

Rafting in Nepal - Four Great Trips

Nepal isn't just a trekker's paradise it's also a paradise for whitewater rafting enthusiasts.

If you stop and think about it for a moment this really shouldn't come as much of a surprise. Sooner or later the snow from at least the lower elevations of Nepal's grand mountains has to melt and when it does it has to flow somewhere. Eons of melting water have carved deep canyons and valleys.

A mixture of spectacular mountain views, twisting canyons and white-sand beaches set the scene for trips down Nepal's rivers. The rivers themselves run from mild and meandering to rushing and roaring with rapids all the way up to class V. Four of the best of [Nepal rafting](#) rivers include the Trisuli, the Bhote Koshi, Kali Gandaki and the Marshyangdi.

The Trisuli:

Due to its easy access from Katmandu and Pokhara, lovely valleys and deep gorges, and a mixture of both thrilling rapids and milder sections the Trisuli is Nepal's most popular river. Nepal's rafting is no longer undiscovered and the popularity of the Trisuli means that the river can be crowded and the beaches well used during the height of rafting season. The secret is to run it during monsoon season. Heck you're going to be wet anyway so what's a "little" rain. The ironic thing is that when the river is at its best, high and wild, most rafters are nowhere to be found. Take the plunge and do the Trisuli during monsoon season, it'll no doubt be the most exciting thing you can do in Nepal.

The Bhote Koshi:

Rises from high Tibet, which is also called Bhot, and tumbles into Nepal through spectacular valleys. The fourteenth-highest mountain in the world is Shishapangma and it is from Shishapangma's glaciers that the water which carves a steep flows into streams that for a 46km run, which ends at the Lamosunga Dam. At high flows the rapids are class IV-V, with V being the upper end of the scale. At lower levels the rapids still offer fun class III rapids.

Often described as continuous the Bhote Koshi fulfills the dreams of adrenaline seekers.

Hardly anyone walks away from a trip down the Bhote Koshi without commenting that it was the ride of a life time and that goes for experienced rafters as well as first-timers.

Kali Gandaki:

On the northern side of the Himalyan range is Mustang, and this is where the Kali Gandaki, named for the Hindu goddess Kalie, begins. One of the world's deepest river canyons has been carved by the Kali Gandaki which runs down between the Dhaulagiri and Annapurna ranges.

Sadly the lower portion of this river has been dammed, but the part above the dam is without a doubt one of Nepal's best river journeys. The villages along the river are seldom-visited and provide a true insight into the culture of the area. There is abundant wildlife along the banks and the sand carried by the river has been deposited along the bends making lovely sandy beaches.

Of course it's not all about the scenery, Kali Gandaki rapids are highly technical and continuous and paddlers are never left with enough time to get bored. A three-day trip the river provides a great combination of drops, chutes and churning rapids all of which are class III to IV+ during the fall and spring seasons.

The Marshyangdi:

Just one trip down the Marshyangdi and you'll come to appreciate the meaning of name, which translates into "Raging River" in one of the local dialects. The Nepalese government only recently opened the Marshyangdi and this in itself adds a special air to this trip.

If you choose to go on this trip you'll find solid, steep, technical and continuous rapids. It truly is a serious undertaking, but if you're looking for a demanding, thrilling river this is it.

Choosing a Commercial Rafting Company:

When whitewater is exploding all around you and you're being tossed about the boat you realize that the one thing that really matters most at that moment is the quality of your guide. Does he or she have the experience to get you through safely? If so, you're in for a delightfully exhilarating ride, but if not things could become scary very quickly. Make sure to find out how experienced the company's guides are and especially how experienced your guide is. Ask about their credentials and where they got them.

Equipment is another big factor in your safety. Take a look at the boats of the company and the boat you'll be in. It should look sturdy and in good condition. Modern whitewater rafts have a good amount of rocker on both ends and the boat you're in should too. Self bailing boats (boats that allow water to flow out from the floor when it comes in over the side) are a great idea in big water. Some quality rafting manufacturers include Avon, Maravia, and Sotar all of which build boats that have multiple air chambers which is a must for safe equipment.

In addition to your guide the best companies will send along a safety kayaker or two. These people can be invaluable at helping you if you get tossed out of the boat, so look for a company that provides them, and yes iTrekNepal does this.

The right river, in the right country with the right company is a sure recipe for a once in a lifetime experience that you will always look back on and treasure.