

we all eat



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Nepal Drying Chilies

The first ancestor of *Capsicum frutescens*, the chili pepper, was eaten somewhere in Bolivia a long time before any of the oceans had been crossed. The fruit, a member of the same family as the tomato, spread like its fiery taste throughout South and Central America, and on to the rest of the world in the holds of European trading ships. The heat of the chili comes from an acid called capsaicin; it does not stop at the taste buds, but continues on to scorch the mouth, the throat and anything else it touches. The Indian subcontinent got its first taste of Chili from the Portuguese traders in the sixteenth century, and its popularity soon spread, perhaps due to its use as a substitute for refrigeration in hiding the taste of two-day old food.

I can imagine the excitement when the first chilies were trekked into the Kathmandu Valley centuries ago. The Khursani continue to enrich Nepali life both visually and gastronomically.
--Scott Faiia, *Peace Corps/Malaysia, 1973-75*

Nepal (Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal)

Capital Kathmandu

Population 28,563,377 (2009 est.)

Life Expectancy 65.46 years

Literacy 48.6% (age 15 and over can read and write)

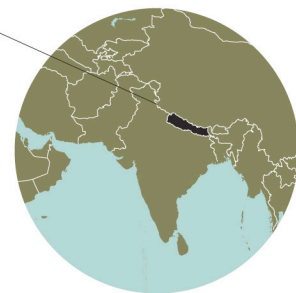
Languages Nepali 47.8%, Maithali 12%, Bhojpuri 7.4%, Tharu 5.8%, Tamang 5%,

Religions Hindu 80.6%, Buddhist 10.7%, Muslim 4.2%, Kirant 3.6%

Government federal democratic republic

Source: *The World Factbook, 2009*

Nepal



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