

From October 28<sup>th</sup> to November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

# ART & SPIRITUALITY

Trip to Kathmandu between artisan workshops and  
visits to sacred Buddhist sites





*Swayambunath Stupa, Kathmandu*

## THE SACRED VALLEY OF KATHMANDU

A trip to the Kathmandu Valley is a special experience because it offers the opportunity to connect with the sacred places of Buddhism. The different **Buddhist spiritual traditions** are still alive in Nepal and allow visitors to immerse themselves in daily practices: in temples, stupas, but also simply in small personal and collective rituals. Furthermore, since ancient times, the valley has been a destination for important yogis, masters and meditators of all spiritual traditions.

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“Whatever we wear, put on the altar or in sacred places with a spiritual intention – incense, statues, paintings, malas and so on – is a reminder of the inner qualities we want to develop.”

*Lama Gangchen Rinpoche*



## TIBETANS IN KATHMANDU

Kathmandu - especially the Boudhanath district - has become an important center for **Tibetans in exile** who have recreated spaces of life and spirituality here, including numerous monasteries. Lama Gangchen Rinpoche himself, with the help of his family and the support of many disciples and friends, has created a **welcoming space** dedicated to visiting pilgrims and the **production of traditional Tibetan handicrafts**.



## TIBETAN CRAFTSMANSHIP

Kathmandu has become a world center for Tibetan handicrafts. In particular, the production of **objects related to spiritual practice** such as incense, ritual objects, statues, thangkas (paintings), malas and furnishings for temples and sacred places is widespread. Lama Gangchen Rinpoche's family has started a **craft shop** that produces incense sticks and powder, sacred furnishings, mandalas to hang around the neck and health pills.

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*Craftsmen at work, Drubkhang Gangchen Labrang, Kathmandu*





## THE HANDICRAFT WORKSHOPS

The Tibetan **handicraft workshops** allow us to get in touch with the local culture thanks to the production of objects related to the spiritual practice of Buddhism, in particular incense, protections to hang around the neck and furnishings for temples and sacred places. We will be hosted at [Drubkhang Gangchen Labrang](#) by Lama Gangchen Rinpoche's family and **guided by the artisans of his workshop**. We will participate in the various stages of production learning the basic operations to obtain the final product.



## THE INCENSE

The production of incense begins with the collection and drying of flowers, herbs and minerals which are then crushed and mixed or transformed into a modeling paste suitable for making sticks. The **complete process** will be illustrated and it will be possible to participate in some phases of production in order to make our own incense. Tibetan incense has beneficial properties for the body, for the mind and for the environment.

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## PROTECTION PENDANTS

Protection pendants are **small mandalas made with colored threads** that contain a sacred mantra and can be worn as a necklace or otherwise carried with you. We will learn to make them for ourselves and for the people we want to offer them to.



## WOOD CARVING

Wood carving is part of the production of **sacred furnishings and furniture for temples and prayer rooms**, but also for typical rooms in Tibetan homes. It is a meticulous activity that begins with drawing the decorations on the surface and continues with increasingly fine chisel work.



## TIBETAN CUISINE: MOMOS

As an extra activity, a workshop will be organized to **learn how to make momos**, the typical Tibetan ravioli, under the guidance of the all-Tibetan team of the Drubkhang Gangchen Labrang kitchen. Finally, we will be able to taste the delicacies that we have prepared together.

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## TOURS TO SACRED PLACES

The workshops will be alternated with **cultural and spiritual visits** to the sacred Buddhist sites of the Kathmandu Valley. The valley is characterized by the wealth of stupas, temples and natural places where for centuries the local population and pilgrims have gone to meditate, celebrate religious rituals, do retreats and regenerate spiritually.



## CONNECTING TO THE LAMA GANGCHEN LINEAGE

Lama Gangchen Rinpoche has left an important legacy in Kathmandu made of people and places linked to him. In addition to the retreat house and the Labrang that will welcome us for the

workshops and for the stay, in Kathmandu there are two monasteries linked to Lama Gangchen - [Segyu](#) and [Phelgyeling](#) - and the [Samling Gangchen school](#) dedicated to him, whose students are sponsored thanks to the distance adoptions of the Onlus [Help In Action](#).

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## PROGRAM

**Sunday, October 28**

Arrival in Kathmandu, transfer to Drubkhang and welcome dinner

**Monday, October 29**

Workshop and visit to Boudhanath stupa

**Tuesday, October 30**

Workshop and cultural visit to Bhaktapur

**Wednesday, November 1**

Workshop and visit to Segyu Monastery

**Wednesday, November 2**

Visit to the sacred places of Pharping

**Thursday, November 3**

Let's learn to make momos and free time

**Friday, November 4**

Workshop and visit to Samling Gangchen school

**Saturday, November 5**

Workshop and free time

**Sunday, November 6**

Guided tour of the sacred places of Namobuddha

**Monday, November 7**

Workshop and cultural visit with dinner in Patan

**Tuesday, November 8**

Visit to Swayambunath Stupa, Pelgyeling Monastery and free time in Thamel

**Wednesday, November 9**

Departure from Kathmandu

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The program is **provisional and subject to change**. The final program will be provided in September 2025.

## COSTS

**Participation fee:** €500. The fee includes the cost of the workshops and organizational costs. A **deposit of €50** will be required upon registration and the payment of the entire amount before departure.

**Expenses to be borne by participants:** food and accommodation, flight, visa, local transport, entrance tickets, any donations.

**Overnight stay:** €20 per night in a double room, breakfast included (to be paid upon arrival). In case a single use room is requested, the price is €30.

**Visa (15 days):** \$30 (US dollars).

**Meals:** meals at Drubkhang cost €6 each. When we eat at a restaurant, the cost will depend on what is consumed.

**Entrance fees:** Swayambunath Stupa 200 rupees, Patan Durbar Square 1000 rupees, Boudhanath Stupa 400 rupees, Bhaktapur Durbar Square 1800 rupees. Normally 1 euro corresponds to approximately 137 - 140 Nepalese rupees.

## USEFUL INFORMATION

### Flight

Qatar Airways is a very reliable company with efficient services, but everyone is free to choose which company to fly with. Regardless of the airline, the invitation is to arrive in Kathmandu **by the afternoon of October 28**. To purchase the flight it is

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possible to rely on a travel agency or online directly on the websites of the various airlines.

## Visa

The tourist visa "on arrival" is the only entry visa to Nepal. To arrive prepared, we suggest you **apply by filling out the online form** at this link: <https://nepaliport.immigration.gov.np/online>. When filling out the form, choose Tribhuvan Airport as the "entry point". You will be asked to upload a passport-sized photo and a scan of your passport. **Payment will be made upon arrival:** for 15 days the cost is 30 dollars (you can also pay in euros). Please note: the form must be filled out **no earlier than 14 days before departure**.

## Vaccinations and health

**There are no mandatory vaccinations for Nepal.** If anyone wants to know more, just make an appointment for a consultation at an international vaccination center. With the participants, we will share a list of precautions and tips that can be adopted even before departure.

## Local transport

Transportation to and from the airport, as well as the transfers planned for the guided tours, will be organized by us thanks to dedicated vehicles and will be paid together with the stay and meals consumed at Drubkhang Gangchen Labrang.

## Registration

**Participation is limited.** To register, you must send an email to [massimo@kunpen.it](mailto:massimo@kunpen.it) with the following information: name and surname, telephone number and WhatsApp and any flight information (if it has already been purchased). When the group is formed, we will set up an online appointment to get to know each other and answer any questions.

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To confirm your registration, we ask you to pay a **deposit of 50 euros by September 30, 2025** via PayPal or in cash. The remaining amount can be paid later before departure.



*Detail of small stupa in Swayambunath, Kathmandu*

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