HOW TOURISM GREW IN NEPAL
1950

Annapurna 1 expedition - Maurice Herzog
Official opening of Nepal to Tourists.
Boris Lissanovitch created the Royal Hotel, now the Election Commission building.
Boris brought in 20 American lady tourists from Calcutta.
British first ascent of Everest 29 May by the late Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay.
1958
RNAC was founded - same year as Thai Airways.
1960-73

Age of legal Hashish and the Hippie trail from Europe - Freak Street and apple pie.
Jim Copeman then A.V Jim Edwards set up Tiger Tops before Chitwan National Park was created.
The start of wildlife tourism to Nepal.
Colonel Jimmy Roberts established Mountain Travel Nepal, Nepal's first trekking agency.

Three ladies from American mid west set off on a 7 week trek to Everest.
1965

Hotel Annapurna opened.
1966

Soaltee Hotel opened.
Tourism grew steadily – Cultural tours to the KTM valley and later on to Pokhara.

Trekking became popular.

River running got started – Himalayan River Exploration founded.

Nepal became the “in destination/the place to visit.”


Mountaineer Renhold Messner summited Lhotse and completed the first ascent of all 8000m peaks in the world.
During this period;

- Pokhara - Lakeside and Baidam Tourist areas developed.
- Chitwan, Bardia and Suklaphanta National Parks attracted wildlife enthusiasts.
- Religious tourism to Pashupatinath and Lumbini grew.
1980

9 - 12 December - Prince Charles visit and the start of the “Royal Trek”.
The Nepal/Tibet road border at Kodari/Zangmu opened.

- Allowed for Sherpa supported treks and expeditions to Kailash, Mansarovar, Everest Base Camp (North Side) and to Lhasa.
• The Kathmandu valley was beautiful, and the cultural heritage sights were outstanding.
• Mountain flights to Everest became popular.
• “Mountains, Rivers and Jungle” packages flourished.
"We want Demo-cracy" movement.
Subsequently Private banks were opened and business got moving.
By 1996 tourist arrivals topped 600,000 and there was talk of 1 million soon.
1999 onwards

...then came the build up of the Maoist movement, and on 29 Dec 1999 the hi-jacking of IC814 out of Kathmandu.

1 June 2001 our own tragic Royal Family Massacre.
By 2003

Tourist arrivals had halved to around 300,000 and the country was almost in “civil war”.
2006

- Peace agreement signed.
- Peace allowed tourism to start rebuilding but by this time there had been changes. Kathmandu had become crowded, there were plenty of vehicles around, but the “People of Nepal” were still the No. 1 attraction.
• The Chinese started to arrive in great numbers.

• Indian Visitors returned, but growth from Nepal's traditional Western Europe and USA markets was slower.
By Spring 2015 arrivals were once again approaching 800,000. Some 500,000 Nepalese were employed in the tourism industry which generated some Rs 88 billion for the national economy.

Domestic tourism was growing rapidly, Pokhara and Chitwan were booming and hotel occupancy was at a good level.
However in 2012, the world renowned Tiger Tops and the other five lodges that were located inside Chitwan National Park were closed.
The earthquakes, closely followed by the border blockade almost brought Nepal to its knees.

Tourists arrivals for 2015 dropped back to the 320,000 level.
Tourist growth was encouraging, with Asian, Chinese and Domestic tourism surging. Much Still to do.

Nepal listed by the Lonely Planet guide as “5th best value destination”.
In which way do you think Tourism to Nepal should be developed?

Much rides on the answer, including high levels of employment and hard currency income for the country.

Thank you very much
Namaste!
Robin Marston