaccinations:

The following vaccinations are recommended for people visiting Nepal, however we advise to check with your GP prior to arrival in case you require anything extra or if the health regulations have changed:

Tetanus, Polio, Typhoid, Hepatitis A

Insurance:

In the event of an emergency it may be necessary to evacuate an injured or seriously ill competitor by helicopter. It is a condition of entry that all competitors have suitable insurance covering them for taking part in this event and allowing for immediate helicopter evacuation in the unlikely occurrence that it is needed. This is compulsory and evidence of the policy must be provided at a minimum of 1 month prior to the race start. Any competitor without the necessary insurance will not be allowed to participate.

All competitors shall be required to sign a personal liability waiver in order to participate in the race.



Make sure your health and travel insurance covers you for medical expenses abroad. If not, supplemental insurance for overseas coverage, including possible evacuation, should be bought. If illness occurs while abroad, medical expenses including evacuation may run to tens of thousands of dollars. Bring your insurance card, claim forms and any other relevant insurance documents. Before departure, determine whether your insurance plan will make payments directly to providers or reimburse you later for overseas health expenditures to save delays if you need to use it.

Health Considerations:

Upset Stomach

As most stomach upsets are due to the unsanitary preparation of food, it is useful to know what to watch out for. Under-cooked fish (especially shellfish) and meat (especially pork and mince) can be hazardous. Salads can be risky unless purified water has been used to wash the vegetables. Fruit that has already been peeled should be avoided. Be careful of ice cream, in particular the varieties sold by street vendors and served at cheap restaurants. Sometimes there are power outages in Nepal, especially away from urban centres, so it pays to be suspicious of all refrigerated foods if you know there has been a recent outage in your area.

Water

Tap water is not safe to drink. Bottled water is readily available both in Kathmandu and Pokhara. The plastic bottles however contribute immensely to Nepal's pollution problem. Modern filters + water purifying tablets will produce water that is safe to drink, will save you money and will help reduce the pollution in the country. If purchasing a filter for the first time, it is probably best to obtain it from your country of origin from a reputable source.

Sunburn

Always remember to apply a sunscreen product with a high sun protection factor: we recommend factor 50. Remember you are just 600km from the equator. Even with sunscreen, your exposure to the sun should be limited.



Heatstroke

Sometimes those who have spent too long in the sun suffer what is termed heatstroke, the most common form being caused by dehydration. This condition can occur if the body's heat-regulating mechanism becomes weakened and the body temperature rises to unsafe levels. The symptoms are a high temperature - yet a lack of sweat - a flushed skin, severe headache, and impaired coordination. In addition, the sufferer may become confused. If you think someone has heatstroke, take that person out of the sun, cover their body with a wet sheet or towel, and seek medical advice immediately. To avoid heatstroke, take plenty of bottled water and avoid prolonged time exposed to the sun.

General Advice:

Bring adequate supplies of all medications in their original containers, clearly labelled. Carry a signed, dated letter from the primary physician describing all medical conditions and listing all medications, including generic names. If carrying syringes or needles, be sure to carry a physician's letter documenting their medical necessity. Pack all medications in hand luggage. Carry a duplicate supply in the checked luggage.

If you wear glasses or contacts, bring an extra pair.

If you have significant allergies or chronic medical problems, wear a medical alert bracelet.

For rural and forested areas, boots are preferable, with trousers tucked in, to prevent tick bites. Apply insect repellents containing 25-50% DEET to exposed skin (but not to the eyes, mouth, or open wounds). DEET may also be applied to clothing. In rural or forested areas, perform a thorough tick check at the end of each day with the assistance of a friend or a full-length mirror. Ticks should be removed with tweezers or an appropriate tick removal device, grasping the tick by the head. Many tick-borne illnesses can be prevented by prompt tick removal.



Don't sleep with the window open unless there is a screen. If sleeping outdoors or in an accommodation that allows entry of mosquitoes, use a bed net, preferably impregnated with insect repellent, with edges tucked in under the mattress. The mesh size should be less than 1.5 mm. If the sleeping area is not otherwise protected, use a mosquito coil, which fills the room with insecticide through the night.

Emergencies: Useful Emergency Numbers are:

Police Control - 100

Fire Brigade – 101



Arrival in Nepal:

International Guest House

If you are booking your pre-race accommodation with our partner hotel, <http://www.intguesthouse.com/> be sure to supply your flight details at the time of booking and ask them to collect you from the airport on arrival.



Transfer day (February 11th)

Your bike must be fully built and ready to go at the International Guesthouse at 06.00am on the morning of the 11th February. The transfer vehicle cannot park right next to the hotel, so all riders will be required to take their bikes approx. 1 Km to the vehicle for loading and then walk back to the hotel (someone will be here to direct you).

At 07.30am riders will need to carry their luggage to the same location and be ready to board the transfer bus by 08.00am.

All luggage not required during the race, including bike bags and boxes can be securely stored at your hotel and collected on return – please ask your hotel.



The transfer to Pokhara is 200km and will take approx. 8 hours (this can be considerably higher in the event of traffic or accidents on the route, up to 13 hours).

There will be a stop for lunch en-route but this is not included in the race entry fee so please make sure you have some NPR to be able to purchase food and drinks.

The bikes will arrive in Pokhara at approximately the same time the riders and will be unloaded at the race hotel, the Butterfly Lodge.

Race registration and race briefing will be held at the Butterfly Lodge on the evening of the 11th and the time will be advised on arrival at the hotel.

Butterfly Lodge – <http://www.butterfly-lodge.org/>





Your room will be allocated on a twin share basis, unless requested otherwise at time of booking. (You can upgrade to a single room on availability for an extra \$100, please email us to request this).

The hotel does not have its own restaurant and no food or drink is included in the race entry fee; however, it is in very close proximity to a number of quality restaurants that can cater for all cuisines, many of which have spectacular views across the lake.

All rooms at the hotel are large: for security reasons, we advise keeping your bike in your room when you are not using it.

Climate in Pokhara:

During February, the average daily temperature is 15 °Celsius, with a maximum of 22°C and a minimum of 8°C. The average rainfall is 24mm which is the third lowest for any month.



Race Days:

After breakfast at a restaurant of your choice, all riders must congregate back at the Butterfly Lodge by 08.30am. There will then be a short briefing of the days stage, followed by a head count and a group ride to the start location.

Once all riders are at the start line, there will be a further head count and the riders will be flagged off, on a mass start with race timings starting from then. Upon completing the course, the riders individual time will be recorded and the rider will make their own way back to the hotel and will be free to do as they please for the remainder of the day.

The GPS files will be given to all riders prior to the race and will include the route to and from the hotel so can be used, should you not be able to remember the way.

The results from the days stage and the overall timings will be posted at the hotel reception as soon as possible.

Compulsory Kit List:

The following clothing and equipment must be carried by all competitors during the race:

- ✓ Mobile phone
- ✓ Plasters
- ✓ Bandage and safety pins
- ✓ Provisions for carrying at least 500ml of water

If weather conditions dictate, we may ask riders to carry additional clothing and equipment. This will be advised at the daily race briefing in the evening.



It is also compulsory that whilst riding all bikers wear a helmet and carry the following items:

- ✓ Spare tube & puncture outfit
- ✓ Link to repair broken chain
- ✓ Multi tool
- ✓ Pump
- ✓ Chain Lube

It is a race requirement, as a minimum, that all competitors are adept in repairing a puncture and fixing a broken chain.

Recommended Kit List:

Below is a recommended kit list for PokharaIV. We have only included the cycling clothes in this list, but would also recommend you bring warm coat and/or top and full-length trousers. Pokhara, at this time of year, can have colder evenings and mornings.

- ✓ Cycle tops – a minimum of 2
- ✓ Cycle shorts - a minimum of 2 pairs
- ✓ Cycle socks – 4 pairs
- ✓ Base layer top – 1 or 2
- ✓ Cycle gloves short fingered
- ✓ Sunglasses
- ✓ Shower proof jacket
- ✓ Cycling shoes *

*For the less fit / strong riders there may be some walking on the steeper and more technical climbs so it would be prudent to ensure chosen shoes are comfortable to walk in. If luggage allowance and space allows it would be better to bring 2 pairs of shoes in the event that one pair gets wet during a stage.



First Aid Kit:

This is only a minimum recommendation and is at the participant's discretion: For further items to include, please have a look at our FAQ's page on the website.

- ✓ Plasters (various sizes) / plastic skin
- ✓ Crepe Bandage and fastening
- ✓ Antiseptic cream
- ✓ Pain Killer such as paracetamol or Ibuprofen
- ✓ Sunscreen (Factor 50)
- ✓ Lip Salve
- ✓ Hand wash

The Bike:

Your bike must be in good working order and of a suitable quality for coping with a seriously tough off-road trail. Most people ride hardtails with front suspension, although full suspension is growing ever more popular and a couple have even done it on singlespeed fully rigid! We would recommend fitting new brake pads and chain before starting the race if there are any signs of wear and tear.

The course passes through an extremely varied terrain; including sand, mud and water. As a minimum, along with the aforementioned compulsory items, we would recommend bringing:

- ✓ 2 sets of spare brake pads
- ✓ Spare chain
- ✓ Spokes
- ✓ SPD cleats
- ✓ Chain lube
- ✓ Equipment for cleaning the chain, cassette, chain wheel and mechs etc.

Our mechanic will have a comprehensive set of spares available to purchase but may not always have parts that are specific to your brand and/or make.



Bike Mechanic:

The race mechanic will be located at the Butterfly Lodge and will be set up in the gardens daily for when riders return. If you have pre-booked the clean and lubricate service (4 x clean and lubricate \$120) then please take your bike to him on return from the stage and collect approx. 1 hour later. At this time, you can also discuss any additional repairs needed directly with the mechanic where you will be informed of the extra charge.

The mechanic will also be available to carry out repairs for those that haven't booked the cleaning service and costs can be discussed with him on an individual basis. All work taken out by the mechanic, not prepaid for, must be paid for directly to the mechanic upon collection of the bike.

Post-race Physiotherapy Massage:

If you have pre-booked a post-race massage pack (4 x 30 minutes session \$120) then the race physiotherapist (CJ Physiotherapy www.cjphysiotherapy.co.uk) will be in contact with you via email to explain the procedure.

Individual massages may be available on the day (\$35 for 30 minutes), if time and space is available and you can contact the Physio on the day to discuss this.

PokharaIV Cycle Tops:

If you have pre-ordered your PokharaIV bespoke race top, then it will be issued at registration on the 11th. Tops may be available to purchase at registration and throughout the race at a cost of \$100 but numbers are limited so desired sizes may not be available – ordering prior to the race will ensure that you have the correct size shirt.



Race Nutrition:

Sports specific nutrition is not readily available in Nepal. Torqfitness have devised a PokharaIV bespoke nutritional package that will cater for both your energy and recovery needs during the race. These can be delivered to your country or for collection at race registration. Please see www.mtb-worldwide.com and click on the Torq link for further information on the specific packages offered.

The water stations will carry basic supplies including water, muesli bars, peanuts, banana's and biscuits but will not be stocked with any sports specific products.

Race Safely!

One of the most important ways competitors can help to maintain safety during a race is to listen and adhere to the race official's instructions before, during and after each stage. A rider that turns up late for the start, or does not report in at the end, for example, will inconvenience the rest of the participants and could result in a search party being needlessly sent out. There will be briefings each morning at the race HQ, we request that all riders are in attendance and pay careful attention.

The route will be way marked and all riders will be supplied with a GPS file of the route that should be downloaded to a GPS device (this will be sent to prior to the race). Riders are requested to be diligent in following the markings and, if in doubt, refer to the GPS device. There will be markings every 2km or so. If a rider has not seen a marking for some time the chances are that they have taken a wrong turn. Please do not carry on blindly; some trails lead to remote and sparsely inhabited areas. Retrace your steps to the last marking and, if necessary, wait until another rider or race official appears & contact a race official via your mobile phone.



Stay hydrated. Temperatures can rise to around 25 degrees C during the daytime and humidity can be high. Riders who do not hydrate adequately risk the misfortune of heatstroke and, in worst case scenario, collapse. There will be frequently located water stations (details in course notes, to follow later), please use them at every opportunity.

Accidents – Emergency help will never be far away, but if you do come across a seriously injured rider, it is your duty to stay with them until further assistance arrives.

The route traverse's trails used by local villagers, traffic, dogs, cows etc. Please be considerate when passing and give them a warning shout if they are unaware of your approach.

Returning to Kathmandu:

Once you return to the hotel after completing stage 4, your bike will be loaded (after cleaning and lubricating if requested) on to the transfer vehicle. This vehicle will leave in the evening for Kathmandu. If you are staying on in Pokhara and want us to transfer your bike back to Kathmandu then please let us know in advance. Also if you are staying on in Pokhara and keeping your bike, please also let us know, so that we're not searching for your bike back in Kathmandu. Your bikes will be stored securely at the International Guesthouse and will be ready for you to collect when you arrive on the 16th.

The return coach to Kathmandu will leave at 7.30am on the morning of the 16th and again will take approx. 8 hours with a lunch stop midway. The coach will drop you at the same point you embarked with a 1000m walk up to the International Guesthouse. If you are staying at the International Guesthouse on return to Kathmandu then it is wise to book a room before you leave for Pokhara as it is a very popular place and is often full.

A taxi to the airport will cost around 500rp (\$5) and this can be arranged by your hotel. Please allow around 1 hour to get to the airport at busy times.