

Travel

The majestic peaks of Nepal are where Mia Regan gets her highs



PEAKY BLINDERS  
Trekking among the high summits of Nepal; below, Mia Regan on Mera Peak; left, the white-knuckle runway at Lukla

Sunrises, spicy curries and a cuppa: the model shares her memories of climbing a 6,500m mountain in the Himalayas

Where is your favourite destination and why? Nepal, I have such special memories there from trips in recent years. The people, culture and food are so beautiful. I feel very clear-minded when I am in Nepal, particularly in the mountains. It truly has become such a special place to me.

When was the last time you were there, and who were you with? I last went in November, when I summited Mera Peak's 6,476m with my dad, brother, godfather and some family friends. We were guided by the wonderful Tendi Sherpa and his two colleagues Pasang and Dendi. It was one of the hardest things I have done in my life, but so rewarding. My dad and I hiked Ama Dablam base camp the year prior with Tendi. It was really special bringing my other loved ones to this beautiful place that we had experienced.

Where do you like to stay there? I've travelled around many tea houses across the Himalayan districts while trekking, and they are all so unique. Some are more basic than others, but they all have delicious food. Dal bhat, a spiced lentil curry — the national dish of Nepal — gets better the higher the altitude! In the evenings after hiking, all the trekkers sit around by the fire, and we play cards, eat our tasty food and relax after the long days. It is really fascinating meeting people from all around the world and sharing stories.

What has been your favourite meal there? Dal bhat and momos, which are Nepalese filled dumplings. I ate dal bhat every day on both trips — it's my favourite. There's a spot in Dalston called House of MoMo, and when I landed back in London after my last trip I went straight there because I missed the food already.

What would you do if you had only 24 hours there? Meet up with Tendi and the other wonderful people (and dogs) I have met out in Nepal. I would want to share some food together, then hike to enjoy the views of the Himalayas. When we were climbing Mera Peak we adopted a horde of dogs who joined us every day. My agent Grace and I named one of them Honey; she stayed with us up until the last day at base camp. She would sit outside our room waiting for us to wake up in the



morning. Tendi said she must have been a mountain guide in a previous life, as she was so loyal and caring towards us — I am a huge dog person, so having the home comfort of adopting the wonderful Honey for our trip was so special.

What is the one unmissable thing you recommend doing? The flight from Lukla to Kathmandu, on a teeny plane that seats around 10 people. It drives off a really short runway in the middle of Lukla. It feels a bit like a rollercoaster, and the views are amazing. Having said that, it is known as one of the most dangerous flights in the world.

Is there a hidden gem you are willing to share? In Nepal, there are so many beautiful corners filled with amazing food — there are too many to count and they aren't limited to restaurants or tea huts. Sometimes stopping for a cup of tea and a biscuit with locals was the perfect satisfaction. It's best to set a route or trek with your guide and discover places as you go along.

Where do you like to let your hair down? When I'm in Nepal, my mind is very clear — it's serious stuff, climbing mountains. But when I'm back in the UK, my favourite place to let my hair down is in a British field listening to my favourite live music — nothing beats a British festival with my friends and family.

What are your favourite shops? I adore vintage shops for finding great bargains and rare pieces of incredible quality. I did try to do this in Nepal, but was instead distracted by all the local crafts on sale. The one thing you would bring home as a souvenir?

Always a pack of cards and craft goods local to the country. I got a gorgeous Nepalese yak wool blanket in November, which is my new homeware prized possession.

Your favourite beauty spot? The mountain air... wherever I can get it.

Your packing essential? A film camera. I was shooting lots of pictures for a special creative project I have coming out next month, so the camera was always at hand to capture the moment.

Song that reminds you of the place? Resham Firiri by Buddhi Pariyar.

Your dress code for the destination? Clothing by On — head to toe! It was minus 35 degrees at points overnight so I was very grateful to have many of the brand's cosy layers to keep me warm.

Have you ever had an emergency incident there? Luckily no, but the mountains are an extremely volatile place — I was in the safe hands of Tendi Sherpa. He has summited Everest 17 times, has a wealth of knowledge and, most importantly, has a love and respect for the mountains. It is so important to take these trips with care across altitude training and general mountain awareness. Tendi has a charity called Tendi

THERE WAS A HEART-SINKING MOMENT WHEN THE INTENSE WINDS BLEW AWAY OUR FLAG



Sherpa Foundation that supports his efforts to develop his village and surrounding areas — it has built bridges for the community to improve transport links and supported education. It's a project very close to my heart.

Favourite memory from there? My favourite memory was our summit day. We woke up at 1am for our attempt and, after 14 days of trekking, we were excited while also anxious about what we were about to take on. With crampons, harnesses and head torches on, we set off with a belly full of porridge and boiled ice water. We then set off for our seven-hour hike up the ice to summit Mera Peak. We saw the sunrise on the way up — the beautiful orange glow gave us that morale boost for the final stretch. At the summit it was so special to embrace my brother and friends after our incredible achievement. There was one heart-sinking moment when the intense winds blew away our flag, which had been so kindly homemade by my friend Flora. But luckily Tendi went to the rescue and safely retrieved the flag, which will now be a proud possession of mine for life.

As told to Joe Bromley

Mia Regan is represented by Storm Management



INTO THE BLUE  
Each villa at the Rixos Premium Belek has its own thatched pavilion

Very exclusive all-inclusive

Rixos Premium Belek, Turkey

I've just ordered a tenderloin steak and the waiter is pouring a large glass of local merlot. I'm in a fancy restaurant that has a grand dining room, with velvet chairs and double-height windows. If I had been anywhere else, I might have expected a sky-high bill at the end of the meal, but, instead, I simply — and happily — walked out.

Welcome to Rixos Premium Belek, near Antalya on Turkey's Mediterranean coast, and one of the new breed of all-inclusive resorts that is redefining the "pre-paid" hotel experience. Gone are cheap buffets and, instead, guests are able to dine in sophisticated restaurants. Out is bland, cookie-cutter design replaced by a polished aesthetic and sumptuous decor.

There was a time when "all-inclusive" was almost a dirty word in travel — conjuring up cheap buffets, low-grade alcoholic drinks and twee entertainment. Over the past few years,

however, hospitality brands, such as Rixos, with addresses in Turkey and the Middle East, and Ikos Resorts, with hotels dotted around Greece, have shaken up the image of the sector by elevating their offerings to tempt in a new breed of traveller. A recent trends report from Expedia, Hotels.com and Vrbo, declared 2025 "the year of the all-inclusive", putting its upward trajectory down to Gen Z travellers. "One-third of Gen Zers say their perception of all-inclusives has changed for the better over the past 12 months," says the report.

Facing the Turquoise Coast, with the Taurus Mountains as its backdrop, Rixos Premium Belek cuts an impressive sight. You arrive to find a gleaming, marble lobby with fountains. By day, you can wind through towering pine trees to get to a sandy beach, where each villa has its own thatched-roof pavilion, or there's an assortment of pools to dip in. Tapping into current wellness and fitness trends, the dedicated sports club offers everything from Muay Thai boxing classes to TRX and CrossFit, while the cavernous spa tempts you in with its therapies, from traditional hammam experiences to facials.

Out of sight of the main resort, and tucked away in its own enclave, is the jewel in Rixos's crown — Club Privé. Built around a collection of 39 luxury villas, and offering a whole layer of extra privileges for its residents, it has been designed to uplift the brand's

all-inclusive concept even further. Setting the tone is a VIP transfer from the airport — taking you straight to your villa, where you are greeted with canapés, fizz and flowers. Each residence has lavish interiors, which recall TV show Succession — think floor-to-ceiling windows, polished floors and huge bathrooms with egg-bathtubs and rainfall showers. King-sized beds have oversized leather headboards and crisp bed linens, while open-plan living rooms boast cosy sofas and contemporary lighting.

Let's face it, with eight restaurants to dine in, as well as a dedicated Club House open 24/7 just for Club Privé guests, you won't be making much use of the full-scale kitchen. If you suddenly fancy something on a whim, your problem will be resolved within minutes. Just ask your butler service, available round the clock on WhatsApp.

Indeed, effortless holidaying sums up the Club Privé experience. It taps into a growing desire for privacy, curated experiences and exclusive services. The main bonus is one that has always been the big tick when booking an all-inclusive resort: your bill has been paid for before you've even arrived, so any anxiety over any hidden costs at check-out has been removed. It really is an escape from reality — the very definition of what holidays should be about. Angelina Villa-Clarke

From £1,160 per night; rixos.com



Top Pick

Seaside A Lifestyle Resort is an adults-only, five-star haven on Crete, Greece's largest island. It's designed for those seeking a serene escape, with panoramic views of the Mediterranean from sunrise to sunset. Carved into the cliffs of Monofatis bay in Agia Pelagia, the resort's crowning jewel is the Cave Spa, with an infinity pool. Room rates start at £144, seaside-hotel.gr

Country pub of the week The Crown, Mundford

The Crown in Mundford has taken many forms. It dates back to 1652, first as a place of refuge for weary travellers passing through Thetford Forest. Then it was a hunting inn and the local magistrates' court for a time. Today, it is a great white country pub at the top of the village square — a traditional boozier and the only good one for miles.



Inside, the saloon bar is usually occupied by holidaymakers. They will be drinking Murphy's by the fire in a relaxing atmosphere. In the public bar, countless locals, whether farmer, labourer or retired banker, will be huddled and convivial beneath the low ceilings. It is always abuzz on a Friday night and full to the rafters come Sunday. The only really dud these days is the food. That said, classics like ham, egg and chips are solid. Rooms are a snip at £95 and dogs are welcome for an extra tenner. Josh Barrie Mundford, Norfolk, the-crown-hotel.co.uk