

**19**  
DAYS

# EVEREST BASE CAMP

Trek to Everest Base Camp via Phortse and Kala Pattar



2015 dates  
Duration: 19 days

**HIMALAYAN  
ASCENT** 



Starts from

**\$2250**

### GRADE/FITNESS

This is a trek and requires no prior trekking experience. Good fitness is required as most days will involve 4-6 hr of trekking carrying a 5kg day pack. The trail is non technical but will reach a maximum altitude of 5500m.

### INCLUDES:

Trekking permits, 4 nights Kathmandu hotel, trekking guides, transport in Nepal, extensive high altitude wilderness first aid kit, all meals outside Kathmandu, porters to carry personal/group equipment, down jacket, sleeping bag and expedition duffel.

### 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) and personal trekking gear.





## HIGHLIGHTS

- Stunning views of Everest, Lhotse, Nuptse and Ama dablam
- Colourful Buddhist culture
- Spirited Sherpa people
- Alex Lowe Foundation's Khumbu Climbing School
- Tengboche monastery

## OVERVIEW

The trek to Everest base camp offers a comprehensive and colourful journey through Nepal's most famous valley, the Khumbu, the home of Everest (8848m) and Lhotse (8501m). The trail also offers glimpses of other 8000m giants, Cho Oyu (8201m), Makalu (8463m) and Shisapangma (8013m). During Spring, the valley is awash with flowering rhododendron trees of various colours and large white magnolia trees. The rolling landscape varies from lush low alpine vegetation to dry high altitude scrubland. Inhabiting this harsh land are the Sherpa people,

an ethnic group famous for their hardiness, spirit and mountaineering prowess. This trek journeys into the heartland of the Sherpa people providing an insight into their rich Buddhist culture and traditional way of life. Sir Edmund Hillary grew a passion for Sherpas from his early mountaineering years and following Everest, spent his remaining years dedicated to fundraising and bringing development to the region.

Spring also brings climbers from around the globe with Everest ambitions. You'll share the trail with yak and porters carrying supplies to Everest base camp (EBC). During this season, Himalayan Ascent can offer you accommodation at an Everest Expedition camp. This unique opportunity gives a chance to mix with excited and anxious climbers, and gives close up views of the infamous Khumbu icefall.

Our route begins from the gateway airport town of Lukla at 2840m. Following the Dudh kosi river on the valley floor, the trail first passes through farming villages of mixed Tamang, Rai and Sherpa communities. We then make a sharp ascent up to Namche, the capital of the Khumbu and the traditional trading centre of Sherpa people. We take a less traveled road to Phortse, a typical Sherpa farming village and the site of the Alex Lowe Charitable Foundation's Khumbu Climbing School. Many Sherpa climbers come from Phortse and have been trained at the Khumbu Climbing School. From here it's a short trek to Pangboche, the highest permanent Sherpa settlement. We acclimatise in Dingboche first before trekking the last few kilometres of a high altitude trail to EBC. The view of Everest and Lhotse from Kala Pattar, our highest point, is a magnificent reward! The return route passes through Tengboche and the Tengboche monastery. This is the largest monastery in the region and is open to visitors to share prayer time with monks.





## ITINERARY

### 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

This is a free day for you 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. Take the time to drop into the Monjo school, they love visitors.

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

Before leaving Monjo, we'll drop into the Khumbu National Park Information Centre where you can trace our trail from a 3D model of the region. 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 for the spectacular scenery to come! From here, you can explore the villages of Khunde and Khumjung where Sir Edmund Hillary opened a hospital and school, respectively. Or the afternoon is free for wandering around Namche, emailing friends/family 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 pass a chorten in memory of Tenzing Sherpa, Sir Edmund Hillary's climbing partner, before reaching Kyangjuma to break for morning tea. 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. Since 2003, the Khumbu Climbing School which operates in Phortse has trained many keen young men and women. Every winter, renowned international climbers and local guides work together to run climbing courses. The partnership has not only increased climbing enthusiasm amongst locals, but has also improved general climbing safety. On arrival, we will stop into the Khumbu Climbing School to check their activities, perhaps even getting in a rock climb at the nearby crag.

### **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) ~4 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. You feel instantly that Everest must be close! Dingboche is the first of a series of settlements leading to EBC 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 ~5 hrs**

We take a rest day in Dingboche to acclimatise to our increased altitude gain. In the morning, we'll walk up to a lookout to touch the 5000m mark. It's a steep climb but the views of Makalu (8463m), Lhotse (8501m), Nuptse (7861m) and on clear days, Cho Oyu (8201m) and



Shispangma (8013m) are worth any feelings of breathlessness. After lunch, if you're feeling energetic, you can hike towards Chhukung village or down to Pheriche. Alternatively, curling in with a book and hot chocolate is also recommended.

### **Day 10 Trek Dingboche (4410m) to Lobuche (4910m) ~5 hr**

Just above Dingboche and along a plateau of yak herder shelters, we enter a serene sanctuary of panoramic mountains. Take a moment to absorb and reflect on feelings of excitement that Everest is just around the corner! Passing Dughla, it's a 1 hr hike up to Thokla pass (4830m) where memorials have been built for fallen climbers. We then cross rocky terrain to Lobuche for the night.





### **Day 11 Trek Lobuche (4910m) to Gorak Shep (5140m) and Kala Pattar (5550m) ~7 hrs**

Gorak Shep is the last settlement before reaching EBC. From Lobuche, it's a short walk of a couple of hours across a glacier moraine to reach there around mid morning. After a quick refreshment, we will hike the trail up the large black hill behind our teahouse. The summit of Kala Patter or "Black Rock" offers us our first real look at Everest, an unobstructed view of the highest mountain in the world. Alongside it stands Lhotse, the 4th highest in the world. Kala Pattar is also our highest point on the trek. We trek back down to a hearty lunch and a good rest.

### **Day 12 Trek Gorak Shep (5140m) to Everest base camp (5300m) ~4 hrs**

Finally we reach our objective today, EBC! We walk further along the rocky terrain alongside the Khumbu glacier to EBC. This pile of rocks sitting at the foot of the infamous Khumbu

ice fall in spring is home to some 30 teams (hundreds of climbers and support staff) aspiring to climb Everest. In the afternoon, we'll take our time inspecting the Khumbu ice fall and visiting the Himalayan Rescue Association. We'll spend the night at EBC using the camp facilities of Himalayan Ascent's Everest/Lhotse operation. This is a great opportunity to see firsthand, what it takes to climb an 8000m mountain. During autumn, instead of staying at EBC, we'll spend a day visiting Ama dablam base camp or simply resting with fantastic views and a good book.

### **Day 13 Trek EBC (5300m) to Pheriche (4270m) ~7 hrs**

As we trek the undulating glacier trail back to Thukla pass, we look back and around at the snow peaks within this wonderful valley. You can understand why this region attracts so many climbers to this playground of mountains. We continue the downhill trail to Pheriche.





#### **Day 14 Trek Pheriche (4270m) to Tengboche (3860m) ~4 hrs**

As we descend to lower altitudes, every step you take from here to Lukla, you will feel rejuvenated with increasing oxygen in the air. We have lunch at Pangboche, cross the river and pass through Deboche to reach our destination of Tengboche for the night. Tengboche monastery is famous for hosting the major Buddhist festival, Mani Rimdu, in November. The monastery itself was rebuilt after a fire in 1989. Visitors are allowed to observe prayer time with the monks at mid morning/mid afternoon. This is not to be missed! Also enjoy a cake at the bakery.



#### **Day 15 Trek Tengboche (3860m) to Monjo (2840m) ~ 5 hrs**

It's a big descent from Tengboche to the Dudh koshi river crossing, followed by a 45 min hike up the otherside heading back to Namche. The trail from here is an easy traverse with familiar sights of Thamserku and the Kongde range. We pause in Namche for lunch before making another big descent back to the valley floor. Crossing over the many suspension bridges in warmer temperatures again, we eventually break in Monjo for the night.

#### **Day 16 Trek Monjo (2840m) to Lukla (2840m) ~ 3 hrs**

Enjoy the sights of the maniwalls around Ghat and other villages, as we make our way back to Lukla. This is our last opportunity to take in the Buddhist culture that has prevailed throughout the trek before returning to the melting pot of cultures found in Kathmandu.

#### **Day 17 Fly Lukla to Kathmandu, stay in Kathmandu**

Another early morning flight out of Lukla back to Kathmandu. You have the rest of the day to rest from the trek. A massage is highly recommended!







### **Day 18 In Kathmandu**

Our last day to catch in some sight seeing, shop, relax and prepare for departure. 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 19 Depart Kathmandu**

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

Note: daily walking hours include a lunch break





# 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.



## OTHER INFORMATION

### 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. 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.

### Health tips

This trek reaches a maximum altitude of 5550m at Kala Pattar. As such, you may experience some affects of high altitude (e.g. headaches, increased breathing, disturbed sleep) as your body adapts. The trek 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, Hepatitis B and Japanese Encephalitis 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 or parasitic infections by eating from hygienic venues, avoiding salad (raw) and unpeeled fruits.

### 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, ~5kg) 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

Spring and autumn (before and after monsoon) are both dry seasons, and the forests are flowering and lush. In winter, the skies are brilliantly blue but cold, sometimes with snowfall. Below Namche, temperatures can reach ~24°C in the day. Whilst, above 4000m, day temperatures can range 15°C-20°C. Nights are cool and may drop to -10°C during storms. Prepare cool and warm attire as suggested in the packing list.

## Packing list

- 20-40L day pack
- Trekking clothes (1 shorts, 2 t-shirts, 2 pants, etc)
- 1 set windproof/waterproof shells
- 1 fleece (mid-heavy weight)
- 1 mid layer shirt or fleece
- 1 fleece 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 waterproof trekking boots
- 1 pair of sandals (e.g. Crocs)
- 1 set of trekking poles
- 1 warm hat (wool/fleece)
- 2 sets of buff/scarf
- 1 sunglasses (category 3)
- 1 sunhat
- 2 One litre water bottles (e.g. Nalgene)
- 1 head torch (plus batteries)

- 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/mat, down jacket, tents and duffel will be provided by Himalayan Ascent

## 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.



# **HIMALAYAN ASCENT**

The logo for Himalayan Ascent features the company name in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. To the right of the word 'ASCENT', there is a blue silhouette of a person leading a yak by a rope.

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