Kali Gandaki

Kali Gandaki - Deepest gorge in the world

In this bonustrip you follow the river Kali Gandaki upstream through the Himalayas.

The canyon separates the main peaks of Dhaulagiri to the west and Annapurna to the east. If you measure the depth of a canyon by the difference between the height of the river and the heights of the highest peaks on either side, the canyon is the deepest in the world. The part of the river directly between Dhaulagiri and Annapurna is at an elevation of 2,520 meters, which is 5,571 meters lower than the summit of Annapurna and 5,647 meters lower than the summit of Dhaulagiri.

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LEGS

LEG 1: VNBP - VNBL

Departure: Bharatpur (VNBP)
Destination: Baglung (VNBL)
Distance: 84,8 nm

POI1-Trishuli

Distance:	3,8 nm
Dist. from Dept.:	3,8 nm
Dist. to Dest.:	80,9 nm
True Course:	354°
Magnetic Course:	354°

You take over the Pilatus PC-6 Cold & Dark at a parking position in Bharatpur. Switch on the batteries and the avionics and start the engine. Also check the fuel level.

North of the airport flows the Narayani River, called Gandaki in India, which joins the Ganges at Patna. Fly to the river and follow it north. After a few minutes you will see the confluence of the Kali Gandaki and Trishuli rivers, which join to form the Narayani.

Like the Kali Gandaki, the Trishuli cuts through the main Himalayan ridge. The river is one of the most popular rafting waters in Nepal.

According to local residents, until the turn of the millennium, the water quality of the Trishuli was so good that one could drink the water directly from the river. However, with Nepal's economic development, the water quality has deteriorated significantly.

POI2-Aanptak

Distance:	5,2 nm
Dist. from Dept.:	9,1 nm
Dist. to Dest.:	75,7 nm
True Course:	277°
Magnetic Course:	277°

We continue in a northerly direction along the Kali Gandak. Coming from the west, it winds around a small mountain. Behind it, at the next small village, the river turns north in the direction of flight.

POI3-Khalte

Distance:	5,3 nm
Dist. from Dept.:	14,4 nm
Dist. to Dest.:	70,4 nm
True Course:	343°
Magnetic Course:	342°

From here, the river continues north and upstream. At the next village of Khalte, on the east bank, the river turns west and follows this main direction for about 50 nautical miles.

POI4-Maidi Khola

Distance:	19,4 nm
Dist. from Dept.:	33,7 nm
Dist. to Dest.:	51,0 nm
True Course:	277°
Magnetic Course:	276°

On the way west you fly over a few small villages on the banks of the river. At Solti, the Maidi Khola joins the Kali Gandaki from the north. Immediately behind, the Bhimad Sankhar Highway crosses the river.

POI5-Chapakot

Distance:	6,3 nm
Dist. from Dept.:	40,0 nm
Dist. to Dest.:	44,8 nm
True Course:	278°
Magnetic Course:	277°

Shortly after, you will see a road on the north bank. It follows the river valley and leads to the next town. Chapakot is located on the north bank of the Kali Gandak above the mouth of the Jagdee Khola.

POI6-Dimeekt

Distance:	9,7 nm
Dist. from Dept.:	49,7 nm
Dist. to Dest.:	35,0 nm
True Course:	275°
Magnetic Course:	275°

From Chapakot, two roads now accompany the river. One in the north and one in the south. The northern road winds further and further into the mountains and meets the Siddhartha Highway.

Behind a river bend, the highway crosses the Kali Gandaki.

POI7-Ridi Khola

Distance:	10,4 nm
Dist. from Dept.:	60,1 nm
Dist. to Dest.:	24,6 nm
True Course:	280°
Magnetic Course:	280°

You continue to follow the river and a small road that runs south of the river. At the mouth of the Ridi Khola, which comes from the west, the Kali Gandaki turns and now flows from the north.

POI8-Badi Gat

Distance:	2,9 nm
Dist. from Dept.:	63,1 nm
Dist. to Dest.:	21,7 nm
True Course:	38°
Magnetic Course:	37°

Turn northeast and continue following the river to the mouth of Badi Gat.

POI9-Aadhi Khola

Distance:	5,9 nm
Dist. from Dept.:	69,0 nm
Dist. to Dest.:	15,8 nm
True Course:	86°
Magnetic Course:	86°

Shortly after, the direction of flow changes and the Kali Gandaki flows from west to east. Follow the river until the mouth of the Aadhi Khola. Shortly before the mouth there is a hydroelectric power station.

Was the valley of the Kali Gandaki between your starting point Bharatpur and here just beautiful, this will change now: Now it will be beautiful and spectacular!

POI10-Purtighat

Distance:	4,4 nm
Dist. from Dept.:	73,4 nm
Dist. to Dest.:	11,4 nm
True Course:	343°
Magnetic Course:	342°

Turn north and follow the Kali Gandaki to the next settlement, Setibeni, on the right bank. There your flight direction changes to northwest and behind two river bends you reach Purtighat, a small village on the western bank.

POI11-Theule Khola

Distance:	8,7 nm
Dist. from Dept.:	82,1 nm
Dist. to Dest.:	2,7 nm
True Course:	29°
Magnetic Course:	28°

The river winds through the Himalayas coming from the north-northeast. From a valley on the western side flows in the Theule Khola.

VNBL-Baglung

Distance:	2,7 nm
Dist. from Dept.:	84,8 nm
Dist. to Dest.:	0,0 nm
True Course:	32°
Magnetic Course:	31°
Elevation:	3231 feet
Fuel:	no

However, before entering the high mountains and breaking through the main Himalayan ridge, the airfield in Baglung is waiting for you. The grass runway is located west of Kali Gandaki.

LEG 2: VNBL - VNJS

Departure: Baglung (VNBL)

Destination: Jomsom (VNJS)

Distance: 40,4 nm

POI12-Baglung

Distance:	4,8 nm
Dist. from Dept.:	4,8 nm
Dist. to Dest.:	35,6 nm
True Course:	314°
Magnetic Course:	313°

Off we go into the high mountains. While the terrain rises only slowly at the beginning, it becomes steeper and steeper as it progresses.

About 5 nautical miles northwest of the airport is the town of Baglung. It is located on a terrace a good 200 meters above Kali Gandaki.

The Kanthe Khola River flows into the Kali Gandaki on the left. Baglung is the starting point for hikes to the Dhaulagiri area and upstream through the Kali Gandaki gorge to Mustang and the pilgrimage site of Muktinath.

POI13-Beni

Distance:	4,6 nm
Dist. from Dept.:	9,4 nm
Dist. to Dest.:	31,0 nm
True Course:	339°
Magnetic Course:	338°

North of Baglung is the town of Beni at the mouth of the Myagdi Khola. It flows about 40 kilometers through the Dhaulagiri mountain massif.

POI14-Annapurna

Distance:	11,3 nm
Dist. from Dept.:	20,7 nm
Dist. to Dest.:	19,7 nm
True Course:	25°
Magnetic Course:	24°

Fly further upstream along the Kali Gandaki. You are now entering the spectacular part of the gorge that cuts through the main ridge of the Himalayas between the Annapurna and Dhaulagiri massifs. Flanked by the eight-thousanders, it forms the deepest breakthrough valley in the world.

The fourth valley on your right gives you a view of the main peak of the Annapurna range. At 8091 meters, it is the tenth highest mountain on earth. Annapurna is the least frequently climbed eight-thousander and one of the most dangerous due to high avalanche danger.

POI15-Dhaulagiri

Distance:	9,8 nm
Dist. from Dept.:	30,5 nm
Dist. to Dest.:	10,0 nm
True Course:	339°
Magnetic Course:	338°

A little further north you will pass a lake and shortly thereafter the river will also be dammed. Above your left wing you recognize the summit of Dhaulagiri.

With 8167 meters, it is the seventh highest mountain in the world within all 14 eight-thousanders and, moreover, the highest mountain whose summit does not lie on a national border. Dhaulagiri was the penultimate eight-thousander to be climbed. Seven expeditions failed. Only members of the eighth expedition succeeded in reaching the summit in May 1960. This was the first time in the history of mountaineering that a small plane had been used to transport the equipment and the expedition members to base camp 2 at an altitude of 5700 meters. The Yeti christened small aircraft, a Pilatus Porter PC-6, crashed during one of the difficult take-off maneuvers at this altitude on May 5, 1960, without anyone being harmed.

VNJS-Jomsom

Distance:	10,0 nm
Dist. from Dept.:	40,4 nm
Dist. to Dest.:	0,0 nm
True Course:	44°
Magnetic Course:	44°
Elevation:	8997 feet
Fuel:	yes

Turn northeast and follow the river for about 10 nautical miles. There you will reach Jomsom Airport. Two well-known aircraft accidents occurred at this airport. First, a Dornier 228-212 crashed during a go-around in 2012, and almost exactly a year later, a DHC-6 Twin Otter crashed on approach. Both aircraft were from Pokhara.

You are welcome to explore the course of Kali Gandaki further north. Since there are no airports there, this is the official end of the trip.

Also check out the Beautiful Canyons of Koschi. In the sixth part of the series he also travels the valley of the Kali Gandanki and gives you many insights into the country and life in Nepal in the deepest valley on earth.

We at Nordheim Missions wish you a good stay in Jomsom and would be happy to accompany you on another mission soon.

Thank you very much!