Nepal's original ultra-trail race
Annapurna 100
1st January 2012
100, 70 and 50 km trail races
through traditional villages, along fabulous trails
with stunning views of the Annapurna range.
An unforgettable, Himalayan start
to 2012
http://annapurna100.com
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Introduction

The Annapurna 100 is destined to be one of the world's great trail running races. It's got hills, trails, forests, culture and probably the only ultra race where you get a *tikka* on your forehead at 50 km and a garland of flowers around your neck. It's Nepal's original ultra-marathon and a fabulous way to spend the first day of 2012.

History

It started with a cricketer. On October 31st 1995 Sir Ian Botham, world-renowned cricketer, started this 100 km race. Twelve local runners proved that a run from Pokhara to Poon Hill and back was possible in less than 12 hours. The route normally would take an average trekker 5 days. The winner took 11 hours 55 minutes and 55 seconds.

Since then, due to a decade of conflict, only a couple more races have been run. Now the race is has become an established annual event.

2012 will be the best race ever, with a 85% trail course on delightful paths with stupendous views. There are three ultra-distances to choose from, including a none-too-easy 100 km over some very hilly terrain.

This challenging race is now a qualification race for the UTMB and India's 'The High'.
(http://www.ultratrailmb.com/)
(http://www.thehhigh.in/)

Route

While in January the nights can be pretty chilly, the skies are typically clear which means warm days and fantastic mountain views.

The course takes the road out of Pokhara (820 m) and soon any trace of the urban world is left behind. While slowly climbing on wide trails the views from the Dhampus ridge are spectacular.

On popular trekking trails we continue to Pitam Deurali (2100 m), through Landruk (1565 m) where the 50 and 70 km routes drop down to the Modi river (1350), then up the long steep climb to Ghandruk (1940 m). The 50 km turns south here for the descent to its finish at Birethanti (1025 m) where the 70 km continues climbing to Tadapani.

"I felt lucky to be part of a wonderful race and enjoyed sharing the experiences with both the other Nepali and foreigner runners. " - *Lizzy Hawker* – http://lizzyhawker.com/

From Landruk the 100 km route makes a loop up to Chhomrong, Kimrong and meets the 70 km course again at Tadapani (2630 m) on a beautiful forest trail. Then comes a welcome descent to the Bhurungdi khola (2400 m) before heading steeply up to Deurali (3210 m). This ridge leading to Ghorepani is delicious running with absolutely fabulous views of Annapurnas and the Manaslu range to the East and the Dhaulagiri range to the West. You may also spot some wild Yaks here.

From Ghorepani (2860 m) you head for home along a section of the Great Himalaya Trail lower route. After another 1835 m of descent, the 70 km runners head to the finish in Birentanti while 100 km runners add another tough loop up to Ghandruk before finally heading for the party in Birentanti.

All foreign and many of the Nepali runners will overnight here in this riverside village. After breakfast on the 2nd we return to Pokhara for the awards ceremony and farewell lunch.

Feeding stations are frequent and run by local villages and many will be out to watch and cheer you. Children might tell you you're last or going slow – but they're just joking. Watch out for buffaloes and goats on the trail or people carrying huge bundles of firewood or fodder. Go around prayer flagpoles to the left and keep a small handkerchief with you to dry your sweat in case someone gives you a red *tikka* mark on your forehead.

Supporters walk

If you are coming with friends and family, we organise a day walk that gives them a chance to cheer you at the 11 km mark and at the finish. They get to enjoy the views and trails too!

Race details

Registration for the race is on Saturday 31st 2011 and payment will be taken then. The race starts at 5.30am on Sunday 1st close to the lakeside in Pokhara.

Costs

The entry is 150 Euro for all races which includes food and lodging at the finish and transport to Pokhara. You're free to manage the rest of your travel and accommodation according to your own preferences.

Altitude

Pokhara lies at 827 m altitude. The highest point in the race is 3210 m which for many visitors is noticeable but completely manageable and poses no problems.

Getting to Pokhara

It's easy. From Kathmandu you can come to Pokhara on public bus, micro-bus, tourist bus, private vehicle or even fly. It takes less than 6 hours and $US 5 with the slowest method up to around $US 90 to fly one-way.

Prizes

There will be prize money for the talented top finishers, however for the **Nepali** finishers only as this race is focused on supporting local running talent in their running careers. Full details will be given soon on the website.

Make a vacation of it: what else to do in Nepal?

This race is just one day, albeit a long one. What to do with the rest of your time in Nepal? The weather is dry, the skies clear and daytime temperatures are around 17°C (63°F).With a few days, a week or more, there is much to do.

Post-race trek: Annapurna base-camp is a close by and an amazing 5-7 day trek. ***Trail running:*** You could fly up to Jomsom in Mustang, and run to holy Muktinath and back. There are many other trails with lodges meaning you can travel light. Those experienced at altitude could run the famed Annapurna circuit in a week. ***Adventure sports:*** Mountain biking, rafting, kayaking, bungy jumping (160 m), paragliding. ***Culture:*** Kathmandu valley offers the globe's highest density of UNESCO World heritage sites, Kathmandu and Patan Durbar squares, Pashupathinath, Bouddha and on it goes – try it as a culture run! (http://bit.ly/culture-run) ***Nature:*** It's all around you but Chitwan offers an immensity of wildlife and jungle fun. ***Spiritual:*** Meditation retreats and fantastic & low cost massages come to mind.

International travel

Reaching Kathmandu is easier than ever. It's connected via hubs in Delhi, Mumbai, Bangkok, Bangladesh and the Gulf. Needless to say, the earlier you book the better.

Accommodation

Finding a place to meet your budget is never a problem in Nepal and you can sleep well from $US 5 to $US 100. For nicer hotels, our agents will get you the best negotiated rates. Similarly in Pokhara and Kathmandu there is a range of international cuisine to suit every palette.

Contact details and useful websites

For all enquiries big and small, contact: *Roger Henke* c/o Summit Hotel, Kopundol Heights, Kathmandu Tel: +977 1 5521810 / 5524694 & Fax: +977 1 5523737. rh.summit@gmail.com

http://www.annapurna100.org and http://www.trailrunningnepal.org - a resource for running in Nepal and links to other races in Nepal.

"Only Nepal could make memories of racing over 71 kilometres so good - beautiful scenery, incredible mountains, as well as the warmest welcomes from locals and tourists alike" - *Moire O'sulivan Ultra-runner,* http://moireosullivan.wordpress.com/

Part of this race is on the Great Himalaya Trail lower route. Learn more at thegreathimalayatrail.org

This race is organized by the **Nepal Mountain Running Service** who is working to give Nepal's talented runners a chance to develop and reach their potential.

We look forward to seeing you on the Annapurna 100 on 1st January 2012!

Can't make this race? Join our mailing list (http://bit.ly/trn-newsletter) and we'll let you know for next time!