

# Triple Peaks Expedition

Summit the Jewels of Everest (Pokhalde, Lobuche East and Nirekha)

## 2014 DATES

2nd November - 29th November

16th November - 13th December

Duration: 28 days

(group sizes 2 and above can customise own dates)

## GRADE/FITNESS

This is a climbing expedition with 3 non-technical climbs. No prior climbing experience is required, but you should feel comfortable under exposed conditions.

Excellent fitness is essential as most days will involve 4-7 hr of trekking carrying a 8kg daypack and 8-12 hr climbing on summit days. The maximum altitude is 6169m.

## COST

USD: 5150 per person

**COST INCLUDES:** All trekking and climbing permits, 4 nights Kathmandu hotel (3.5 star), climbing and trekking guides, all transport in Nepal, extensive high altitude wilderness first aid kit, all meals outside Kathmandu, group climbing equipment, porters to carry personal/group equipment, down jacket, sleeping bag and expedition duffel.

**COST EXCLUDES:** International flights to Kathmandu, meals in Kathmandu (USD 10-15 per meal), aerated and alcoholic beverages, personal items (e.g. phone calls, laundry), tips, travel insurance (incl. early departure, mountain rescue), personal climbing equipment (can be hired in Kathmandu) and personal trekking gear.



## OVERVIEW

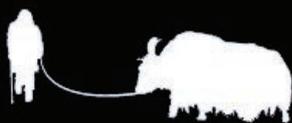
Himalayan Ascent is offering an expedition to tackle some of the less-frequently climbed trekking peaks of the Khumbu. These days the most popular trekking peaks in Nepal are Island Peak and Mera Peak, and while both are great introductory climbs for Himalayan novices, we've decided to add to our list of expeditions, a trip which is a little more adventurous.

**Our Route** begins with a pleasant week trekking up the Khumbu valley towards Mount Everest, passing through numerous Sherpa villages until we arrive at Dingboche. Our introductory climb will be on Pokhalde (5806m), which is a rock ascent from Kongma La pass. We will drop down towards and cross the Khumbu glacier to reach Lobuche for our second, more challenging climb of Lobuche East (6119m). This climb will require 3 camps, one base camp at the foot of the mountain and 2 higher camps. We will practice rope skills and fixed line climbing at base camp. Summit day will involve crossing the summit ridge, which offers an exhilarating sense of exposure and amazing views towards Mount Everest. We'll descend the mountain confident in our growing ability to tackle our next more technically demanding challenge. Nirekha (6169 m) is in the same chain of summits as Lobuche. From our high camp, there's a relatively steep climb on 50-60 degree angles. On this mountain, we will introduce alpine-style climbing to those confident to try this style with our experienced guides and in close proximity to fixed lines. From here we'll descend into the Gokyo valley. It's an easy relaxing trek back to Lukla via Namche.

This expedition is perfect for Himalayan climbers or trekkers who would like to try something a bit different from the usual trekking peaks, and for experienced rock climbers who are looking to transfer their technical skills onto alpine terrain at high altitude.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Ascents of Pokhalde, Lobuche East and Nirekha
- Stunning views of Everest, Lhotse, Nuptse, Ama dablam, Makalu and Cho Oyu
- Colourful Buddhist culture and spirited Sherpa people
- Beautiful serene Gokyo lakes



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## SLEEP AND FOOD

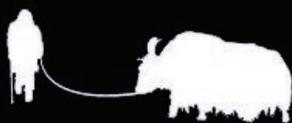
Whilst on the trail, you'll sleep in local friendly teahouses. These provide basic accommodation (twin-share), common toilets and a large common dining hall. Teahouse kitchens cater for international and local tastes, from pizzas/pastas to typical Nepali favourites. Other facilities including showers, internet, battery charging and laundry are sometimes available for an extra cost.

During climbing stages, you'll be camping and twin sharing 3-man tents. Food will be more basic but nutritious to fuel you for your climb.

Your Kathmandu accommodation is a mid-range 3.5 star hotel, but we can adjust according to your budget (i.e. budget to 5-star). Note that meals in Kathmandu are not included in the cost. Plan for USD 10-15 per meal on these days.

## SHERPA CULTURE

Known as "Eastern People" in Tibet, Sherpas were nomads who migrated and settled in the Solukhumbu region around 500 years ago from Tibet. Their dialect, dress and food is very similar to Tibetans, more than the Hindu majority ethnic groups in Nepal. With a culture deeply rooted in Buddhism, Sherpas have a strong respect for the mountains and its spirits. First employed as high altitude porters on early Himalayan mountaineering expeditions, Sherpas are now by their own rights, well regarded accomplished climbers.



## DAY 1 Arrive in Kathmandu

A Himalayan Ascent representative will collect you from the airport. It's a free day to recover from your international flight. Later in the evening, there will be a group briefing and welcome group dinner.

## DAY 2 In Kathmandu

You will first do a gear check at your hotel and organise renting any equipment if needed. Then you have a free day to explore the crazy, yet wondrously beautiful city of Kathmandu. Home to 5 World Heritage sites, Kathmandu is a stunning landscape of handcrafted wooden palaces (durbar or palace squares of Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur) and glorious Buddhist stupas (Swayambu and Boudhanath). It's a city that stimulates all senses, so be prepared because Kathmandu is a city that demands attention.

## DAY 3 Fly to Lukla (2840m), trek to Monjo (2840m) ~5 hrs

Our trip begins with an early morning 30 min flight to Lukla, that flies over endless rolling hills covered with green terraces. Once in Lukla, we have a short break to organise porters and gear before starting our day's walk, descending and ascending to Monjo. We pass green villages and colourful maniwalls as we follow the Dudh kusi river upstream. This region is Buddhist so remember to walk clockwise or to the right of maniwalls and prayer flag poles. Monjo is an apple farming village situated near the base of the hill up to Namche. Note, if we leave on a mid morning flight, we may stop earlier along the trail at Phakding (2640m) instead of Monjo.

## DAY 4 Trek Monjo (2840m) to Namche (3440m) ~5 hrs

The route crosses several steel suspension bridges covered with katas, white well-wishing scarves, and prayer flags. From the last bridge, it's a 2-3 hr hike up to Namche. On a clear day, you can catch your first view of Everest from a lookout about mid-way up the hill. Once in Namche, you have the afternoon to rest, do last minute gear shopping or catch locals enjoying the Saturday market.

## DAY 5 Acclimatisation day in Namche ~ 5 hrs

We spend an extra day in Namche before trekking higher to allow our bodies to adjust to the lower levels of oxygen in the air. In the morning, we will walk up to the Everest View Hotel to enjoy a panoramic view of Everest, Ama dablam and Thamserku. It's just a taster of the spectacular scenery to come! The afternoon is free for bouldering above Namche, wandering around the bazaar or relaxing over coffee and cakes in the bakery.

## DAY 6 Trek Namche (3440m) to Phortse (3810m) ~ 5 hrs

The trail behind Namche is a gentle track that traverses high above the Imja river with overlooking views of Thamserku and Ama dablam. We split from the regular traffic of trekkers heading to EBC by taking the higher road up to Mong for lunch enroute to Phortse. Many villagers still depend on potato and buckwheat farming here, but Phortse is also known for producing many climbing Sherpas to supplement incomes. Every January, Phortse hosts the Khumbhu Climbing School, an institution that invites international and local guides to train aspiring locals in basic and advanced mountaineering. We can spend the afternoon rock climbing at a local crag used by the school.



Rock climbing

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## HEALTH TIPS

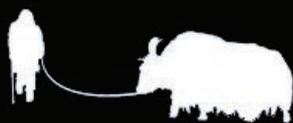
This trip reaches a maximum altitude of 6169m at Nirekha north summit. As such, you may experience some effects of high altitude (e.g. headaches, increased breathing, disturbed sleep) as your body adapts. The schedule has been designed to allow for proper acclimatisation. However, everyone responds to high altitude differently, so the best advice is to walk slow, drink plenty of water (~4L/day), listen to your body and alert your guide if you are feeling unwell.

Nepal is a developing country so some travel vaccines are advised. Obtain these at least 2-6 months before arrival to ensure good immunity. Typhoid, Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B are recommended. Ensure that you are up to date with routine immunisation (MMR, DPT). Malaria tablets are not needed.

Your guide will be carrying a well stocked first aid kit along the trail. It will contain commonly used medication including ibuprofen and general antibiotics. It is easy to stay healthy and avoid bacterial/parasitic infections by eating from hygienic venues, and avoiding salad (raw) and unpeeled fruits.

## VISAS

Tourist visas can be obtained directly at the immigration department of Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu. Bring at least 2 passport sized photos, a copy of your passport and USD 40 cash for a 30-day tourist visa. You can also prearrange a visa from your nearest Nepalese consulate.



Yak herd above Phortse

## DAY 7 Trek Phortse (3810m) to Pangboche (3930m) ~2.5 hrs

Heading out of Phortse you will see Cho Oyu, the 6th highest mountain in the world up the Ngozumba glacier leading to Gokyo lakes. The trail to Pangboche is an easy day of traversing with views of Tengboche monastery just across the valley. Pangboche is the highest permanent settlement with the oldest monastery in the Khumbu. The horizon from here to Lobuche is dominated by Ama dablam, (6856m) one of the most picturesque mountains in the Khumbu that is technically demanding to climb.

## DAY 8 Trek Pangboche (3930m) to Dingboche (4410m) ~5 hrs

As we hike up the track towards Dingboche, there's a distinct change in the landscape as we cross the 4000m barrier. High altitude scrubs replace trees and formidable mountains suddenly appear within reach. Dingboche is the first of a series of settlements leading to Everest base camp established to accommodate trekkers. It is a seasonal village with a few fields and yaks. The afternoon is free to use internet or to do some much needed laundry. There are a few bakeries you can try too.

## DAY 9 Acclimatisation in Dingboche

Another "rest" day for acclimatisation will take us up to the ridge overlooking Dingboche for views into the Imja valley. You will see the great faces of Nuptse, Lhotse and Imja Tsa (Island Peak, 6189m) and another face of Ama dablam. There's also the option to walk to Chhukung village or visit Pheriche. Alternatively you can rest up, enjoy the sun, drink hot chocolate and curl up with a book too.

## DAY 10 Trek Dingboche (4410m) to Intermediate camp (4900m) ~3 hrs

We'll make an easy ascent up towards Imja Valley camping above Bibre on the trail to Kongma La pass. The rest of the afternoon is free to enjoy views of Imja valley.

## DAY 11 Trek Intermediate camp (4900m) to Pokhalde base camp (5400m) ~3 hrs

We continue up the route stopping just short of Kongma La pass by lakes for our base camp. We will be able to appreciate close views of the summit from camp.

## DAY 12 Summit Pokhalde (5806m) via Kongma La pass (5535m), trek to Lobuche (4910m) ~8 hrs

From camp it's a short hike to Kongma La pass that provides access between the Imja and Khumbu valleys. Reaching the Pokhalde summit is a rock scramble left of the pass. After celebrating our first summit success, we'll return to base camp for lunch, pack up camp and then make the steep descent from the pass to Lobuche.

## DAY 13 Trek Lobuche (4910m) to Lobuche base camp (4900m) ~3 hrs

In the morning we'll trek to Lobuche base camp, an easy traverse contouring around Lobuche on the south side of the mountain. The camp provides uplooking views of neighbouring but challenging peaks of Taboche (6367m), Cholatse (6335m) and Arakam Tse (6423m).

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## WHAT'S A TYPICAL DAY ON THE TRAIL?

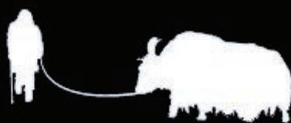
You will be woken up with a knock on your door around 6am by a staff member. You'll get dressed and packed for the day's walk, and have your duffel ready for your porter before breakfast ~7am. The aim will be to leave the teahouse and hit the trail by 8am.

On the trail, you'll carry a small day pack (20-40LL, ~8kg) with your personal items, water, warm clothing and wet weather gear. Generally lunch is at the rest stop for the night, which leaves the afternoon free to rest and soak in the views.

Dinner is ~7pm, and most trekkers then either read/play cards or head to bed early ~8-9pm to prepare for the next day's adventure.

## CLIMATE

In spring and autumn, the weather is dry and a pleasant temperature for walking. Below Namche, temperatures can reach ~24°C in the day. Whilst, above 4000m, day temperatures can range 15°C-20°C. Above 5000m, nights are cool and may drop to -10°C. Prepare cool and warm attire as suggested in the packing list.



## DAY 14 Rest day in Lobuche base camp

Today is a training day in base camp to practice climbing on fixed lines (up on a jumars and descending on a belay device). It's also a contingency day to allow for poor weather conditions that may delay a summit attempt.

## DAY 15 Climb Lobuche base camp (4900m) to lake camp (5300m)

After crossing a grassy meadow to the foot of Lobuche peak, we ascend steeply on a rocky trail to a col for lunch. From here, we can appreciate magnificent 360° views of Everest, Lhotse and Nuptse.

## DAY 16 Climb Lobuche lake camp (5300m) to high camp (5700m)

To reach high camp along the start of the summit ridge, it's another 1.5-2 hr rock scramble or snow climb depending on conditions. Do not miss the stunning sunset view from high camp!



Sunrise from Lobuche high camp

## DAY 17 Summit Lobuche East (6119m), return to base camp (4900m)

Summit day begins with an alpine start at 4am for a quick breakfast and dressing for a summit climb. We leave camp by 5am and walk up the ridge for 50m to a face. Climbing on fixed lines up the 45° snow wall, we then reach the ridge proper. We follow the ridge around seracs (snow/ice climb) to the 1st or false summit. Be prepared for exposure along the way as we walk on the ridge. It's a quick rappel down from the 1st summit, then finally up another 60m to the real summit by mid morning. We return by the same route to high camp for a break and pack up camp, and head to base camp.



Climbing to Lobuche East summit

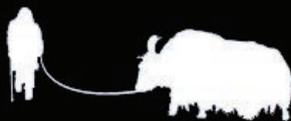
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## PACKING LIST

- 20-40L day pack
- Trekking clothes (1 shorts, 2 t-shirts, 1 pants, etc)
- 1 set windproof/waterproof shells
- 1 fleece (mid-heavy weight)
- 1 mid layer shirt or fleece
- 1 fleece pants
- 1 soft shell pants
- 2 sets thermal underwear (top/bottom)
- 1 pair of insulating gloves
- 5 pairs of trekking socks
- 2 pairs of liner socks
- 1 pair of gaiters (high calf)
- 1 pair of waterproof trekking boots
- 1 pair of sandals (e.g. crocs)
- 1 set of trekking poles
- 1 warm hat (wool/fleece)
- 1 balaclava
- 2 sets of buff/scarf
- 1 glacier sunglasses (cat. 4)
- 1 sunhat
- 2 One litre water bottles (e.g. Nalgene)
- 1 head torch (plus batteries)
- Mountaineering boots (light weight leather or plastic double)
- Mountaineering crampons
- Ice axe
- Jumar and abseiling device
- Climbing harness and helmet
- Karabiners (3 screw gate, 2 snap gate), prussic cord, slings
- Closed cell sleeping mat (e.g. Exped down mat type 7)
- Personal toiletries (including sunscreen, hand sanitiser, body wipes, etc)
- Passport, travel insurance (including mountain rescue) and copies of passport
- Entertainment (e.g. books, notebook, camera, cards)
- Sleeping bag, down jacket, tents and duffel will be provided by Himalayan Ascent

NB: Mountaineering equipment can be rented in Kathmandu



## DAY 18 Trek Lobuche base camp (4900m) to Nirekha base camp (5050m) ~2 hrs

Nirekha base camp is located a short distance from Lobuche base camp on the West side of Lobuche. After our previous full day climbing Lobuche, this day is easy. We will reach our camp by some lakes before lunch, so that the remainder of the day can be spent soaking up warmth from the sun and resting. You will be able to appreciate our final and most challenging peak from camp. Nirekha sits just northwest behind Lobuche on the same chain of mountains. Depending on conditions and for those with previous rock climbing experience, your guide will take you through the basics of roping up to a line for alpine style climbing.

## DAY 19 Rest in Nirekha base camp (5050m)

After 2 summits and the hardest still to come, we will take an extra day to rest in base camp. This is also a weather contingency day to allow extra time for summit opportunities should bad weather delay our summit pushes.

## DAY 20 Trek Nirekha base camp (5050m) to Nirekha high camp (5600m) ~4 hrs

Climbing up to our high camp below a col west of Nirekha is a slow ascent that passes Cho La pass (5330m) on the left and Nirekha itself on the right. The route includes a short but steep (45°) ice and snow slope. We will mostly rest to prepare for our big and last summit day.



View of Nirekha on climb to high camp

## DAY 21 Summit Nirekha (6169m) and return to high camp (5600m)

The day will start early with an alpine morning start. The climb first follows the snow covered west ridge up. The route progressively gets steeper (35-50°) and is quite exposed on some sections. We will bypass seracs, cross crevasses and climb an ice wall to eventually reach the north summit of Nirekha. This route is more technical than Lobuche, and it will require a high level of fitness and confidence to attempt it. We return by the same route to high camp for a much deserved rest! Congratulations, you have summited 3 peaks!



Everest from Nirekha summit

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## WHY HIMALAYAN ASCENT?

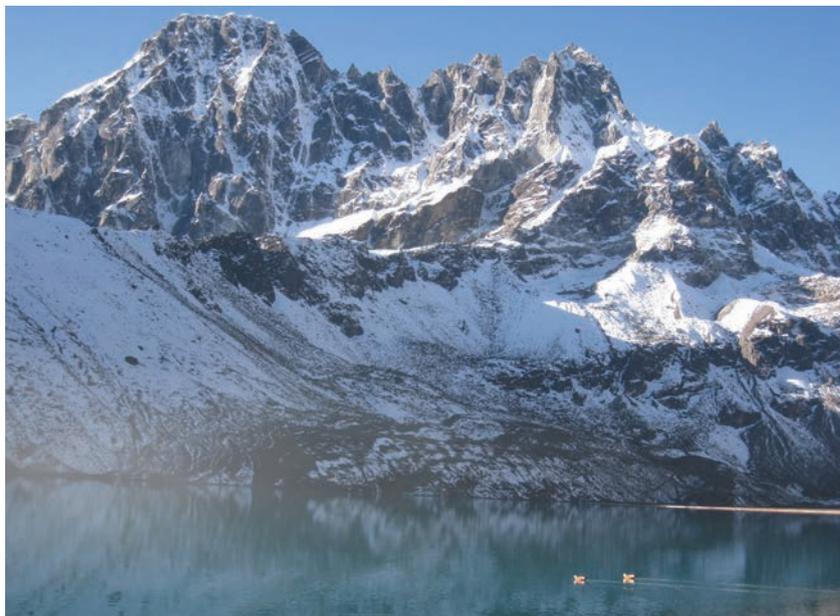
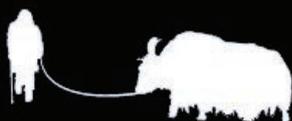
Himalayan Ascent is owned and managed by local Nepalese guides Sumit Joshi and Lakpa Sherpa. With more than 40 years of guiding experience between the pair across the Himalayas in Nepal, Tibet, India, Pakistan and Bhutan, Himalayan Ascent *know the Himalayas*, its challenges, people and mountains.

As avid rock climbers with a passion for the mountains, Sumit and Lakpa have led numerous expeditions to Everest, K2, Broad Peak, Cho Oyu, Manaslu and Ama Dablam. Raised in the outdoor wonderland of the Solukhumbu, the Himalayan Ascent difference is a guiding and support team of personnel who are intimately familiar with the Himalayas, who actively enjoy the outdoors and love sharing the experience with others. With a growing reputation for providing affordable, international standard complete guiding service for challenging treks in remote areas or demanding 8000m expeditions, Himalayan Ascent has the experience to deliver the type of service that's desired by international outdoor adventurers.

## CONTACT US

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Ducks on Gokyo lakes

### DAY 22 Trek to Nirekha high camp (5600m) to Thangnak (3860m) ~6 hrs

We will drop down the col on the north Kangchung side, and then climb south to rejoin the trail that crosses Cho La pass. From here we're descending to lower altitudes, stopping first at Thangnak, an entry point into the Gokyo valley.

### DAY 23 Trek Thangnak (3860m) to Dole (4200m) optional via Gokyo lakes (4790m) ~4 hrs

From Thangnak, Gokyo and its serene glacier lakes is a 2 hr hike north. For those still with energy, there is the option to make a day hike to view the lakes. Alternatively, the trail can be followed directly south to Dole.

### DAY 24 Trek Dole (4200m) to Namche (3440m) ~ 5 hrs

With the high climbs now behind us, our adventure leads us back to Namche for refreshing showers, espresso coffee and internet access to share our climbing success with friends and family! The trail follows the Dudh koshi river, across the valley you can enjoy the farming terraces of Phortse and stunning views of Ama dablam before we re-enter Namche.

### DAY 25 Trek Namche (3440m) to Lukla (2840m) ~5-6 hr

It's a big downhill trek from Namche to the valley floor. Take this opportunity to farewell Sherpa culture as the trail undulates through the villages. This is our last night as a group with your guides and porters.

### DAY 26-27 Fly to Kathmandu and in Kathmandu

The flight will give you a final close look at some Himalayan giants (Gauri Shanker, Langtang). Once in Kathmandu, you're free to relax. A massage in one of the many beauty spas is highly recommended! If you didn't make it to Bhaktapur or the other durbar squares in Patan/Kathmandu, make sure you don't miss these world heritage sites. They provide another viewpoint of Nepal's diverse culture and ancient architectural talents.

### DAY 28 Depart Kathmandu

We bid Kathmandu and Nepal farewell....until next time.

Note: daily walking hours include a lunch break

## OPTIONS

- Trek only and no peak climbs
- Extra trek to Ama dablam base camp or Imja valley
- Other trekking peaks (e.g. Island Peak)

CONTACT US ABOUT COST DETAILS FOR THESE OPTIONS