

26
DAYS

AMA DABLAM EXPEDITION

Summit the best loved mountain of the Khumbu



DATES

6th Oct to 31st Oct
20th Oct to 14th Nov
27th Oct to 21st Nov

**HIMALAYAN
ASCENT** 



Starts from

\$7250

GRADE/FITNESS

This expedition requires previous climbing experience or strong rock climbing experience. Excellent fitness is essential as most climbing days are 8-12 hr along a technical route carrying a ~10-15kg pack. The South West Ridge route is technical and will reach a maximum altitude of 6856m.

Cost includes:

Trekking and climbing permits, 4 nights Kathmandu hotel, experienced climbing guides at high guide:client ratio, transport in Nepal, extensive high altitude wilderness first aid kit, fully serviced base camp with personal tent, dining, kitchen and shower tents, serviced higher camps, all meals outside Kathmandu, porters to carry personal/group equipment, climbing Sherpas to set up camps and carry group food, 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) and personal trekking/climbing gear.





OVERVIEW

Towering over Tengboche monastery and the Sherpa village of Pangboche at a height of 6856m, Ama Dablam is one of the most iconic mountains in Nepal. The much-coveted South West ridge is one of the more popular routes in the Himalayas today, with climbers often using it as preparation for an expedition to one of the greater 8000m peaks (of course the mountain is by its own right a fantastic objective!). Comprising of steep ice and rock with exposed ridges, the technical nature of the route is somewhat lessened by the presence of fixed lines along the majority of the route.

Our Route: We start our acclimatisation when we land in Lukla, the thriving Sherpa village known as the 'Gateway to the Khumbu'. We trek through numerous Sherpa villages before arriving in the grassy surrounds of Ama Dablam Base Camp, which is undoubtedly one of the more scenic base camps in the Himalayas.

Above base camp we place three camps on the mountain, each precariously positioned on the ridge, which means you'll need to have a good head for heights. Our summit push will begin early in the morning from Camp 3 and hopefully you'll top out in great weather, as the summit affords spectacular views of numerous Himalayan giants, including Mount Everest, Lhotse and Nuptse.

This month-long expedition is suited to strong rock climbers and technically-orientated mountaineers who have previous experience in the Himalayas or other lower technical peaks in Europe, North and South America or New Zealand.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Stunning views of Everest, Lhotse, Nuptse, Makalu and Cho Oyu
- Summit one of the jewels of the Khumbu valley
- Experience technical climbing under well protected conditions
- Colourful Buddhist culture
- Spirited Sherpa people





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 day to check your gear with your guides. If needed, there's time to buy extra gear from local suppliers in town. Once the gear check is complete, you can sight see for the rest of the day. Don't miss some of Kathmandu's world heritage sites (e.g. Boudhnath, Kathmandu and Patan Durbar Square). Kathmandu is a hectic city full of culture and historic sites.

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 kosi river upstream. This region is Buddhist so remember to walk clockwise or to the right of maniwalls and prayer flag poles. Monjo is a Sherpa village situated near the base of the hill up to Namche.

Day 4 Trek Monjo (2840m) to Namche (3440m) ~4 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 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 and to do last minute gear shopping.





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 your objective, Ama dablam alongside Everest 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 Deboche (3710m) ~ 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 will pause at Kyangjuma for a morning tea break and to admire stunning views of Ama dablam. From here it's a descent to the valley floor to cross the Imja river and then uphill to Tengboche. The Tengboche monastery is the largest monastery in the Khumbu, which allows public viewings of its prayer sessions. It's a short 30 min descent from Tengboche to Deboche, our home for the night.

Day 7 Trek Deboche (3710m) to Ama dablam base camp (4600m) ~4.5 hrs

In the morning we head to Pangboche, take a short break, cross the Imja river and then walk up the ridge opposite the village. It's a gentle ascent to this meadow base camp that sits at the foot of the mountain. With close up views of this Himalayan mastiff, it's one of the best camp sites in the Khumbu. Base camp consists of a dining tent, kitchen tent, shower tent and individual comfortable stand up tents for clients. You'll get a good sleep on your 8 inch sleeping mattress, critical for good rests after acclimatisation rounds on the mountain before the summit push.

Day 8 Rest day in Ama dablam base camp

We take an easy day to give your body extra time to slowly acclimatise. You can enjoy the day by exploring base camp grounds, taking short walks or sleeping and enjoying your base camp service. Eating good healthy food is critical for success so eat well. During one of the rest days before beginning your acclimatisation rounds, we'll conduct a special puja (Buddhist ceremony) with the local lama to request the mountain spirits for safe passage. This is a highlight for many climbers.



Day 9 Training day at base camp

We begin the day by first checking gear before heading out for a practise session. On a set up of fixed lines, we'll practice climbing up and traversing on fixed lines, and abseiling over knots. You should be confident using your gear whilst fully kitted up (gloves, climbing clothes). Please feel free to ask your guides if you have questions about safety and explanations about the route.

Day 10 Day trip base camp to 5800m

The first round of acclimatisation trips on the mountain starts with a hike up to 5800m, at the foot of the SW ridge route. We walk eastwards on a ridge around the south end of the Mingbo glacier that stretches off Ama dablam. From the saddle, we can see Mingbo La pass further East that gives passage to the Hunku valley. We'll hike up through a boulder field, cross a slab area and up a gully to the ridge. The SW route can be clearly seen from this advantage point to give you a better idea of the challenges and fun ahead! We return via the same route to good food and rest.

Day 11 Rest and gear preparation

Over the next 2 days we'll be climbing up to Camp 2 and sleeping at Camp 1, so



this is the day to pack and prepare. You'll be carrying your sleeping bag, mat and personal items. Some climbers choose to bring 2 sets of sleeping bags so that 1 is left at base camp and 1 at a higher camp. This spares you from carrying your sleeping bag constantly up and down the mountain. Climbing Sherpas will head up today to set up the camps carrying tents, food and fuel.

Day 12 Climb base camp (4600m) to Camp 1 (5900m)

We follow the ridge route up through the boulder field, over the slab, up the gully and then scramble further to the tent platform, or Camp 1. You'll be welcomed with a hot drink and will be able to rest in your tent before dinner.





Day 13 Climb Camp 1 (5900m) to Camp 2 (6100m), return to base camp (4600m)

This is the first serious day of climbing. It begins with a hike up to 2 finger like rock projections, and a climb up to the ridge proper. It's a narrow ridge that leads to an exposed traverse on tension fixed lines. We jumar up to the ridge again and follow this to another face traverse, that takes us to the Yellow Tower. It's a 15m pitch around AUS 16/US 5.8/5b standard to our camp. Camp 2 is an infamous site known for its precarious location with 360o degrees of surrounding exposure. Once we've touched this site we drop back down to base camp.

Day 14-15 Rest, contingency day and final Summit preparation

With our full rotation now complete and familiarity of the route and its challenges established, we rest and wait for our summit push. This is time to rest and eat! We plan an extra contingency day for weather.

Day 16 Climb base camp (4600m) to Camp 1 (5900m)

The final summit push! We follow the now familiar route up to Camp 1.

Day 17 Climb Camp 1 (5900m) to Camp 2 (6100m)

We continue on up now to Camp 2. Get a good rest and sleep. The next 2 days will be challenging and rewarding!





Day 18 Climb Camp 2 (6100m) to Camp 3 (6400m)

The climb from Camp 2 to Camp 3 is considered to be the most difficult of the entire route. We begin by dropping briefly, traverse eastwards and then ascend to the base of the Grey Tower. We climb up alongside the Grey Tower using a steep rock gully that's approximately an 80m ascent over 3 pitches. Watch for rock fall here especially if there are other parties over head. We cross an exposed traverse that brings us to the West side of a large snow ridge (Mushroom ridge). From here it's a climb up on this steep and narrow ridge to Camp 3.



Day 19 Climb Camp 3 (6400m) to Summit (6856m), return to Camp 2 (6100m)

Our summit push! We climb up the steep snow/ice slope behind Camp 3 and move towards the right side of the face to a small snow field. We cross a Bergschrund and climb up to an ice crest. This follows the summit ridge route to the large glorious snowfield summit top! The central position of Ama dablam affords stunning views of Khumbu peaks and beyond from its summit. From the summit, you see the summit of Island Peak just below you, and unobstructed views of Everest and Lhotse. Further a field in other valleys, Cho Oyu and Malakhu can also be seen. After a period of celebration on the summit, we climb and abseil down to Camp 3. Pack up camp and head to Camp 2 for the night. A well deserved rest awaits.

Day 20 Climb Camp 2 (6100m) to base camp (4600m)

After a quick breakfast, we pack up Camp 2 and return to base camp. Showers and good food are waiting to welcome you "home" from your summit success.





OTHER OPTIONAL SERVICES AVAILABLE

- Base camp only service (no climbing Sherpas or serviced higher camps)
- No personal Sherpa guide on summit day
- Trekking to Ama dablam base camp only
- Joint expeditions to Island Peak or Lobuche East can be arranged, requires extra 7 days

Contact us for cost details regarding these options.

Day 21 Rest and pack up base camp

It's been an exhausting last few days so we take an extra day to rest and slowly begin to pack up base camp. Enjoy your last day soaking in the views from this tranquil camp site.

Day 22 Trek base camp (4600m) to Namche (3440m) ~6 hr

We hike down the ridge to Pangboche, and then follow the main traffic of hikers back to Namche. Back in town, you can send emails to family and friends about your summit news, and enjoy good coffee and bakery treats.

Day 23 Trek Namche (3440m) to Lukla (2840m) ~6hr

This is our last day on the trail. The route from Namche drops back down to the valley floor and follows the river towards Lukla. Take in the beautifully decorated maniwalls and prayer wheels lining the trail to Lukla.

Day 24 Fly Lukla to Kathmandu

After living in Sherpaland for the last few weeks, we arrive back in the melting pot of cultures that is Kathmandu. Spend this day, doing last minute sighting and shopping.

Day 25 In Kathmandu

Today is your last day in Nepal so prepare for departure, packing and returning gear. A massage is highly recommend to relax your tired muscles before your long haul flight home.

Day 26 Depart Kathmandu

We farewell the Himalayas and people of Nepal until your next Himalayan adventure.





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.





WHY HIMALAYAN ASCENT TO AMA DABLAM?

Himalayan Ascent runs small sized expeditions on Ama dablam. You'll get to know your Sherpa guides and team mates personally. Building a good rapport with your team is critical for summit success. Our Sherpa guides are formally trained through the Khumbhu Climbing School or the Nepal Mountaineering Association, and some are internationally accredited. We have a reputation for having the best managed and most comfortable base camp, and a camp cook known for making the best pizzas. Want to speak to our past clients? Contact us for the contact details of our previous Ama dablam clients.



OTHER INFORMATION

SLEEP AND FOOD

Whilst on the trail to base camp, 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.

You'll end up spending a fair bit of time in base camp as you rest in between acclimatisation trips and wait for a suitable summit window. We provide a comfortable, healthy environment at base camp so that you can focus on getting prepared for your summit push.

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.

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.

HEALTH TIPS

This expedition reaches a maximum altitude of 6856m, so you may experience some affects 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 carry a well stocked first aid kit containing commonly used medication, e.g. ibuprofen, general antibiotics. Stay healthy and avoid bacterial/parasitic infections by eating from hygienic venues, avoid raw salad and unpeeled fruits.

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. 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.

FITNESS AND EXPERIENCE

The South West ridge route requires technical climbing over rock, snow and ice. Even though the route will mostly be fixed, you should be familiar and confident mixed climbing. Preferably experience at Alpine grade AD and rock climbing at a minimum AUS 16/US 5.7 is recommended. Excellent fitness particularly endurance



cardiovascular fitness is a must. Most climbing days will be strenuous over steep long sections. The route is very exposed at parts so you should feel comfortable and confident with heights.

The expedition will include some training time to practice using a jumar and abseiling devices. However, we recommend that you have some experience climbing on fixed lines. A previous experience on a Himalayan expedition is advised, but not essential if you are already an experienced climber.

CLIMATE

Immediately following monsoon or rainy season, autumn is a dry time and the forests are lush. Sometimes this can be broken by periods of cold and snow. The weather is dry in spring. Overall, it's pleasant walking temperature. Below Namche, temperatures can reach ~24°C in the day. Whilst, above 4000m, day temperatures can range 15°C-20°C. In base camp, day temperatures can range 10°C-15°C. Between 6000m to 7000m, temperatures will range from -15°C to 15°C.

PACKING LIST

Familiarity and comfort using your personal equipment is paramount to summit success. We recommend that you test drive your equipment before joining this expedition, ideally on another Himalayan expedition. This is a list of recommended items you should bring with you. Please email us about specific brands or models we know works well on Ama dablam.

There are a number of branded mountaineering equipment stores now open in Kathmandu. To save some check-in luggage allowance, contact us about what's available locally for purchase.

CLOTHING

Head:

- Baseball cap
- Balaclava (comfortable tight-fitting, which covers as much skin as possible)
- Warm polar fleece or wool hat (beanie)
- Glacier glasses (category 4 lens, must wrap around your face well)
- Ski goggles (snug fit with good ventilation and anti-fog)
- Headlamp X 2 (bright LED with powerful beam) and plenty of extra batteries
- Climbing helmet (adjustable, climbing-specific)

Hands:

- Gloves (snug fitting wind stopper, and a few pairs of thin liners)
- Big Mountain gloves (Gore Tex with removable liner, warmest available)
- Big Mountain mittens (warm and should fit over your wind stopper gloves. Must be able to operate a Jumar wearing them)

Feet:

- Liner socks (4 pairs)
- Hiking socks (4 pairs)
- Warm mountain socks (4 pairs)
- Down booties
- Base camp shoes (comfortable, waterproof and warm)
- Hiking shoes (good low to mid-cut, Gore-Tex lined)
- Mid-weight mountaineering boots suitable for 7000m summits (e.g. plastic double boots)



Upper Body:

- Base layers (breathable and moisture wicking, few different weights, e.g. silk weight, mid-weight and expedition weight)
- Warm jacket (fleece or polarguard)
- Softshell jacket (with wind stopping properties)
- Gore-Tex jacket (breathable waterproof with good hood that fits over a climbing helmet)
- Synthetic fill Jacket (e.g. primaloft)
- Down jacket (800 fill, lightweight with hood)
- Sleeping bag X 2, -20oC to -10oC rated (800+ goose down fill, correct length for your height, one for base camp and one for higher camp)
- Harness (light weight alpine with belay loop and gear loop)
- Carabineers (4 screw gate and 4 snap gate)
- Belay device (easy to use and lightweight)
- Prussik cord (about 8 meters of 6mm and 5 meters of 4mm)
- Ice Axe (for alpine use and right length for your height)
- Crampons (semi auto with heel bail, good anti-balling system and steel)
- Jumar (large handle to fit your glove hand)
- Trekking Poles (lightweight with good snow basket)

Legs:

- Base layer (breathable and moisture wicking, mid-weight and expedition weight)
- Soft shell pants (comfortable for everyday wear)
- Gore-Tex pants (heavy duty with reinforced crampon patches and waterproof zippers)
- Insulated pants (down or primaloft)
- Shorts (quick dry)

PLUS:

Normal city clothes, trekking clothes, scarf (bandana, buffs) and underwear (avoid cotton).

EQUIPMENT

- Small day pack for trekking and city use (comfortable, 15-20L)
- Backpack (50-70L, fitted for your back length and internal frame)
- Duffle bags to transport your gear to Nepal
- Sleeping pads (full length, insulated inflatable and closed cell foam pads with repair kit)

PLUS:

Small personal first aid kit, water bottles, pee bottles, pocket knife, cigarette lighter, pad locks for the duffle, Ziplock bags, garbage bags to use as waterproof liner, different size stuff sacks, sunscreens (heavy duty), lip balms, toiletries, snacks to last one month and entertainment items (e.g. music, books, camera and phone with solar power charging system).

Travel documents: passport, visa (30 days), passport photos, copy of your travel insurance and photocopies of passport.



HIMALAYAN ASCENT



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