

Everest Base Camp Trek, Nepal



This outstanding trek to the base camp of the *world's highest mountain* will take you through the lush valleys of the Sagarmatha National Park, with time to explore its villages and monasteries and to sample the warm hospitality of the Sherpa people. Sagarmatha National Park is located to the northeast of Kathmandu in the Khumbu region of Nepal and was declared a World Heritage Site in 1979. There are just 14 peaks in the world that exceed 8,000m in height, and eight of them are situated in the Nepalese Himalayas. The highest of them all standing at 8,848m is Mt. Sagarmartha (Mt Everest) but there are many other well-known peaks including Lhotse, Makalu and Manaslu separated by deep gorges and glacial lakes.

Your trekking adventure begins at Lukla, where you will trek to Phakding and onto the Sherpa capital of Namche Bazaar. The only means of transportation between the Sherpa villages is by foot, so the paths are well trodden. You will have plenty of time to acclimatise to the altitude, following a trail alongside and across numerous rivers to Thyangboche with incredible views of Mt. Khangtiaga, Mt. Thamserku and the Nuptse-Lhotse wall, with Mt. Everest soaring high above them. Your trek leads gradually uphill after Thyangboche, with constant views of the magnificent Mt. Ama Dablam (6,900m) and other huge snow-capped peaks. You will reach a highpoint at Kalapathar with breathtaking panoramic views of the surrounding peaks and glaciers including Mt. Everest - just a stone's throw away. Your descent will take you through traditional Sherpa villages, before returning to Lukla via Thyangboche and Namche Bazaar. Having completed the challenge, you will have the chance to explore the city of Kathmandu and its many temples and bazaars.

Day 1: Depart from London for Kathmandu, Nepal

You will be flying with Qatar Airlines from London Heathrow, leaving at approx. 2130hrs, OR Gulf Air leaving at London Heathrow at 2030hrs.

Day 2: Arrive Kathmandu

The Qatar flight goes via Doha and lands at approx. 1540hrs in Kathmandu. The Gulf Air flight goes via Abu Dhabi and lands at approx. 1700hrs in Kathmandu. Meet and transfer to local hotel.

Day 3: Kathmandu - Lukla - Phakding

Short flight to Lukla & 3-4 hour trek to Phakding at 2,652m. Early morning after breakfast you will be transferred from the hotel to the domestic airport, a short drive of 20-30 minutes, and board a small twin otter or similar type of aircraft for the sweeping panoramic flight to Lukla. In Lukla you will have time to wander around, while the Sherpa crew sort and divide the load of camping equipment and baggage on the Ghopkyo (mix breed of Yak & normal cow, as the Yak cannot survive below 3000m). The walk is along a pleasant trail most of the way, with a few steep climbs from Tarhe khola, where you have a superb view of the Kusum-Kangru (6,369m) crossing. Then after a short climb, you reach Ghat village, and another 1½hrs of trekking brings you to Phakding village for the overnight stop near the bank of the Dudh-Kosi River.

Day 4: Trek to Namche Bazaar (3,440m)

Approx distance: 12-14 km, walking time: approx. 5/6hrs. From Phakding after crossing the suspension bridge over the Dudh-Kosi River, the walk is pleasant with a few short uphill climbs and then downhill, re-crossing the same river again, with magnificent views of Thermasarkhu (6,608m). From the village of Benkar, you will cross the long suspension bridge over the Bhote-Koshi River once more, and then continue on this busy trail of trekkers, Ghopkyo and porters, before finally arriving at the small village of Monjo-where you can see an interesting water-mill grinding roasted corns and barley for Tsampa, one of the staple foods of the Sherpas, Tibetans and other mountain people. Monjo is situated below the magnificent peak of Thermasarkhu and near to the entrance of Sagarmatha National Park. After few minutes walk from Monjo, you will reach the entrance of Sagarmatha National Park, where your trekking permit, and especially the park ticket is checked to keep a record of all trekkers going in and out including the local trekking staff. From here there is a short descent to Jorsalle village, the last village and the only place to shop at until Namche Bazaar. You will continue to trek by the river until the last bridge over the Imjatse River is reached. From here the walk is along a winding uphill path all the way to Namche Bazaar, with views of Kwangde peak and its other sister peaks to the east, with Kusum kangru behind you as you climb higher. There are also views of the Mt. Everest-Nuptse wall, Lhotse and a closer view of Taweche peak, which can be seen all the way up to Thop Danda, where there's a resting stone wall for the porters and trekkers. There is still another 1-2 hour walk, which brings you to the famed Namche Bazaar, with its colourful houses situated in an amphitheatre U-shaped bowl.

Day 5: Rest Day at Namche Bazaar

Suggested activities include a short walk uphill to the Sagarmatha National Park headquarters, a magnificent spot perched on top of Namche Bazaar with spectacular views of the surrounding snow-capped giants and the valleys way down below. There is also an interesting museum with all kinds of information regarding the history of the Himalayas, its geography, culture, mountaineering history and information on flora and fauna of this region. You can then enjoy the afternoon at leisure.

Day 6: Trek to Thyangboche (3,867m)

Approx distance: 10kms, Approx walking time: 5hrs. The trail leads along a winding path with great views of Mt. Everest, Nuptse, Lhotse, Ama Dablam and a close-up view of Tharmserkhu. You will come to a busy place called Shanasa, and on this area there is a much higher chance of seeing the beautifully coloured Danphe pheasant (Impeyan Pheasant) the national bird of Nepal, and the elusive musk deer, and sometimes even a herd of Himalayan Thar (mountain goat). From Shanasa, the trail descends to the Imjatse River at Phungitenga (3250m), a small settlement with a couple of teahouses and a small Royal Nepalese Army barracks in the midst of the alpine woods of mostly silver fir blue pines, rhododendron and some magnolia and birch trees. At Phungitenga there's an interesting prayer wheel propelled by water, from the nearby streams. The walk from here is strenuous for an hour on a winding trail through shaded woods until a small religious monument of prayer stones covered with rhododendron leaves and junipers is reached. From here the walk is uphill for another hour, with views of

Thermasarkhu and Kangtenga (which from this angle looks more like an icy Sphinx or a big cat). As you reach Thyangboche, you will be assured by a religious Buddhist gate that the walk for the day is almost over. Tyangboche is one of the most beautiful places in the Himalayas, and the first thing that you will see is a big Ghompa (monastery), before a large field with campsites and teahouses, lodges beneath the peak of Ama Dablam with Everest looming above, and the Nuptse wall to the North with Mt. Lhotse and Lhotse Shar to the North East and many more peaks all around you.

Day 7: Trek to Dingboche (4,358m)

Approx distance: 12km Approx. trekking time: 5-6hrs. The trail descends through a forest of birch, fir, juniper and rhododendron and comes out at a lovely spot at Deboche (3,650m) with further views of Mt. Ama Dablam, Mt. Everest, Nuptse and Lhotse. From Deboche you will walk past the long prayer mani wall, the path is gradual until you reach a small bridge over the narrow gorge of the Imja-Tse River. The walk continues gradually uphill most of the way, as you come to a large mani wall gate. A little further from here the route diverts two ways, the upper one going to the upper Pangboche village, where the old Monastery is located, the lower route is the straight forward main trail to Dingboche, Pheriche and beyond. It will be better to go on the upper trail, for the views and to visit the upper Panboche village 3,900m and its Monastery which had a Yeti scalp and a skeleton believed to be a Yeti's hand, it was stolen in the early '90's, and has never been recovered. After a visit to the Monastery there is a gradual walk downhill which brings you back to the main trail, where you will continue with a short climb to Shomare a small settlement with fantastic close-up view of Ama-Dablam-for lunch. From here Kantenga peak looks different from its northern face. After a pleasant break here your journey continues eastwards, after an hour walk, before a small wooden bridge the road splits two ways again; the north going to Pheriche and the second leading east beneath the towering north face of Ama Dablam. The trails climbs slowly, winding above the Imjatse River, until you come to a big mani Stupa. From here onwards the walk is fairly moderate as you enter the Imjatse Valley beneath the mighty peaks of Ama Dablam, Nuptse and Lhotse with views of the eastern snow capped mountains including the Island Peak or Imjatse (6,189m), which is a popular trekking peak in Nepal. Dingboche is a beautiful patchwork of fields enclosed by stone walls protecting the crops of barley, buckwheat and potatoes from the cold winds and grazing animals.

Day 8: Acclimatisation day in Dingboche

Today is a very important acclimatisation day. The day is spent visiting the monastery in Dingboche, famous for its Yeti scalp and hand, and then exploring the Imja Khola. There are some breathtaking views of the North face of Ama Dablam and the Lhotse-Nuptse ridge as we explore this beautiful valley that leads up to Island Peak. The days walk is usually short with a good chance to relax in the afternoon and either do some washing etc or just laze in the sun.

Day 9: Trek to Loboche (4,928m)

Approx trekking distance: 8km. Approx trekking time: 5hrs. Our onward journey leads north, and the path heads up for about 40-50mins until you come to a mani-prayer stupa. The trail is gentle looking down to Pheriche village below. Today's walk offers views of the Mt. Tawache, Ama Dablam and to the north-Pokalde (5,741m), Kongma-tse (5,820m) and the great wall of Nuptse. After a walk of 1 ½ to 2 hours the trail from Pheriche joins near Dugla (4595m) before a small wooden bridge over the river of Khumbu glacier. You will stop at Dugla, for lunch, before continuing for an hour up a steep hill to the top, where there are views of Mt. Pumori and other peaks west of Everest. This is a good spot for a short break. There is another 1 ½ to 2 hours of trekking up to Loboche, hidden and sheltered from the wind.

Day 10: Trek to Everest Base Camp/Kalapatthar (5,545m)

Approx 3-4 hrs walk to Gorekshep, another 1.5/2.5 hours walk to Kalapatthar and 2-3 hours for return back to Lobuche for overnight. After an early breakfast, you will prepare for your final destination at the foot of Everest. You will trek up the valley following the rocky moraine path. You can see the icy-glacial pond and icebergs down below of Khumbu glacier. After the last rocky moraine dunes, a short downhill walk brings you to Gorakshep on the flat field below Kalapatthar (5545m) and Mt. Pumori (7,145m). Gorakshep is the location of the original Everest Base Camp with the New camp being further up the valley. After a short break, with refreshment, continue towards Kalapatthar. The walk is gradual till you reach the rocky spot after an hour walk. From here another uphill climb for ½ hour brings you to Kalapatthar, 5,288m. From Kalapatthar Top, the views will be beyond your wildest imagination, with Everest seeming within a stones throw distance between the summit of Mt. Nuptse and Lho-La and Lhotse on the back. The panoramic view from this spot is something to cherish and you feel it's worth the hard climb up to here and to feel at the top of the world. With all the higher snow capped giants that dominate all around, it is truly a magnificent spot to be at on a clearer sunny day. After a great moment, an hour descent takes you back to Gorakshep and then all the way back to Lobuche for the night.

Day 11: Trek to Thyangboche

Approx trekking time: 5-6hrs. After a wonderful time close to the giant peaks, the trek back to Thyangboche will be easier with mostly downhill all the way passing through the village of Pheriche (4,245 m). You will have opportunity to visit a small hospital run by the Nepal Mountaineering Rescue Association. Continue walking to Thyangboche for the overnight stop.

Day 12: Thyangboche to Namche Bazaar

Approx trekking time: 6-7hrs The walk from Thyangboche is mostly downhill on the main busy trail with a few steep climbs for an hour from the bridge at Phungitenga, near to Shanasha. The walk to Namche is very scenic on a long winding path. Enroute you will visit traditional villages of Khumjung and Kunde, an opportunity to visit one of its monastery, the only monastery that has a Yeti Scalp. From Khumjung village another 30 minutes walk brings to the village of Kunde, where you can visit the Kunde Hospital funded by Sir Edmund Hillary Trust. After Kunde, a scenic and pleasant walk brings you to Namche for the overnight.

Day 13: Trek back to Lukla

Approx trekking time: 5hrs. The last day of your trek leads from Namche Bazaar via Monjo to Lukla. The trek is pleasant, except for few short uphill climbs and then down to the Bhotse-Koshi River crossing it three times. The last uphill climb of 45minutes will bring you to the busy village of Lukla for your overnight stay.

Day 14: Lukla to Kathmandu

Fly from Lukla to Kathmandu. You will have the afternoon to relax, and will have the chance to enjoy a celebratory meal in the evening. If flying Gulf Air, you will depart at 1845hrs. If flying Qatar you will overnight in Kathmandu.

Day 15: Leisure Day in Kathmandu

The Qatar return flight leaves at 0815hrs and arrives later the same day (1755hrs) with a stopover in Doha. The Gulf Air flight lands in London at about 0635hrs after a brief stopover in Abu Dhabi.

N.B. The itinerary is there as a guide and may change due to unusual weather patterns, wildlife movements, the strength of the group and so on. We will do our very best to keep to the set itinerary, however we cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes that might occur. In all such circumstances, your expedition leader will have the final say.