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Teaching Buddhist Monks in Nepal

"Our stay at the monastery is something we will never forget, it was everything we dreamed of and more." Melissa

A unique opportunity to make a difference to the lives of young Buddhist monks in Nepal, undoubtedly one of the most spectacular countries on earth. Buddhism was born, quite literally, in this mountainous kingdom and the colours, the sounds and the spiritual influence of Buddhism drive the culture and flavour of the country to this day.

You will immerse yourself in this gentle culture, experiencing the daily routines of monastery life and teaching different subjects including English to the young monks. No teaching experience is required – all we ask is a decent level of self-confidence and an easy-going, open-minded outlook. Your contribution here is both valuable and appreciated.

Learning the English language is considered very important for the 21st century monks of Nepal as a solid grasp of English enables them to be better connected with the outside world. You will also get a chance to learn about Buddhism while doing this.

Volunteers are placed in one of a selection of monasteries located in different locations around Nepal, from the outskirts of Kathmandu to the remote Everest region of the country. Wherever your location, your classes will be up to 40 young monks aged between 7 and 16, all eager to meet, interact and learn from you. You will work with the young monks of the monastery school, teaching for 2-4 hours each day 5 days per week.



Book your placement now with a low \$400 deposit. Payment plans available

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"Teaching at a Buddhist monastery has been life-changing for me, and I have Totally Travel to thank for that" Chisela

Snapshot

- **Start Dates :** Every Sunday year round
- **Duration :** 2 weeks or more
- **Pricing :**
 - 2 weeks AU\$1,395 / 3 weeks AU\$1,845
 - 4 weeks AU\$2,295 / 6 weeks AU\$3,195
- **Minimum Age :** 18
- **Fly In/Out :** Kathmandu (KTM)
- **What's included:** Airport pickup, monastery transfers, accommodation, meals, sightseeing tours as detailed, orientation briefing, local 24/7 support
- **What's not included in cost:** Tourist visa, departure transfer
- **Accommodation:** Multi-share in Kathmandu, twin room at the monastery (occasionally triple/quad-share) **private room upgrade is available for \$125 per room (single or twin-share) per week
- **Food:** 3 meals provided daily (brunch & dinner on weekends whilst in Kathmandu)

As part of our duty of care to the children, you will need to provide us with a Police Check / Working with Children Check prior to arrival in Kathmandu.



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Itinerary

Day 1 (Sunday) Arrive at Kathmandu Tribhuvan airport and say Namaste to Nepal. After clearing customs and immigration, you'll be met by our local team and taken straight to your arrival accommodation, a journey of under 30 minutes, depending on traffic. Arrive any time between 6am and midnight and our staff will be there to meet you with a warm welcome.

Day 2-6 Activities and Sightseeing Week (Monday-Friday)** Week 1 is your introduction to this wonderful country, packed full of exciting adventures, cultural excursions and workshops. We take you for a city tour to get your bearings in the exciting and vibrant city of Kathmandu. Your week also includes yoga and meditation, a cooking class, a language lesson, visits to markets and temples, a trek in the Himalayan foothills and much more. Expect most or all of the following activities this week:

- Puja to the gods & goddess and name-giving ceremony
- Cultural orientation and local area exploration
- Nepali language lesson
- City tour and market visits
- Excursion to the iconic Boudhanath temple
- Nepali cooking session
- Yoga and meditation session
- A Buddhist religious tour
- A local tour to the Hindu Temple
- A day's trek in the Kathmandu Valley

Day 8 Residential monasteries are available in the Kathmandu Valley, in Pharping (2 hours' drive) and Namobuddha (4 hours). For the intrepid volunteer seeking extreme remoteness and solitude, Serlo Monastery in the Everest region involves a 12 hours overnight jeep journey, followed by a 4 hour hike – a truly amazing experience !!

On arrival at the monastery, you'll be introduced to the monks and staff and given your schedule so that next day you can get right into your teaching role.

Monastery life You'll very soon find your rhythm in the classroom, and the experience is sure to be as much fun for you as it is for all the monks. Your monastery classes will relish your presence and the young monks will love to learn from you. It's a cliché, but the more you put in the more you'll get out – prepare your lessons well and work hard to fill the contact time with your energy and enthusiasm – you'll love the feeling when your students start to use your slang to banter with you (and the proper stuff too, of course!).

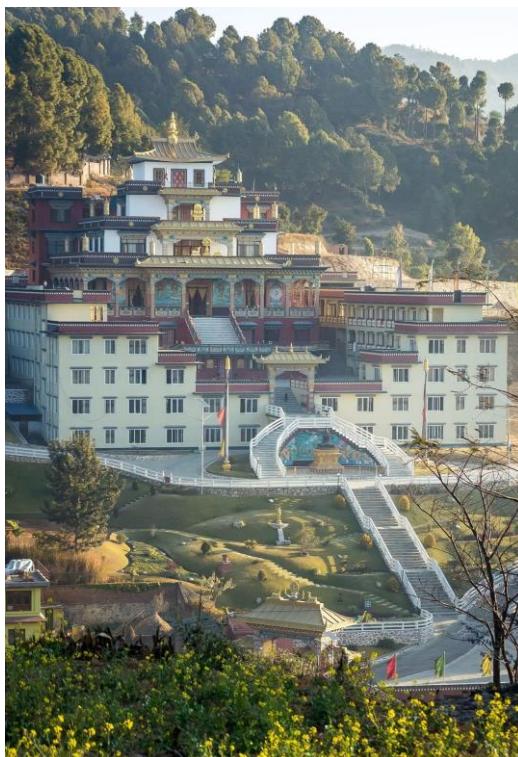
Your attentive pupils are generally well behaved, if at times a little mischievous. Class times vary, but generally operate in the mornings. You will live and eat with the monks, getting to know them as you spend time with them.

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There is plenty of time free to plan lessons or to explore the local area. This is also the perfect opportunity to join meditation, rituals, prayers and songs with the monks, who will welcome your participation and interest. As you would expect, the monasteries are quite conservative so you'll be expected to dress modestly. No visible tattoos or piercings please, and no drinking or smoking at the monastery. **Further weeks** follow the same structure and the longer you are here, the greater the impact you will have and the more comfortable you will become with life in the classroom.



Weekends Weekends are generally free to spend as you please. Saturday is always a free day, Sundays there are usually classes which you may choose to take.

Your last day (Saturday) You'll return to Kathmandu on your final Friday where you will spend the night before your program concludes after breakfast on the Saturday. The team will be happy to help with a taxi to the airport or city hotel, just save some rupees for the fare - budget \$10-15 for the airport, \$5-8 for the city.

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Accommodation During orientation, accommodation is in our volunteer house, around 5kms from Kathmandu centre, with a shop and ATM only 15 mins walk away. You'll share a bunk-style room with three to five others, and bathrooms are shared. Rooms are lockable and there is wifi access, a mini library, a lounge area and a beautiful garden to relax.

The remainder of your time will be spent at an authentic buddhist monastery. According to availability you can choose between different monasteries in Kathmandu or further afield. You will share a room with another teaching volunteer in the accommodation block located safely inside the temple compound. This accommodation is also home for the senior monks and the novice kids. A bathroom is shared between you, and whilst hot water is often available, it certainly cannot be guaranteed - hot water is considered a bit of a luxury in Nepal ! Bedding is provided – consider bringing a sleeping bag for extra warmth, particularly November to February, although extra blankets are always available.

Meals 3 meals per day are provided for you, and eaten together with the monks and other monastery staff. Expect to eat your fill of dal bhat, the Nepalese traditional dish – a fairly basic, though tasty and filling meal. On weekends in Kathmandu a substantial brunch is offered and dinner in the evenings.

Trekking, rafting or wildlife safari?

Add an extra week or two to your volunteering and get out into the mountains, jungles and rivers of this awesome country.

Trekking Week \$995

A 5 day trek in the spectacular Annapurna region, with incredible views of the Himalayas. Includes return transport from Kathmandu to Pokhara, 2 nights in this lovely lakeside village and 4 nights in trekking lodges along the way. The highlight of the trek is the famous sunrise viewpoint of Poon Hill at 3,210m where the mountain panorama bathed in the orange glow of the morning sun really has to be seen to be believed !

Adventure Week \$795

An action-packed week which combines a 1-day trek in the Himalayan foothills, a 2 day overnight white water rafting trip where we camp under the stars and a 3 day/2 night jungle safari in Chitwan National Park, home to wildlife including rhinos, leopards, bears and tigers.

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