

**45**  
DAYS

# MANASLU EXPEDITION

Summit the world's 8th highest mountain



## DATES

28th August - 11th  
October 2015

**HIMALAYAN  
ASCENT** 



Starts from

**\$16,500**

### GRADE/FITNESS

This expedition requires excellent fitness and prior experience of a Himalayan expedition. You should be able to carry at least 20kg, demonstrate strong endurance and high mountaineering experience. The North West ridge is the normal route that crosses an icefall. There is risk of serac fall and avalanche on this route. The maximum altitude is 8156m.

### Cost Includes:

4 nights Kathmandu accommodation, airport transfer to hotel and welcome dinner, all necessary climbing and trekking permits, experienced expedition leader and base camp manager, government liaison officer, transport to Arughat and helicopter from Sama gaon, all meals and accommodation during trek to base camp and return, porter service to carry unlimited personal gear to base camp, fully serviced powered base camp (including personal tent, heated dining tent and communication tent, full satellite communication system (pay per use), all meals/snacks and hot showers), ICOM 2-way radio system for all guides to communicate between camps, team of Sherpa climbing guides to set up and stock all higher camps, Sherpa guides to carry personal gear to higher camps, all meals and tents above base camp, High Sherpa climbing guide: Client ratio on summit day, maximum oxygen allowance with the TopOut delivery system (allows multiple summit attempts), extensive high altitude wilderness first aid kit, porters to carry group equipment, all group climbing equipment, all other charges for route fixing and expedition duffels.

### Cost Excludes:

international flights to Kathmandu, tips and summit bonuses for Sherpa guides, tourist visa fees, meals in Kathmandu (USD 10-15 per meal), aerated and alcoholic beverages, personal items (e.g. phone calls, laundry), travel insurance (including early departure and mountain search/rescue) and personal climbing gear.





## OVERVIEW

Standing as a relatively isolated 8000m peak in Nepal's central mountain region, Manaslu (8156m) is the world's 8th highest mountain. Like Cho Oyu, it's a good mountain to test extreme high altitude climbing before taking on the Everest challenge. Manaslu is largely a non-technical climb when compared to other 8000m peaks, however, its avalanche-prone slopes mean that careful climbing is required throughout the expedition.

You can climb Manaslu as a true sea to summit adventure by trekking in from the village of Arughat, which at an altitude of only 530m is subtropical! The trail to Manaslu closely follows the Budhi Gandaki river, and weaves through Gurung farming villages, bamboo forests and countless waterfalls during summer, before climbing steeply into high alpine Bhotia villages inhabited by Tibetan descendents.

This expedition will summit Manaslu via the North-West ridge by placing four high camps above base camp. The most technical section is through the icefall between Camps 1 and 2, with some potential for serac fall in certain conditions. The remainder of the route is relatively straight forward, with increasing steep sections from Camp 3 to the summit.

You must have extensive climbing skills and a considerable level of experience in the Himalayas to join this expedition, preferably with prior 7000m expedition experience.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Ascent of the 8th highest mountain in the world
- Beautiful gorge trek through subtropical forests
- Colourful Buddhist culture of Bhotia tribes
- Traditional farming villages of Gurung and Magar hill tribes





## EXPEDITION BREAKDOWN

### Trek (10 days)

The trek to Manaslu base camp is one of the most varied and beautiful in Nepal. It begins in a subtropical climate by the roaring Budhi Gandaki, and slowly climbs up on a gorge trail used by villagers that meanders through a dense and humid forest. We pass traditional Gurung villages and magnificent waterfalls. Eventually we enter the high lands of the Nupri valley inhabited by Bhotia tribes. Trekking allows time for your body to acclimatise properly. If time is limited, there is the possibility to helicopter into directly into Sama goan (3525m), the last settlement before base camp. From here, base camp is a steep 1000m climb up the glacier moraine.

### Base camp (approx. 1 week)

Manaslu base camp (BC) is comfortable and well-equipped. It will be your home for the next few weeks. Each climber will have their own comfortable individual tent with comfortable mattress, extra blankets, and a carpeted floor. We will gather in our warm triple-skin heated and carpeted dining room for meals, and a separate, similarly outfitted communication and meeting tent with full internet facilities.

Here you can chill with fellow climbers, watch movies, check email, and stay in touch with home. In addition, it has become a climbing tradition in the Himalayas for all groups to conduct a small Buddhist ceremony (puja) to offer thanks to the mountain, and to ask it for safe passage through its environment. As we get ready, we will alternately rest and climb, giving ourselves the preparation necessary for the best chance of success.

### Climb (approx. 3 weeks spent above base camp)

After we settle in at base camp, we will proceed with checking and testing all of our climbing equipment before our first rotation through the higher camps. Our rotations will include spending nights progressively higher on the mountain as we climb and familiarise ourselves with the route. Meanwhile, our Sherpas will set up and stock higher camps (C1-C3) with essential supplies needed for the next month of climbing.

Once we are well-acclimatised and our camps are set, we will take some extra time to rest up at base camp, before going for the summit!





### **Day 1-2 Arrive in Kathmandu and 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. 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 Drive to Arughat (530m) ~6 hrs**

We drive 6 hrs out of the Kathmandu valley exiting via the busy west gate of the city, and down the hillside with direct views of the Langtang mountain range. The windy road eventually turns right into Gorkha district and up to Arughat, our trailhead. We have the afternoon to explore this little riverside town as we prepare for our trek.

### **Day 4 Trek Arughat (530m) to Khursani bari/Liding (860m) ~6 hrs**

We follow the Budh Gandaki river north passing Gurung and Magar farming villages, and through forests noisy with monkeys.

During summer especially and also autumn, large waterfalls stream down gorge cliffs feeding the Budh Gandaki river.

It's a refreshing sight in the heat at this low altitude. However, be prepared for fun and wet stream crossings!

### **Day 5 Trek Khursani bari (860m) to Machha Khola (930m) ~ 6 hrs**

We continue to follow the undulating trail along the river and through sal forests. The gorge narrows against steep cliffs and dense forest, and then widens for pleasant riverbeds. There's a steep climb up to Machha khola or "fish river" for our night's stop.

### **Day 6 Trek Machha khola (930m) to Dobhan (1070m) ~5.5 hrs**

At Tatopani or "hot water" you can stop to enjoy a natural hot spring bath under a cliff. After crossing a suspension bridge to the other side of the river, there's a climb up stone steps to Dobhan.

### **Day 7 Trek Dobhan (1070m) to Philim (1570m) ~6 hrs**

The trail continues on the true left of the river until Thado Bharyang just below the town of Jagat. We cross the river to Jagat, and to more prominent Buddhist communities as seen by chortens and mani walls in the villages. The route crosses the river again and up to Philim.





### **Day 8 Trek Philim (1570m) to Deng (1860m) ~6 hrs**

From Philim we enjoy more thunderous waterfalls and a sensational gorge walk high above the river. The trail then wanders through pine and bamboo forests to the town of the Gurung town of Deng.

### **Day 9 Trek Deng (1860m) to Namrung (2582m) ~6 hrs**

The Budhi Gandaki river thins further as we continue the journey now high in Upper Manaslu. We trek north-west in parallel to the Tibetan border only 5km north when we reach Ghap. Maniwalls and chortens welcome and well wish travellers through villages inhabited by Bhotia tribes, Tibetan descendants who migrated into the Nupri valley. We trek through forests are filled with alpine rhododendrons and oak trees up to Namrung.

### **Day 10 Trek Namrung (2582m) to Sama gaon (3525m) ~6 hr**

As we journey deeper into the Nupri valley, the Bhotia way of life and devote Buddhist culture can be appreciated in each village. Old monasteries or “gompas” can be seen positioned high above the trail route. Look south-west for your first views of the twin peaks of Manaslu (8163m), and south to take in Himal Chuli (7893m, 18th highest mountain).

### **Day 11-12 Acclimatisation in Sama gaon**

As our support team push ahead to establish BC, we will rest a few extra days in Sama gaon to facilitate acclimatisation before making the 1000m hike to camp. You can visit the local monastery that offers splendid views of Manaslu or day hike to Samdo.

### **Day 13 Trek Sama gaon (3525m) to Manaslu base camp (4460m) ~3.5 hrs**

The hike to Manaslu BC is a steep ascent of approximately 1000m. The trail moves up the ridge and alongside the glacier moraine. We will pass a serene and beautiful glacier lake at the foot of the glacier.

### **Day 14-16 Acclimatisation in BC and puja**

It's important that we now spend a few days adapting to the high altitude to ensure that our bodies are properly prepared for our climb into 8000m+ heights. During these days, we'll busy ourselves checking our climbing gear and mentally preparing for the climb. From BC, the route can be clearly observed with the summit itself hidden by the East Pinnacle. Following the Buddhist tradition of our Sherpa guides and of the locals, the local Sama gaon lamas will conduct a puja ceremony to request a safe and successful climb from the mountain spirits.



### **Day 17-27 Rotations Climb BC to Camp 1-3**

Once our bodies are well acclimatised, we begin our first forays on the mountain with a series of climbs: half way to Camp 1, to Camp 1 overnight, to Camp 1 overnight and Camp 2, then Camp 2 overnight and touch Camp 3. Between climbs we will return to base camp to allow our bodies to recover and regain strength with increased oxygen. The route between BC and Camp 1 (5500m) is a rock scramble, be wary of loose rock. Depending on conditions, part of the route may be fixed for safety. The most technical section of Manaslu is between Camp 1 and 2 (6400m) that goes up a couloir and through an icefall filled with crevasses and seracs. You must move quickly through this section and be roped up. Climbing up to Camp 3 (6800m) continues up the slope to seracs located just beneath the North col. The slopes between Camp 3 and Camp 1 are avalanche prone.

### **Day 28-30 Rest in BC**

It is important to rest at a lower altitude before our final push to Camp 3 and the summit. This allows your muscles to recover with higher oxygen levels and improved nutrition from the base camp kitchen. Also relax your mind, climbing a mountain is both a physical and mental challenge. Take this time to reset your mind to prepare you for the mental challenges ahead above 8000m.

### **Day 31-39 Climb to Camp 4 and Summit Manaslu**

Finally, when the conditions are right we will progress back up the mountain, sleeping at Camp 1 and 2 or directly to Camp 2 depending on everyone's fitness and acclimatisation. The route from Camp 3 to 4 (7450m) climbs a steep slope beneath seracs until it reaches the North col that connects to the summit on the left. From here we move continuously up the slope towards the summit. It's a slow trudge and the slope progressively gets steeper and winds around seracs to just below the summit plateau.

We'll rest and prepare for our summit push the next day. The day begins early up the long crevassed plateau to steep snow banks, and eventually to the final summit pinnacle which is steep and exposed. From the summit we will drop directly to Camp 2, then to straight to BC. Congratulations you have climbed the 8th highest mountain!

### **Day 40-41 Rest in BC, pack and trek to Sama goan**

A deserved rest at BC to recover from the summit climb before we begin packing up our home away from home. We trek back down the glacier moraine to Sama goan and celebratory beers!

### **Day 42-43 Helicopter to Kathmandu and in Kathmandu**

We make a fast descent off Manaslu via helicopter straight to Kathmandu. Here we'll rest, enjoy showers and possibly take in a massage.

### **Day 44 Depart Kathmandu**

Time to depart crazy Kathmandu to friends and family at home. We'll see you on your next Himalayan adventure.

## **OTHER OPTIONS**

### **Optional limited services available:**

- Advanced Base camp only service (no climbing Sherpas or serviced higher camps)
- Full service with limited oxygen

Contact us for cost details regarding these options.





# 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 CHO OYU?

Himalayan Ascent runs small sized expeditions on Manaslu. 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 Nepal Mountain Guides 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 Manaslu clients.



## OTHER INFORMATION

### SLEEP AND FOOD

Whilst on the trail to base camp, you'll sleep in local friendly teahouses. These provide basic accommodation, 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. Our base camp cook, Rabin Shrestha, cooks delicious and high-quality meals.

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 100 cash for a 90-day tourist visa. You can also prearrange a visa from your nearest Nepalese consulate.

### STAYING HEALTHY

It's vitally important to protect your health on an Manaslu expedition, and Himalayan Ascent Director, Sumit Joshi, is an experienced high-altitude medical provider who has trained under legendary high-altitude practitioner, Dr. Jim Duff. Sumit's knowledge is an invaluable resource, especially higher up on the mountain, without such easy access to base camp ER facilities.

Our staff are also well-trained in all aspects of hygiene, to ensure that you don't come down with a stomach bug the day before you leave base camp for the summit. Having a smaller team also assists in this regard.

### GURUNG AND BHOTIA CULTURE

The hill and mountain ethnic groups of Nepal are ancient descendents from Tibet, hence their variant facial features from Hindu Indo-Aryo tribes. "Gurung" people primarily reside in the hill regions of central Nepal below the Annapurna range. They practice a hybrid religion of Hinduism and Buddhism. Gurung people with other hill tribes (e.g. Magars) have a proud Gurkha history of service in the British and Indian Army. In comparison, "Bhotia" people are relatively recent arrivals and practice a culture very similar to ancient Buddhist Tibet. They live a harsh lifestyle in the high Himalayan mountains alongside Nepal's highest peaks.

### EXPERIENCED SHERPA GUIDES

Our Sherpa guides are passionate climbers who live and breathe their sport – i.e. they are not farmers who moonlight as climbers during Everest season. Our entire team have graduated from the Khumbu Climbing School, and train new guides during its winter session. One of them, Jangbu Sherpa, is now a fully-qualified UIAGM guide.

### SMALL COHESIVE TEAM

Manaslu is a big mountain. You'll find a number of large expeditions on the mountain, with as many as 30 climbers and 40 Sherpas in a single team. For a multitude of reasons, that's not our style. By having a small team of climbers, we are able to move more efficiently on the mountain, and we have the capacity to allow input from team members regarding decision making. You'll get to know everyone, both fellow climbers and Sherpas, intimately throughout the course of the expedition. With Himalayan Ascent, your climbing Sherpa will guide you throughout your rotations, so by summit push time, you'll practically be family!



## CALIBRE OF TEAM MATES

When you're climbing Manaslu, you don't want to be in a team with a climber who doesn't have the necessary skills to tackle the mountain, nor the personality traits that might make spending 5 weeks with them extremely difficult! We require all our climbers to have a solid climbing resume, preferably with an 7000m expedition already under their belt. This ensures to us that you're prepared to face the extreme weather challenges that can sometimes affect Manaslu expeditions. High-altitude mountaineering has some associated discomforts, so we also look for personalities with an easy-going and flexible nature to facilitate everyone's tolerance at living at high altitude. Our small teams are carefully chosen to ensure that they are suitably compatible and experienced.

## CLIMATE

During the trek to base camp in summer, the weather will be hot and humid with periods of monsoon rain. Below Deng, temperatures can reach ~32oC in the day. In base camp, day temperatures can range 10oC-20oC, and it will rain or snow at times. Nights are cool and can drop to -10oC during storms. Above 7000m, temperatures will range from -40oC to -10oC at night.

## EQUIPMENT 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 a 7000m expedition. Keeping feet and hands warm in reliable gear during storms above 8000m will make or break your Manaslu dreams. 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 8000m peaks.

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.

### 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)
- Light-weight mountaineering boots (e.g. leather mountaineering boot for acclimatisation climbs up to Camp 2)
- 8000m mountaineering boots (integrated gaiter, double boot with warm insulation)



#### 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 suit (comfortable fit 8000m down suit made by a well known brand)
- Down jacket (800 fill, lightweight with hood)

#### 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)

#### Equipment:

- Small day pack for trekking and city use (comfortable, 15-20L)
- Backpack (50-70L, fitted for your back length and internal frame)
- Duffel bags to transport your gear to Nepal
- Sleeping pads (full length, insulated inflatable and closed cell foam pads with repair kit)
- Sleeping bag X 2, -20oC to -40oC 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 gloved hand)
- Trekking poles (lightweight with good snow basket)

Plus: normal city clothes, trekking clothes, small personal first aid kit, water bottles, pee bottles, pocket knife, cigarette lighter, pad locks for the duffel, scarf (bandana and buffs), underwear (avoid cotton), Ziplock bags, garbage bags to use as waterproof liner, different size stuff sacks, sunscreen (heavy duty), lip balm, toiletries, snacks to last two months and entertainment items (e.g. music, books, camera, phone with solar power charging system).

Travel documents: passport, visa (90 days), passport photos, copy of your travel insurance and photocopies of passport.



# **HIMALAYAN ASCENT**



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