

### 1: The Discoverer Blog | Travel Tales

*Travelers' Tales publishes books about the world and life-changing experiences that happen on the road. The Best Travel Writing, Volume 11 is our latest collection of great stories guaranteed to ignite your wanderlust.*

Flipboard Kapilavastu is located about 28 km west of Lumbini. It is disputed if Tilaurakot in Nepal or Piprawah on the Indian side of the border is the real Kapilavastu of the time of Buddha. Incidentally, both the places are close enough to Lumbini. But for the international border of our age, Buddha could have lived in either place. I visited the Kapilavastu in Nepal and here is my account of what I saw there. You can probably use this information to plan your trip to Kapilavastu. I struggled to find more information on Kapilavastu, so I sincerely hope that this post would make it easy for the readers of IndiTales to navigate their way through the Buddhist archaeological remains in and around Kapilavastu. The first thing to remember, Kapilavastu is a district in Nepal and it is not one town or village. He is the historic Buddha about whom we know a lot. Some texts say 5 Buddhas preceded Sakyamuni Buddha. At Kapilavastu, there are sites associated with as many as 3 Buddhas including the Sakyamuni Buddha. Read more on this Ancient Website. Tilaurakot Ruins of Sakya Fort at Tilaurakot, Kapilavastu – Nepal The word Tilaurakot is definitely post-Mauryan era as it means a city with three pillars – referring to the 3 pillars erected here by Ashok when he visited Kapilavastu on a pilgrimage. It seems he was traveling with pillars and wherever he found an important place, he planted the pillar and had an inscription written on it. We owe a lot of knowledge of that era to these inscriptions. You can see a very thick wall surrounded by a wider moat even today. The geophysical survey of Tilaurakot has revealed some palatial structures beneath the ground. What you see here is the western gate of the fort, a darbar hall, some basements, two stupas, a temple, a few wells, and the famous eastern gate. Well, the eastern gate is the gate from which Buddha left his princely home and life on his horse Kanthak. This is also called Mahadwar. I got a picture clicked at this gate – just to feel like Buddha. We know that he lived a luxurious well-protected early life. He was married and had a son named Rahul. We were told that he saw an old man, a sick man and a dead body that made him question the meaning of life. At Tilaurakot, my guide told me two more potential stories that led Buddha to leave his comfortable and lead the life of an ascetic. Siddhartha too spent some of his childhood there. The clash was about the river water. When no one could resolve the dispute and a war was imminent, Siddhartha took upon himself to solve the dispute. In his youthful vigor, he made a statement that if he is not able to solve the water crisis, he would leave the palace and go and live in the jungle. He failed in solving the issue and stuck to his words and left the palace. Second story The second story says that when his son Rahul was born, his father Suddhodhan organized a grand Utsav to celebrate the arrival of his grandson. The most beautiful dancers came to entertain. Everyone, including Siddhartha, enjoyed the party whole night. When Siddhartha got up in the morning, he saw the mess and ugliness all around him. He realized the momentary nature everything that looks beautiful. This is what triggered his departure from the royal life and his journey to seek the truth. Well, you can choose whichever story that appeals to you the most. I love the stories that you collect on the road, stories that are yet to make it to the popular printed word and stories that locals believe in. I saw two stupas at one end of the fort that is supposed to be the stupas dedicated to parents of Buddha. The bigger one belongs to King Suddhodhan and the smaller one to Maya Devi. There is a lotus pond in the middle of the ruins that is supposedly a part of the leisure gardens for the use of the royal family. Incidentally, here is the only shrine that is living in this whole complex that is in ruins. What is even more intriguing is the fact that the shrine is surrounded by a row of elephant figurines. It seems if you ask for a wish here you have to offer an elephant once the wish is fulfilled. There were elephants of all sizes. Inside the shrine, there is a goddess riding the elephant while the main deity is in stone or we say Pindi form. I would later see few elephants at other small shrines in the area. My guide said that it is believed that the kings of Sakya clan used to pray to Samay Mai Devi before going to the battle. This is in line with all the kings who may pray to anyone in general but always prayed to Shakti before going to battle. The other is the remains of an old iron workshop. You have to walk some distance to reach this mound like a spot. My guide said I am the only person who has made this effort, most people just listen to his story and move ahead. I am so happy I

made that effort. These are small iron slots that have been dated back to the pre-Buddhist era. It seems this was an iron workshop for making weapons or other utility items. It was far outside the city, probably because of its polluting nature. What is left now is the bad quality molten iron mixed with the soil. Even today, the soil around this mound is not cultivable. Archaeologists estimate tons of iron here and that is a big indication of the huge size of the workshop. A sitemap plan is placed at every point of interest, briefly explaining what the place potentially is. There is no direction for you to move around but if you have ample time, you can find your way. Tilaurokot Museum Terracotta Beads at Tilaurokot Museum – Kapilavastu There is a small archaeological museum about meters from the fortified area of Tilaurokot. This is one of the most basic museums I have seen – two rooms full of artifacts comprising Stone Sculptures.

### 2: Travel Tales from India and Abroad – Striving to be India's Best Travel Blog

*Travelers' Tales Nepal: True Stories of Life on the Road (Travelers' Tales Guides) [Rajendra S. Khadka] on www.enganchecubano.com \*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers. Nepal is renowned for its temples, shrines, palaces, amazing mountains and jungles, and colorful festivals.*

We have a long wait of 9 hours here in Qatar until our connecting flight to Kathmandu, there are flights sooner but in my search for the cheapest deal possible that's what I had to book. First experiences of Nepal mostly involve confusion. Anyway we ended up in a taxi that possibly wasn't a real taxi with two lads, one drove while the other tried to sell us things. The "big traffic" as the driver described was a free-for-all with no street lighting, no traffic lights, make your own rules while dodging bikes, potholes and cows. Everyone is so polite that it's difficult to moan about anything, one of the staff even guided us to the restaurant we wanted to eat at so we didn't get lost. Had some dal bhat at a place called Thakali Kitchen and a Gorkha beer comes in a giant ml bottle. Went back to get some sleep ready to start exploring tomorrow, have hardly slept in 24 hours with all the travelling. Yum, curry for breakfast with chapatis and roti bread, great way to start the day. Guided ourselves on a walking tour through the medieval-looking streets of Kathmandu old town passing by rows and rows of little shops, temples and shrines with incense and butter lamps burning, holi men covered in red and yellow paint, scabby stray dogs chasing past, rickshaws rattling along and people carrying ridiculously large loads strapped to their heads. Riding a bike must be difficult on these roads but riding a one-gear bike to pull two people up a hill, well that should be an Olympic sport. The huge gold stupa at the top is reached by a long steep climb up stone steps. Had some more momos at a cafe at the bottom of the hill and then taxied back to Thamel. After having walked through old town and some local streets today coming back to the tourist centre of Thamel feels like being in Blackpool. It's a shame that the influence of Western tourists eventually rapes the local culture out of town and leaves it looking like... Went out at night to the Thamel Restaurant, a Nepalese restaurant where upstairs they had low tables and floor cushions. Went for a drink in Full Moon bar after, it says in our travel book there beer is rupees, however this was written 2 years ago which is enough time to cotton on to a mention in Lonely Planet being worth putting the price up to rupees. Bus to Pokhara Yesterday I rang some prayer bells at a shrine somewhere in Kathmandu old town, praying to the god of this particular shrine is said to be beneficial to your eyesight. Excellent I thought, took a moment to mumble a little prayer and rang the bells Up bright and early to get the 7am bus to Pokhara. Had to wake up Rat the guesthouse manager so we could pay our bill, oops maybe I should have settled up yesterday. Bus journey takes around hours, it's a bit uncomfortable with the road being so bumpy but the magnificent scenery more than makes up for it. One thing we do have though is almost warm water, so what? Went for a beer at a Tibetan place called the Rice Bowl, it's a sit on cushions at low tables place and feels really cool, will maybe return tomorrow. Nipped back to the hotel, gonna get them to arrange a guide etc. The place is decorated with prayer flags and has Buddhist chanting music playing, the waiter is funny, we chat and joke with him and he brings me a glass of tongba to try which is a warm cloudy beer made with fermented millet seeds served with the seeds still in the glass. Had a great day today. Started with a rowing boat across the lake to get to a steep trail through forested hills leading up to the World Peace Pagoda. About minutes to hike up there and the reward at the top is an impressive white Pagoda with a huge gold Buddha and amazing views looking down to the lake and Pokhara on one side and paddy fields on the other side. Took a different route down to take a longer walk right round the other side of the lake. Some small children stopped us on the way down "hallo! Went to Devis Falls next, a big powerful waterfall that has carved a deep vertical hole in the rock. On the way back to lakeside we took a walk through some rice fields where we found medieval fairytale-like scenery complete with workers harvesting by hand, thatched huts, schoolchildren skipping by and a little red temple on a ridge overlooking the fields. The path then leads us to a high rope bridge over the river which swung about when we walked on it, Bec didn't want to walk over it but sorry Bec it's the only way across! Dark by the time we got back, spent a bit of time haggling in the tourist shops for a backpack for Bec to use when trekking, had momos and curry for tea then bed to get rested for trekking tomorrow. Taxi to the start point along bumpy hilltop roads, I say it's a

road but its crumbling so much its better described as a collection of potholes linked by occasional strips of tarmac. The walking starts quite easy and gets progressively steeper and steeper. On the route up here we passed through stepped rice fields, little farm settlements, footbridges, crashing waterfalls, men herding donkeys with packs, locals carrying loading baskets on head straps, forests, shrines, children scampering home from school and some awesome awesome views across the hills and valleys. It really is impossible to describe how picturesque and amazing it is up here. Saturday 19th Trekking Ulleri to Ghorepani It was freezing cold last night so I slept with all my clothes on including woolley hat and gloves so was pleasantly surprised to be able to have a hot shower this morning. Started trekking at 8am, Sanne has joined us to walk today which is nice, its good getting to know someone with similar interests to us. Walked through lots of forest today, love the forest especially wild unmanaged forest like this. The trail takes us along high forested ridges, rocky waterfalls and river gorges, we pass occasional settlements where people are chopping wood, washing clothes and preparing crops. We pass a large herd of goats being guided down the path, i somehow got boxed in as they passed whilst stood precariously on the edge of a steep drop, the goats scramble past and one of them decides to leap from a rock in front of me right over my head, its hoofs missing my head by centimetres! By mid afternoon we reach Hotel Snowland lodge and whilst sat with Bec, Sanne and Ram in the warm sunshine enjoying a some mint tea we watch the clouds drift away to reveal snow topped mountain peaks. We decide to climb Poon Hill to see the sunset, it takes about 45 minutes to the top taking us metres high and rewarding us with brilliant panoramic views of several of the worlds highest mountain peaks. We watch the sun go down painting the sky red behind a silhouette of trees and then race back down to the lodge to warm up with a big pot of mint tea. Can the day get any more perfect? Sanne is still with us but needs to take a different path when we pass Tadopani on her way to Annapurna Base Camp. The sky is clear today and its really sunny but as we set off at about 8am its still quite chilly with frost on the ground especially in the wooded areas. We stop for some essential photo taking. We trek on through some thick forest which is tough going with steep hills and tricky footing, its chilly in the shaded forest and then really warm whenever we reach a hill top or small clearing. Further along we cross several rivers, some big waterfalls and then ridged paths along rockfaces with dizzying drops just when step away. We will be parting ways with Sanne shortly so we decided to buy her a gift, a bracelet and some woollen sock slipper things to keep her feet warm at Base Camp. When we reach Tadopani we say our goodbyes, Ram gives Sanne some advice and directions and she heads off whilst we carry on to Ghandruk. We reached Ghandruk and wrapped up warm to watch the sunset behind the mountain peaks at the guesthouse with a nice big pot of mint tea. Monday 21st Trekking Ghandruk to Dhampus After nearly 9 hours of walking we reached Dhampus on a quiet hill overlooking a valley with views of the mountains. We arrived after walking the last few hours in the afternoon along a hilltop through what I described at the time as ancient enchanted forest. Really quiet apart from chirping birds, cool air with beams of sunlight peeping through between the trees, hardly any other trekkers just the occasional villagers passing by carrying baskets, elves meandering between the trees and druids collecting herbs for their potions Began the day in Ghandruk walking down to the bottom of the steep valley past several millet farms. We cross a river at the bottom then its a steep climb up the other side of the valley, its hard going and the hot sun has me sweating a lot and lagging behind a bit but Bec seems to finding it no problem. Its a long winding ridge path across the side of a deep valley passing through stepped rice fields and traditional farms. When we stop for our dal bhat for dinner its blazing sunshine with a cool breeze blowing through the valley from the mountains, m high Mount Dhaulagiri is watching us everywhere we go, its never out of sight. More steep hills into a more wooded area, the going is tough again and kind of follows down, cross bridge, up, down, cross bridge, up. Its a bit more shaded though and around every corner is another amazing view so its not hard to keep motivated. Next we pass through the magical forest as previously mentioned and arrive at Dhampus. Last day of trek tomorrow but Ram has worked out an extended route for us so we can make the most of a good full day before heading back to Pokhara. Tuesday 22nd Dhampus to Sarangot Another change of plan, we decided to trek to Sarangot, stay the night there and return to Pokhara tomorrow. A group of schoolboys follow us because apparently they think I might be an Indian movie star, I play along with it whilst daydreaming about how a better suntan could blag me into Bollywood. We reach Sarangot at about 3. Yeti news update I have

photographic evidence of a large footprint in the mud. Despite contrary reports it was definitely already there before I came by. We got back from Sarangot, had some breakfast Tibetan bread drizzled with honey is our new addiction then hired bikes to get us about for the day. The meal cost 30 rupees so for 24 pence i could afford to eat there everyday for the rest of my life and never work again although this calculation is made much easier by my significantly reduced life expectancy. Next we cycled on to a Tibetan monastery, it was a uphill all the way and quite difficult riding with a bike that only has high gears which randomly change when riding over bumps. On the upside we both have a bell on our bike which keeps us amused all the way there, tring! The temple itself looks complete from the outside while the inside is busy with monks decorating the walls and celing with insanely detailed hand painted murals. We ask the monk boy lots of questions, he says his family are from Mustang, a 3 day trek into the mountains and since his father sent him here he will maybe only see them once a year, although he is only 9 its like talking to an adult, he seems very intelligent and philosophical. Afterwards Bec and me discuss the rights and wrongs of packing your child off to a monastery, our conclusion was inconclusive but then we never do agree. Before going in we spontaneously decide take a walk up the road and find a little farm village where they are busy making hay bales with hay spread all over the road. We have become the town attraction as we guide our bikes through all the hay, everyone we pass calls "Namaste! We stop at the top of the road for a drink outside a little shop, the shopkeeper comes out to sit with us and chat, she wants us to stay at her house tonight and cook for us. It feels like we are from the future and have gone back in time years, it feels strange but nice. Back down the road we reach the monastery just in time for the afternoon prayer chanting. We are able to go inside with a small handful of other tourists and sit at the sides while they chant. As they chant their mantras two big booming drums are beaten and every few minutes long horns are sounded and bells are rung, the chanting goes louder then softer, faster then slower. There are other goings on which are hard to fathom, its an unusual but very fascinating experience. Having flogged ourselves in the hot sun cycling up here its now downhill all the way back to Lakeside, wwwweeeeeeeee!!! No need to pedal as we bomb down the hills and somehow roll into Lakeside without getting lost. Found a place called the Asian Tea house down an alley off the main strip which must be the last place in Lakeside that has resisted inflating their prices for the tourists, we fill up on pokoras, fried momos and spring rolls, all very tasty and very cheap. Couple of beers at the Rice Bowl then back to pack our bags for Kathmandu in the morning. The bus is absolutely packed full but it still keeps stopping to let more and more people on. As I said the staff are really helpful and friendly and one of them, who calls himself Robin Hood, is hyperactively happy, when I sign the guestbook he says I write like a sparrow?? We go for a wander around in the dark, the streets are narrow and paved with red brick, the buildings have wooden shutters on the windows and overhang the narrow streets. Friday 25th Bhaktapur and on to Patan Up and out to explore Bhaktapur by 8am before all the day tripper tourists arrive in a few hours time. We started off in Durbar Square and checked out the impressive buildings, temples and shrines whils having to repeatedly brush off the wannabe guides "I can give you all the good information" "No thankyou" "I will guide you for only rupees" "We dont want a guide so tanks but no" "Right now you are in Durbar Square and infront of you is the palace built in We dont want a guide! The imposing grand size of everything is just as incredible as the fine detail of all the stone work and wood carvings that adorn the palace, the temples and all the statues and shrines. As we walk away from the square and explore the city we find shrines and monuments dotted about everywhere.

### 3: 8 Reasons Why Nepal is the Perfect Destination for Filipino Backpackers – The Bropacker

*Nepal is renowned for its temples, shrines, palaces, amazing mountains and jungles, and colorful festivals. Ever since it began admitting tourists in the early s, its remarkable blend of cultures, traditions, and languages has stirred the longings and fantasies of travelers of every stripe. The.*

Hopefully, this post will help out other travelers heading to Kathmandu to avoid the pitfalls I encountered there as well as some other useful information. If your respiratory system is sensitive to dry air, dust or pollution, then you might need a few days or a week to adjust to the less-than-ideal air when you arrive in Kathmandu. In my case, I first thought I had a cold. Then I concluded I was allergic to the air. Eventually I realized the dusty, polluted air was attacking my respiratory system. One day after cycling two hours around the city, I wound up feeling sick the entire day, all the way until I went to bed. Even so, you might end up feeling really exhausted and have to take it easy for a few days before you recover or start any serious walking, cycling and exploring. Daily Power cuts Kathmandu has power cuts every day. They happen randomly, at different times of the day, and for different lengths of time. They usually occur in the afternoon and early evening and last anywhere from 30 minutes to 7 hours! Luckily, electricity always seems to be on one way or other after dark, so functioning normally at night is not much of an issue. However, the power cuts do cause two important issues that you should be aware of. When the power is cut, off go refrigerators. And that means foods that must stay cold such as meat and dairy products cannot be kept cold consistently. So eating at such places should be no problem. Other foods such as vegetable dishes, rice, breads and so on should be fine. Plenty of internet shops are scattered all around Kathmandu. In addition, most guest houses, hotels, tourist restaurants, cafes and bars offer wifi. But when the power is cut off, so is the wifi. Upscale hotels and larger tourist restaurants with powerful back up generators might still have wifi access. That brings me to two other important tips about visiting Kathmandu: Luckily, it only knocked me out for about 24 hours with diarrhea and tiredness. But it gave me a very quick reminder to be careful about eating in local shops. One is the daily power cuts I mentioned above. Once I realized the implications of the power cut issue, I stopped eating meat at local shops. I also stopped ordering drinks. If you work online or have other crucial reasons to access the internet reliably, it might well be worthwhile to use a usb modem with your laptop. So if you find yourself in Kathmandu with a three hour power cut right when you need to work online, no problem! Just plug in your usb and access the web. You can keep going as long as your computer battery holds out. To get hooked up with Ncell usb internet, visit the main NCell Office on Durbar Marg Road, about two blocks south of the Imperial palace grounds and just east of Thamel. Monthly pre-paid internet packages are priced by how much MB or GB data you need to use. You can also buy much less or more than these amounts. Walking around Kathmandu is quite safe. No need to worry about theft, muggings or personal safety. Lots of persistent, wandering touts try to persuade every passing tourist to buy something – a tour, a bag, hashish, a hotel room. In short, Thamel is a noisy, chaotic tourist ghetto. Paknajol district lies just a 5-minute walk NW of Thamel on a little nob of a hill. About one dozen guest houses with gardens and rooftop balconies are clustered around the hill, most run by families and a few young staff. Just south of Durbar Square is the Freak Street area, the main hang out spot for hippies back in the s. From Thamel you can reach Durbar Square within 10 minutes or Swayambunath hill top temple in about 30 minutes. Several main attractions, though, are not really within easy walking distance. Most are simply compacted dirt or extremely old stone tiling. All the roads, whether paved, dirt or stone are chock full of potholes, loose stones and dirt piles. Considering Kathmandu is the capital city of Nepal and a major tourist destination, the horrendous road conditions are a really appalling statement about the Nepalese government. All the bike rental shops have mountain bikes with wide knobby tires. Rates in central Thamel are outrageously expensive: Luckily, there are much cheaper alternatives in Kathmandu. Simply head streets west of Thamel to Paknajol Road, which runs north-south parallel to the main Thamel roads. Depending on your budget that may or may not seem like a hefty fee. Regardless, if you visit several of these sites, the fees quickly add up. The ticket booths are at the top of the stairs at each entry to the hilltop temple. I cycled into the plaza on several different days and was never even

stopped about a ticket. I had to dismount my bike and carry it over the pole. Boudanath The main entrance has a big wood gateway you must walk through. The ticket office is right inside. However, just 50 M to the east there are two smaller alleys lined by shops, leading into the temple plaza. Just walk in those alleys instead. Also on the north side, several alleys lead into the plaza. They may or may not be watched carefully by ticket officials. Just act as if you belong there. Baktipur Town Apparently this is one place where guards watch all entryways meticulously. It might not be possible to beat this fee. In addition, guards also wander around the town and randomly ask to see tickets, which they actually examine carefully for dates and passport numbers! I was asked to show my ticket 3 or 4 times while I was there less than 24 hours. Do you have any other useful tips to add?

### 4: Dress Code For Women in Nepal – Travel Tales from India and Abroad

*Another in the Travelers series of travel anthologies, this time capturing the experience of Nepal in 38 stories organized into five sections: Essence of Nepal, Some Things to Do, Going Your Own Way, In the Shadows, and The Last Word.*

Coincidentally, I had a month between when my last contract ended and the start of my TTC programme in India, so I spent some quiet time in Nepal. Basically, after many months of sun, sea, sand, and socialising, diving the days away, I found myself in a tiny cottage in the Himalayas, overlooking the lake at the edge of Happy Village. Naturally, I fell in love with the country, and ended up doing my training in Kathmandu. This one is all about Pokhara – a quaint little tourist town in the foothills of the Himalayas – and her most magical moments. Fireflies in the garden The cottage I stayed in for a while was a short distance from the centre of Pokhara with amazing views of Phewa Lake and the Himalayan mountain range. It was the perfect place to catch up on some alone time and do some reading and writing. My favourite part of this short daily excursion was the short walk home through the little garden gate and up the pathway to my room. There was absolutely no light pollution. The stars shone brightly each night, sparkling in a clear, midnight blue sky. Walking through the garden I spotted a little light floating amongst the leaves of one of the bushes. As I stood transfixed in this tiny garden in the Himalayas, I saw another tiny light floating between the branches and another one and another one. A few minutes after I soaked it all in, I slowly made my way upstairs and looked out over the garden and neighbouring cornfields, all alight with tiny specks of magic floating in and out of view. The garden lit up with countless fireflies. Snow on the mountains I met a fellow traveller in Pokhara and he convinced me to go on a drive with him up one of its hills. We rented a motorbike and snaked our way up the twisty road towards the lookout point on Pokhara Hill. Along the way, we were blessed with spectacular views of the mountains and rice fields. It was a spectacular glimpse at life on the hill as we made our way into the clouds. We were hoping to see the snow-capped mountains once we got to the lookout point, but it was a cloudy day, so although the views were impressive, we had no such luck. Slightly deflated, we made our way back down to the town, stopping along the way to take in closer looks at the beautiful rice paddies and visiting a weaver who makes beautiful shawls. Just as I thought this outing had come to an end, there it was. We were nearing the end of our trip when we rounded a corner. I looked over my left shoulder and saw the magic I was hoping for! In the distance, perfectly framed by the vegetation and clouds, rose a perfect, snow-capped peak of the Himalayas, standing tall in majesty. A touch of Nepali hospitality After a period of hibernating in my little cottage in Happy Village, I moved to Pokhara town. I admired her nail art one day, and she promptly fetched her nail kit and proceeded to add butterflies and flowers to my digits, laughing at me as I tried to photograph the whole thing. I expressed excitement and she told me how the ladies would dress up and put henna on their hands. That afternoon, she knocked on my door and invited me into the room next door where she painted my hands with elaborate henna art. On the day of the festival, she presented me with a little package – a set of green and yellow glass bangles. I was enchanted with the comforting weight of the bangles on my arm and the gentle tinkling sound they made whenever I moved. I was touched by the hospitality she showed me, and how an instant friendship could form between two women from such extremely different backgrounds. My short stay in Pokhara showed me that a bit of magic can be found in the most unlikely places. Like your garden, a spur of the moment drive, or even in the souls of strangers who welcome you with a smile on their face and open arms. Read our last Travel Tale: They can be in any form and length – short stories, top tips, diary entries, even poems and videos. Zafigo is read by women travellers the world over, so your stories will be shared to all corners of the globe. Include your profile photo and contact details. Published stories will receive a token sum.

### 5: Travelers Tales - Community Homestay

*Nepal is magical and mysterious, stirring the fantasies of travelers of every stripe--monks, mystics, hippies, and yuppies. This book will do the same for readers as they discover the harmonious.*

Thamel is a touristy area in Kathmandu, and brick, dirt, and broken pavement form the streets. The streets seem the right width to handle one-way traffic only, but traffic flows both ways. As a pedestrian, I quickly noticed the lack of street signs and so I memorized various buildings and landmarks to learn the lay of the land. The Barnes and Noble corner was an unfortunate landmark because I prefer to see local, not American, businesses in foreign lands. It was still daylight when I first saw Old Tibet Road. Old Tibet Road had hundreds of fantastic shops and street vendors. Cows, chickens, mangy dogs and dirty children roamed and people hawked colorful spices and beautiful handicrafts. I knew I would have to return to explore more of the exciting street activity. This place was cool! When I returned about 8: Such hustle and bustle. Vendors left trash and food scraps in the road. Meandering cows ate the cabbage scraps. Children warmed their hands over a small burning pile of trash in the street. Streets became dark without street lights. People were very friendly and I felt very safe, even though it was obvious my friend and I were not Nepalese. A group of about twenty men, sitting on a small ground level stage area, played musical instruments and sang. I smiled and gestured with my camera and they readily allowed me to photograph them. Some buildings that looked like apartments did not have glass in the window openings. Dozens of black telephone and electrical wires hung from balconies and wood or metal poles, and I did my best to not walk underneath them. I removed my shoes explored an ancient, plain Hindu shrine, where one man removed flowers for the night and another sat cross-legged on the ground and prayed. Since all the people had scattered and it really was too dark to see much, I wandered into a Nepalese disco at the UPS corner. Only men danced, and occasionally a single man would dance alone, with easy, graceful rhythmic swaying. Back at Hotel Vaishali, the electricity was partially down so I skipped the elevator and climbed three flights to my room. It had been such an exciting night! I had spent hours exploring Kathmandu, watching people, glimpsing how they live and simply absorbing the sights and sounds. My roommate, Maryanne, was glad to see me and wanted to hear all about my cool Kathmandu adventures. I had much to share.

### 6: Books - Travelers' Tales

*Nepal Travel Tales. K likes. Nepal travel tales shares stories from around Nepal of the unsung heroes living in communities of the country.*

The China Option Sophia Erickson graduated from college with an apparently useless degree in European history. She faced crippling student loans, but after an anxious couple of months waiting tables in her small Massachusetts town, she bought a one-way ticket to China. Over the following two years she had deeply enriching cultural experiences, paid off nearly half her student loans, and visited China from Heilongjiang to Hainan, as well as neighboring countries Malaysia, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Singapore. *A Guide for Millennials: How to work, play, and find success in China* is a manifesto for recent college grads to pay off debt while living a stimulating, adventurous life, and to pave the way for a successful future. The places profiled in this book are the result of decades of travel, research, and living in Cuba by a US journalist with uncommon access, ensuring travelers incomparable experiences. Much more than a prescriptive list, these narratives incorporate adventures and mishaps, insider opinion, slang, gossip, and conversations with Cubans during a historic shift that saw Soviet support evaporate, Fidel Castro take his final bow, economic reforms whiffing suspiciously of capitalism, and quasi-normalization with the United States. Go with her and discover this magical island for yourself. In *Baboons for Lunch and Other Sordid Adventures*, he tells his remarkable travel stories in rollicking accounts that keep readers off balance and eager for more. Many stories are funny, others are poignant, and quite a few are heart stopping, while others are unique insights into remote ways of life most of the world does not know exists. In this book the reader will climb a remote volcano in Ethiopia, cross the Sahara Desert with nomads, undergo a tribal exorcism, and visit shamans, healers, witch doctors, and holy men. In dozens of entertaining yet authoritative mini-essays. The book is organized alphabetically, but nothing is ever quite that straightforward when it comes to Italy. *Mother Tongue* What is your mother tongue? Sometimes the simplest questions take a book to answer. Such is the case with Tania Romanov. *Mother Tongue* is an exploration of lives lived in the chaos of a part of the world known as the Balkans. It follows the lives of three generations of women—Katarina, Zora, and Tania—over the last years. It follows countries that dissolved, formed, and reformed. Lands that were conquered and subjugated by Fascists and Nazis and nationalists. Lives lived in exile, in refugee camps, in new worlds. Until the first time, she believed your country of birth was a fixed point. Today she knows better. Go with her as she journeys through time and history looking for answers, and finding some. Over those years, thousands of stories have come across their desks, from writers famous and unknown, covering all corners of the globe with stories of adventure and discovery, love and loss, humor and absurdity, grief and joy. In this collection appear all of the top prize winners of the first ten years, stories that bring readers along for journeys that are inspiring, uplifting, and, very often, transformative. These tales are powerful, moving testaments to the richness of our world, its cultures, people, and places. They tell of places like California and Cuba, Switzerland and Singapore, Iran and Iceland, Montana and Mexico and Mongolia and Mali, our own back yards and some of the farthest, most extreme corners of the world. Imagine creating your Italian dream vacation with a fun-loving savvy traveler girlfriend whispering in your ear. Go along with writer Susan Van Allen on a femme-friendly ride up and down the boot, to explore this extraordinarily enchanting country where Venus Vixen Goddess of Love and Beauty and The Madonna Nurturing Mother of Compassion reign side-by-side. With humor, passion, and practical details, this uniquely anecdotal guidebook will enrich your Italian days. Drawing on three decades of intimate acquaintance, she leads readers down to the docks of fishing villages, along twisting mountain roads, into the shoe outlets of Elche, out to the muddy saffron fields of La Mancha. She tells tales of formidable Spanish women, from a fourth-century b. Literary, sexy, whimsical, and spiritual, *Places in Spain Every Woman Should Go* is for the smart and curious traveler who wants to see Spain, her way. *The Best Travel Writing, Volume 11* is our latest collection of great stories guaranteed to ignite your wanderlust.

## 7: Nepal - Travelers' Tales

*We ensure you the best and safest experience in Nepal, in our Homestays. We are much committed to maintaining and practicing safety standards to provide comfort and security to the travelers. From the moment you select our Homestay to the experience is over your safety is always our primary concern.*

We landed at Bharatpur Airport. It is the smallest airport I have seen so far. By the time we reached the lodge, the sun had already retired for the day. After a quick check-in, we sat on the edge of Rapti River which was almost invisible at night. They all wore white and black clothes. I found it a bit unusual – my travel experience said the more interior you go the more colorful the dress code becomes. The whole group had no hint of color except in their hair and the scarf like hangings from their belt. Women wore coin jewelry – that is a constant among all tribals across the world it seems. The group started dancing around the fire. Group of men played the music and a group of elderly women stood in a line and sang. Others danced with sticks and sometimes without sticks. I learned the most famous song of Nepal – Resham Periri. I was told anytime I miss the song – one can find it on YouTube. Tharu Tribal Dance – Nepal They performed a warrior dance called Bajeti – you can see the power in that dance. Damphu was the Holi time dance and the festivity showed in this dance form. Thakara is a dance done with a stick – kind of like Dandiya and this dance celebrates the harvest. Jhamta is a dance performed only by women – I wanted to know the meaning of the song. I knew it would be a naughty folk song. So, after the performance, we asked the elderly lady to tell us the meaning. She laughed and smiled but stayed quiet. I knew I was right about what I thought they sang. Things women only can say! While she was with us I noticed the heavily tattooed arm of hers. She said this was done when she got married. Who are Tharu Tribals of Nepal? It told me that Tharu tribals trace their ancestry partially to Rajput clans of Thar desert of India or Rajasthan. Apparently, the women of this tribe came from Rajasthan and the men were Nepalis. Since the women married the men from the lower caste, they always hold the upper hand at home. Some texts even go to the extent of saying that women push the thali with their feet towards the men. I could not authenticate this with the few women I spoke to. It gave statistics of the tribe and how they live all along the border of India and Nepal in both countries. Tharu Tribe is immune to Malaria – research says it is their genes that protect them from Malaria. Tharus consider themselves as the people of the forest. Their villages are within the forest area – so they are living in or living with the forest. They partially do agriculture and partially live on the forest produce. Tharu Culture displayed through wall murals Each village has a head selected democratically every year in the month of Magh that roughly falls in January. Each household has a vote to cast, not each adult or each individual. This head called Badghar is responsible for the overall welfare of the village. He also has the authority to punish people. Village priest is also selected in the same manner. Tharu tribals speak Tharu language – a language that is quite close to Hindi, Awadhi, and Maithili. Most of them follow Hinduism as the religion but a small percentage have converted to Christianity. Now, while traveling around Chitwan, we have seen mud houses, all of which had hand prints on their doors and the walls. Small single room museum showcases the Tharu lifestyle – their occupations, their dance, their traditions and scenes from everyday life. So, they do always wear white and black clothes – even at their weddings. There are paintings depicting the life of a Tharu – from birth rituals to death rituals via life events like marriage. How I wish there was more reading material on this tribe at the museum! They have a group of houses arranged around an open courtyard. So, the houses are independent but yet a part of a small community or an extended family. In the middle, there are tall wooden birdhouses and on the side of each house was the cattle shelter for. It seems the house was equally divided between humans, cattle, and birds. Tharu Tribe Jewelry in Silver We then visited a home where we were welcomed by the lady of the house holding an aarti thali in hand. As she stepped out of the door that was decorated with motifs all around, the door framed her. For a second I felt, this is the crown she is wearing. She showed us her jewelry. We walked through her house to reach the backyard. I could not help notice that all the cupboards and boxes in the kitchen had the same handprints. Bird House Outside a Tharu Tribe Home Handprints by Tharu Tribe I tried asking what is the significance of these hand prints everywhere – but all could say was this is a part of

our culture. We have always had them everywhere. I assume it is an auspicious sign. It may be the cultural thread that still binds them to Rajasthan. We were offered Roksi or the local rice beer. I am told it is one hell of a strong drink. It seems families regularly consume this homemade drink. I stepped out of the home feeling a bit acquainted with the culture that I came to know of just 3 days ago. The smiling faces will always remain my favorite memory of visiting Chitwan National Park. Recommend you read following travel blog on places to visit in Nepal.

### 8: Cool Kathmandu - Travel Tales and Stuff

*Stories of Unsung Heroes. We came all the way from Dailek. This has been a c.*

Travel Tales Finding Karma in Nepal: An Interview with a Sherpa In , my father returned from a 3-week trip through the Himalayas buzzing with the stories. With each slide came a story, ranging from magnificent breakfast with a Himalayan view to frightening landing at the Nepal airport. It was a man named Tashi Sherpa, a local guide my father had contracted to lead their trip. In all the stories Tashi Sherpa was kind and knowledgeable, with a great sense of humor and a positive outlook on life. Most striking of all, was that this mild-mannered family man had summited Mt. Everest over a dozen times. This was my introduction to the incredible world of Sherpas - a cultural group of people who reside in the harsh Himalayan world. Though their names typically appear only in gruesome news stories about avalanches, or as a side note in a tale of conquering a glorious peak, the Sherpa guides and porters are the true backbone of the Himalayan climbing community. Like Tashi Sherpa, Karma Sherpa has been guiding and working with treks and expeditions for almost his entire life. How did you start guiding expeditions? I became a porter for treks and expeditions when I was 15 years old. The porter work was difficult though. And sometimes the companies I worked for would pay very low wages, or I would only get tips and no wages at all. I worked as a porter in the Everest Region Solukhumbu for six years, and later I was able to work as an assistant cook. This day course included ice and rock climbing training, mountain leadership training, as well as basic first aid. From to I attended advanced level training courses, including high mountain rescue training. These are the more well-known peaks I have guided. In total I have guided more than 40 expeditions on 6, to 8, meter peaks. What do typical expeditions look like? Each expedition is different depending on what type of a peak is climbed, and where it is located. However, most expeditions start in Kathmandu where we do a briefing, gear check, and purchase any needed gear or equipment. Kathmandu is not an easy place for clients to stay because they are not used to the crowding and pollution, so usually we are in Kathmandu for only one or two days. Then we take a flight into the mountains. Most clients like to go to the Everest Region, so we fly into Lukla at an elevation of 2,800m. If clients are doing a popular climb like Island Peak, AmaDablam, or Everest then we carry small packs - usually 30 liters or so - and stay in lodges while we gradually hike up the trail toward our objective. This allows us to acclimatize gradually and stay rested and healthy. Usually the trek to basecamp is supported by porters or by pack animals including donkeys, zobyoks, and yaks. If we are going into a more remote area then we may need to carry camping equipment, and we may need to carry large packs so we have enough food until we are able to resupply after reaching villages on the other side of a pass. Once at base camp, our staff will chat with other guides and check the climbing route to determine if fixed lines need to be installed or replaced, what the hazards are, and what time we need to depart for the summit. For large expeditions all of the staff and sometimes even clients will work together to establish a good route for the season. Different expeditions on the mountain contribute to the cause by providing fixed-line, anchor materials, climbing Sherpas, and wages for those who take on the dangerous work of fixing ropes through technical sections of climbing. This process looks different each season, depending upon what companies are guiding on the mountain and what nationalities are up there. Tell me about your trekking company, Higher Path Treks I had dreamed of starting my own expedition company for many years. Unfortunately this is not easy in Nepal because it requires a lot of money to get a licensed business. One of the great things about the business is it has allowed me to provide employment for many young people in my village. They are able to use their wages to pay for school, to pay for improvements on their homes, and to pay for education for their siblings. The people who work for Higher Path Treks are all so happy because we have known each other since we were very small. We are all family. And now most of our staff have been guiding on 8,000 meter peaks like Everest and have received a very good quality of training. We have also been able to provide training to young women in the village who want to work as trekking and climbing guides. It is unusual to have women working as trekking and climbing guides in Nepal- especially if they are from a rural area like Sibuje Village- so this is very exciting. What inspired you to create the Karma Project? In my culture it is the responsibility of every family member to give back to

their family and their community. I was very lucky to get involved with tourism at an early age, which allowed me to have a better life than my parents did. Even when I was young I wanted to make things better for my siblings, my mother, and my step-father my biological father died when I was 3. When I would go on treks and climbs with clients I would share the story of my life with them in the hope that maybe they could do something to help my family and my community. I met a man named Glen Young in He was from the USA and was working in tourism. He had come to Nepal between leading trips in Southeast Asia. He was a nice man, and we talked about Sibuje where I am from and about climbing in the Himalayas. Glen had worked as an alpine guide in Alaska and was very curious about my life. The next year he brought a client named Bonom Bohanec to Nepal with him and over the coming years the three of us climbed many 6, meter peaks. While we were there I asked Glen and Bonom if they could help to raise money for a hydroelectric project for the village. At the time we hoped that having electricity would allow Sibuje to have a clinic and electric heaters and stoves. A year went by and Glen and Bonom had begun raising money. Glen founded a non-profit in the United States that we decided to call Karma Project. We feel like we are family. I love meeting people from all over the world and spending time with them in beautiful places. I always learn so much about the world from my clients. Some of my closest friends are people who came with me on treks or climbs, and I have had an opportunity to visit some of them in their home countries as a result. What advice do you have for potential climbers? My advice is to prepare well for your climb, and to treat local people and cultures with respect no matter how much money you have spent and no matter how you are feeling. High altitude mountaineering can be expensive, and can make many clients very tired, causes headaches, and can make some people sick to their stomach. Also, interpersonal dynamics on expeditions can be stressful. These circumstances sometimes make people angry. I have had some clients treat guides, porters, or the staff of hotels and lodges very badly. Most people come to the mountains to experience something beautiful and to have fun. This is really important. Expect things to be more emotionally, financially, and physically stressful than you anticipated, prepare for this, and have fun. We are so excited to fill your inbox with discoveries from around the world! You can expect your first edition to arrive on Monday. Until then, feel free to check out our previous editions.

### 9: 10 Important Tips for Visiting Kathmandu Nepal

*Find great deals on eBay for travelers tales. Shop with confidence.*

Originally posted on Gorgeous Nepal One of the most brilliant sights across any landscape is the sight of Mountains reaching out to great heights across clouds! However, my first experience of Nepal was a mere glimpse of the beautiful and chivalrous mountains across the Indo-Nepal border on my Sandakphu trek in Darjeeling. This was back in November , when I decided to take a trek with Youth Hostels Association of India into Sandakphu, the route to which was interspersed with entry and exit points across a few villages up the hills in Nepal. Specifically Jaobari and Kalipokhari. One thing that this trek offered, when you reach the top most point in Sandakphu, was a glimpse of Mt. Everest and a closer view of Kanchenjunga. Our first stop at a point where we entered into Nepal was at a small pit-stop in Tumling. Though not proper Nepal, this region was quite a charm when it came to serenity and the most amazing food they served here. The evening was quite chilly and fog set in even as we reached there in the evening. But that did not deter us from going out for a short walk and exploring a bit of Tumling. Once we did that, we had amazing dinner prepared by Neela Di, the camp leader, a glorious entrepreneur who ran the camp lodge all by herself. This is a common sight you get to see in North East, Himalayas and Nepal regions. Most of the setups are managed very efficiently by the women of the house while husbands are mostly Sherpas. After dinner, we were joined by a couple of guides one of whom was really good at playing the guitar and he played some amazing Nepali songs while we hummed along. What was even more wonderful was the glimpse of a very early sunrise at 5. A much needed refresher for the journey up ahead on Day 2. That was the time when we had to scale a daunting climb, to take us into Kalipokhari. On your way, the Jaobari monastery is quite a small and melancholy stop, which will get you to think, how peaceful this region is. After trekking for hours, when we reached a pit-stop, we decided to stop over at a small place, which served amazing food and great mint tea. This was their answer to Maggi. That was our last stop before we actually reached the Black Lake a. It is believed that Nepalese villagers worship the black lake and no one is allowed to take a swim or a dip in this lake. The temperature was freezing and it was already evening as we approached this village. Once we settled down, we sat by the fire inside the kitchen and started mingling with the locals. So much so, that we even had a chance to listen to Nepalese radio channel, Koshi FM. Some were Hindi songs, and some Nepalese! Was fun tuning into the radio as we had our grub. There was an interesting structure is like an indication of the Indo-Nepal border, with the right side being Nepal and the Left being India. This was at the entrance to our camp in Kalipokhari. The weather in Kalipokhari gave quite the chills. Freezing as it was, we certainly felt the pinch even when we had to step out of our wooden cottages to go have dinner in the hall. There was provision for warm water and that was something all of us desperately desired for, after having dinner. After a tiring hike and extremely fatigued run of this last stretch of uphill mountains one could only feel joy and glory when we saw that flag flying high. We knew we had reached Sandakphu. Post lunch we explored a couple of places on the Nepal side of Sandakphu. A Buddhist Monastery near a Shiva Temple and a small pond of water. One that never dries. This is near the Buddhist monastery of Nepal part of Sandakphu. This is apparently the head of the river Maahi, a very famous river of Nepal that never dries. Once we were done visiting these places, we headed towards the top and after a short walk, and a bit of rock climbing we moved to the top where the beautiful view of both the mountain ranges awaited us. Walking across the silent hills within the woods, gave an enchanting feeling of bliss amidst the fresh air with dry leaves crunching beneath your feet to indicate your beautiful journey across the path. Post lunch we went to the highest point in Sandakphu, another 1 or 2 Kms walk where the beautiful view of both the mountain ranges awaited us. Even though it was foggy, the beauty of it was in the amazing feeling we got there on top. Our trek is finally complete. Well, at least the climbing. After which was mostly going back to Darjeeling, and downhill. Overall from whatever experience I had had of the glimpses of Nepal so far, one thing I felt was most certainly a feeling of utmost magic, something that I had never experienced so far. A beautifully fulfilling experience if anything I may add. I can only imagine what other parts of Nepal may have to offer, if the glorious mountains across Sandakphu, Kalipokhari and

Jaobari were this beautiful.

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