

# THE ANNAPURNA-DHAULAGIRI COMMUNITY TRAIL



## INTRODUCTION

**THE ANNAPURNA-DHAULAGIRI COMMUNITY TRAIL** is one of the most special options for tourism in Nepal. On one hand, this off the beaten trail crosses sacred forests of Rhododendron with hidden Hindu temples around lakes that come and go with the monsoon, extends up to points where clouds and planes are below your feet, brings unique stunning views of the Annapurnas where mountains beyond mountains sprawl with no end in sight, and offers the opportunity of engaging with Magar culture and traditions through its festivals, yak farms, cheese mongers, local paper makers, forest nurseries or bhanga tailors. On the other, this alternative to mass tourism is a community-managed one – with the support of UNDP-MEDEP, NTB and TAAN community lodges have been built and local villagers trained to help you enjoy a unique experience whose proceeds are invested in increasing local access to education and health through Himanchal Education Foundation.

This is only a tiny part of our story – the rest is in Nepal.

## THE ROUTES: OUR LAND

This trail is the joint effort of six Magar villages spread in Myagdi and Parbat districts around the Annapurna and Dhaulagiri areas. We want to share our land and heritage with you and whether you are looking for pure trekking, relaxed community-engagement or a combination of the two, we want to know you. We want you to know us.

We have designed two main trails that nevertheless can be tailored to your preferences.

 SHORT TRAIL (6 DAYS)  
 LONG TRAIL (8 DAYS)

## BANSKHARKA

Banskharka is the first stop of the trail if coming from Beni. A beautiful Magar village in the middle of a Rhododendron forest crossed by streams, Banskharka has lived for hundreds of years on the production of mandarins, oranges and honey, which you might learn about and taste in your visit. Mitho chha!

## NANGI

Nangi is situated at 2330 mts. in a valley surrounded by sacred forests that host several centenarian Hindu temples and is home to our retired Gurkha neighbour Moti, who manages with extreme care the forest nursery and the local fishery; Kumari and Harimaya, who make paper from the lokhta tree bark in Spring; and Raman, who runs a traditional Magar bakery.

## MOHARE

Mohare stands above deep gorges and valleys on the verge of a steep ridge at 3360 mts. Here, our spacious comfortable lodge built by the dzo farm (yak-cow cross-bred) offers an exclusive and pristine view of the Annapurnas, Dhaulagiri, Machhapuchhare and even Phewa Lake.

## DANDA KHARKA

In the middle of a stunning Rhododendron forest crossed by spring streams, Danda Kharka is one of the quietest spot of the trail – yet just a short walk-far from local buffalo farms that are worth to pay a visit.

## TIKOT

Perhaps one of the most beautiful villages in Nepal, Tikot rests on one side of a smooth ridge in front of the Annapurnas and right above the Kali Gandaki, the deepest gorge in the world. Small beautiful temples, bhangra weaving shops and local honey production are some of the main attractions of Tikot.

## SWANTA

Standing at the bottom of the Annapurna South and along a green valley, Swanta is the perfect place to rest before trekking up to Khopra. Also, the community-managed lodge offers some of the best food you might find in your visit to Nepal.

## KHOPRA

With no doubt, one of the most impressive views anyone can experience of the Himalayas. Khopra is an isolated spot that literally stands on one side of Annapurna South at 3660 mts, above tree-line, higher than clouds and the planes that pass by between Pokhara and Jomson. Khopra is also house to our communities' 150 yaks, who roam along the ridge led by Suk Bahadur Pun, their shepherd. For whoever fancies, there is also a ritual yak-blood drinking festival in Summer!

## PAUDWAR

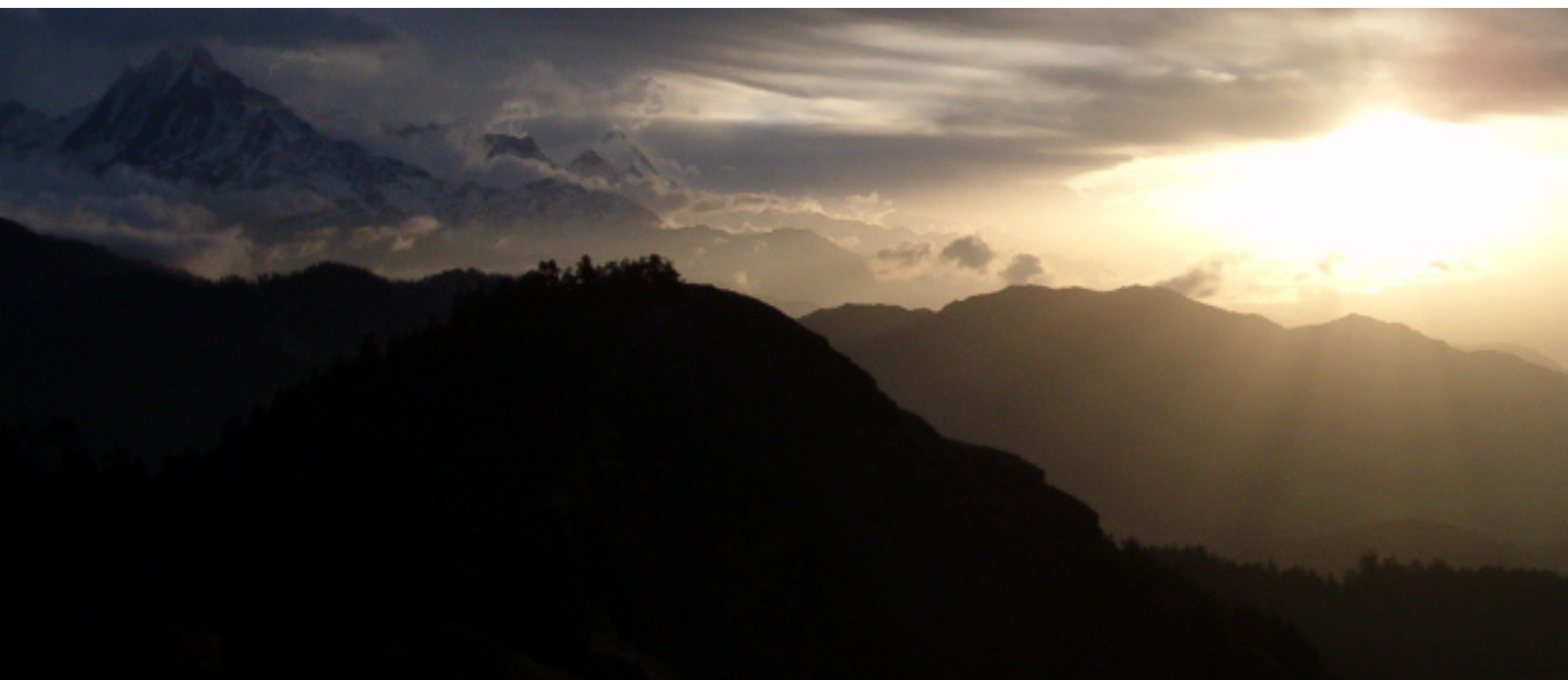
A beautiful lively Magar village, Paudwar houses the first and only cheese monger in this side of the Himalayas. Visit the factory, learn about the process and enjoy a cheese tasting evening with local honey after a long trek.

## NARCHYANG

Another beautiful village that looks right by on side of Kali Gandaki, Narchyang houses one of the most famous local Raksi breweries in Annapurna-Dhaulagiri area. Also, in Narchyang there is a natural hot spring which has been used for hundreds of years for its medical value and that might be enjoyed all year round.

**Landscape and activity diversity** are the two core values of this trail. So, if you are looking for an alternative to mass trekking in Annapurna and Dhaulagiri area with stunning views of the Annapurnas, Machhapuchhare, Dhaulagiri and another 25 peaks, Mohare, Swanta and Khopra should be in your itinerary. Whereas if you prefer a Magar culture engaging experience, the beautiful villages of Banskharka, Nangi, Paudwar or Tikot are easily connected and offer a combination of homestay and community-lodges where you may attend to and participate of our everyday life. Or perhaps you are looking for a combination of both? Let us know.

Contact Chitra Pun ([chitra@himanchal.org](mailto:chitra@himanchal.org)), our communities' trekking coordinator, to learn more about our business partners and the offers.



## TRIP SEASON

The ideal time to come is from Autumn to early Winter and from early Spring to Summer. In Summer, the monsoon, arrives by the middle of May. In Spring, the weather is generally mild yet it can be still icy cold sometimes, especially at the highest points of Khopra and Mohare.

## ACCOMMODATION

Banskharka, Nangi, Mohare, Danda Kharka, Swanta and Khopra offer community lodges whose cooks and maintenance staff are our trained neighbours.

The villages of Tikot, Paudwar and Narchyang offer homestay options where our families will host you in traditional Magar houses.

## HIMANCHAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Local access to education and health remain as big challenges in the mountain regions of Nepal. HEF aims to address this gap by helping on the funding of teachers' and nurses' salaries as well as by improving local infrastructure. Over the last ten years, a library, a computer lab, a health clinic, and new classrooms for additional grades have been built. Still there are many problems ahead, but with the effort of our communities and the support of new income generating projects as this trail, they might be overcome.



+Learn more at [www.himanchal.org](http://www.himanchal.org)

+For all enquiries, contact Chitra Pun, our communities' trail coordinator: [chitra@himanchal.org](mailto:chitra@himanchal.org)

+This trail is part of The Great Himalaya Trail cultural route. Learn more at [thegreathimalayatrail.org](http://thegreathimalayatrail.org)

Design: Pedro Oyarbide // Photos: Mike Nyff (mikenyff.com) & Miguel Angel Oyarbide

