

Earthbound Expeditions

Classic Everest Base Camp Trek

16 days, from US$1,867 per person

Duration **16 days**	Grade **Strenuous**	Max altitude **5,545 m**
Start and end **Kathmandu**	On the trail **5 to 7 hours a day**	Best season **Mar to May, Sep to Nov**
Accommodation **Teahouses**	Meals **All meals on the trek**	Group size **Up to 8**
Getting there **Fly to Lukla**		

Classic Everest Base Camp Trek Overview

Follow the well-known trail through Sherpa villages, glacial moraines and Buddhist monasteries to the foot of the world's highest mountain.

Trek overview

The trip lasts sixteen days: eleven on the trail, including two acclimatisation days at altitude. You fly to Lukla, walk up the Dudh Koshi valley through Phakding and Namche, climb through Tengboche and Dingboche to Lobuche, and reach Base Camp on the tenth day. The next morning you climb Kala Patthar before dawn for a view of Everest that cannot be seen from Base Camp, and then walk back down the same way.

Who this trip is for

Anyone who can walk five to seven hours a day, on consecutive days, on rough ground, with about half the oxygen they are used to. The trek is not technical: there are no ropes, no ice axes and no passes over 5,000 m. It requires stamina and patience rather than skill, and the people who struggle are rarely those who were concerned about their fitness.

Why the trip takes 16 days

Some operators offer twelve-day versions of this trek, but we do not. The two acclimatisation days at Namche and Dingboche are essential for safe acclimatisation, and the spare day in Kathmandu at the end allows for Lukla flights, which are cancelled by weather several times a month in every season. A twelve-day itinerary removes these days and requires you to climb faster.

Planning your trek

Read our complete guide to the Everest Base Camp trek and how to prepare for it. For a longer or harder route, the Gokyo Lakes and Everest Base Camp trek and the Everest Three High Passes trek add high passes and quieter valleys. With less time, the Everest Base Camp Luxury Trek returns by helicopter, and Island Peak Climbing adds a 6,189 m summit.

Key highlights of the Classic Everest Base Camp Trek

Base Camp and Kala Patthar

- Stand at Everest Base Camp (5,364 m), at the foot of the Khumbu Icefall, where expeditions set up their tents every spring.
- Climb Kala Patthar (5,545 m) at dawn, the highest point of the trek, for the closest full view of Everest that can be reached on foot, as the sun lights it along with Nuptse and Pumori.

Viewpoints on the rest days

- Take the short climb above Namche on the first rest day for your first wide view of Everest, Lhotse and Ama Dablam.
- Climb the Nangkartshang ridge above Dingboche (about 5,083 m) on the second rest day, one of the few places on the route with a view of Makalu, the fifth-highest mountain in the world.

The flight to Lukla

- Land at Tenzing-Hillary Airport in Lukla, where the runway is only 527 metres long and built on a slope into the hillside, one of the most memorable landings in the world.

Monasteries and Sherpa life

- Visit Tengboche Monastery (3,867 m), the largest in the Khumbu, on a ridge with Ama Dablam behind it, and home to the Mani Rimdu festival of masked dances in October or November.
- Walk through Pangboche, whose monastery is the oldest in the Khumbu and dates from the seventeenth century.
- Spend two nights in Namche Bazaar (3,440 m), the Sherpa trading town built around a horseshoe-shaped hillside, with its stone lanes and bakeries.
- Stay in teahouses run by Sherpa families and eat dal bhat, the best dish on every menu.

Sagarmatha National Park

- Walk through Sagarmatha National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1979 and home to the Himalayan tahr, the musk deer and the Danphe, Nepal's national bird.

Everest history

- Pass the stone memorials at Thukla, built for climbers who died on Everest, on the climb to Lobuche.
- See Base Camp filled with climbers' tents in spring, at the start of the route to the summit.

Itinerary

Day	Route	Hours	Distance	Altitude
1	Arrive Kathmandu	-	-	1,400 m
2	Kathmandu valley sites	-	-	1,400 m
3	Fly to Lukla, walk to Phakding	3–4 hrs	8 km	2,651 m
4	Phakding to Namche Bazaar	6–7 hrs	11 km	3,440 m
5	Namche, acclimatisation day	2–4 hrs	-	3,440 m
6	Namche to Tengboche	5–6 hrs	10 km	3,860 m
7	Tengboche to Dingboche	5–6 hrs	11 km	4,410 m
8	Dingboche, acclimatisation day	4–5 hrs	-	4,410 m
9	Dingboche to Lobuche	5–6 hrs	8 km	4,940 m
10	Lobuche to Base Camp, sleep Gorak Shep	7–8 hrs	13 km	5,364 m
11	Kala Patthar at dawn, down to Pheriche	8–9 hrs	15 km	5,545 m
12	Pheriche to Namche	6–7 hrs	15 km	3,440 m
13	Namche to Lukla	6–7 hrs	13 km	2,840 m
14	Fly to Kathmandu	-	-	1,400 m
15	Spare day in Kathmandu	-	-	1,400 m
16	Fly home	-	-	-

Day 1

Arrive in Kathmandu

When you land in Kathmandu, we meet you at the airport and take you to your hotel. If there is time, you can explore the old streets and temples nearby. In the evening we have dinner together and go through the trek so that you know what to expect.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, arrival day Night: Hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Dinner

Day 2

Kathmandu Valley sightseeing

A relaxed day visiting the valley's historic sites: Swayambhunath (the Monkey Temple) on its hill, the riverside temples at Pashupatinath, the great stupa at Boudhanath and the carved squares of Patan. It is a good way to recover from the flight before the trek.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: Easy walking, 2–3 hrs Night: Hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 3

Fly to Lukla and trek to Phakding

An early mountain flight to Lukla, the small airstrip where the trek begins. From there you walk gently downhill for half a day beside the Dudh Koshi river to Phakding, an easy start to the trek.

Altitude: 2,651 m On foot: 8 km, 3–4 hrs Night: Teahouse, Phakding Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 4

Trek to Namche Bazaar

The trail follows the river across suspension bridges, then climbs steeply through pine forest to Namche, the busy Sherpa town built around a hillside. On a clear day you have your first view of Everest on the way up.

Altitude: 3,440 m On foot: 11 km, 6–7 hrs Night: Teahouse, Namche Bazaar Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5

Acclimatisation day in Namche Bazaar

A day to allow your body to adjust to the altitude. You can explore Namche's stone lanes and bakeries, or take the short climb to the viewpoint above the town for views of Everest, Lhotse and Ama Dablam, before returning to sleep lower down.

Altitude: 3,440 m On foot: Optional 2–4 hrs Night: Teahouse, Namche Bazaar Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 6

Trek to Tengboche

An open, scenic day with mountains in view most of the way. You descend to the river, then climb for a long time to Tengboche and its well-known monastery, on a ridge with Ama Dablam directly behind it.

Altitude: 3,860 m On foot: 10 km, 5–6 hrs Night: Teahouse, Tengboche Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7

Trek to Dingboche

You walk through the last of the forest and past the village of Pangboche, then up into open country above the tree line. The trail follows the Imja River to Dingboche, a cluster of stone-walled fields below the high peaks.

Altitude: 4,410 m On foot: 11 km, 5–6 hrs Night: Teahouse, Dingboche Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 8

Acclimatisation day in Dingboche

The second acclimatisation day, and an important one. If you feel well enough, a slow climb up the ridge behind the village gives views of Makalu and Lhotse, two of the highest mountains in the world. Otherwise, you can rest in the village.

Altitude: 4,410 m On foot: Optional 4–5 hrs Night: Teahouse, Dingboche Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 9

Trek to Lobuche

A shorter, higher day up the Khumbu valley. You pass the stone memorials at Thukla, built for climbers who died on Everest, before reaching Lobuche near the edge of the glacier, the last stop before Base Camp.

Altitude: 4,940 m On foot: 8 km, 5–6 hrs Night: Teahouse, Lobuche Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 10

Trek to Everest Base Camp

The main day of the trek. A rocky walk along the glacier leads to Gorak Shep for lunch, then across the moraine to Base Camp itself, directly below the Khumbu Icefall. In spring it is filled with climbers' tents. We return to Gorak Shep for the night.

Altitude: 5,364 m at Base Camp On foot: 13 km, 7–8 hrs Night: Teahouse, Gorak Shep Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 11

Hike to Kala Patthar and trek to Pheriche

A cold, dark and early start up Kala Patthar, the highest point of the trek, for the best view of Everest as the sun reaches it. This is followed by a long descent to Pheriche, where the air is thicker and a hot shower and a warm meal are available.

Altitude: 5,545 m at Kala Patthar On foot: 15 km, 8–9 hrs Night: Teahouse, Pheriche Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 12

Trek to Namche Bazaar

You walk downhill with Everest behind you and Ama Dablam ahead. As the air thickens the walking becomes easier, and you descend back into the forest on the way to Namche.

Altitude: 3,440 m On foot: 15 km, 6–7 hrs Night: Teahouse, Namche Bazaar Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 13

Trek to Lukla

The last full day on the trail, back across the bridges and through the villages to Lukla. In the evening we have a meal with the guides and porters to mark the end of the trek.

Altitude: 2,840 m On foot: 13 km, 6–7 hrs Night: Teahouse, Lukla Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 14

Fly to Kathmandu

A short morning flight back to Kathmandu, with the rest of the day free to rest or shop for gifts. There is a farewell dinner in the evening.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, flight day Night: Hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 15

Spare day in Kathmandu

This day is held in reserve, because Lukla flights can be delayed by weather. If everything has gone to plan, you are free to explore the city; if a flight was delayed, this day protects your onward travel plans.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, spare day Night: Hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Breakfast

Day 16

Departure

We take you to the airport for your flight home. We recommend allowing a couple of spare days in your wider travel plans in case the weather at Lukla causes delays.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, departure day Night: No overnight Meals: Breakfast

What's included

- In Kathmandu: Four nights in a three-star hotel, in twin or double rooms with a private bathroom and hot water: two nights before the trek and two after.
- On the trek: Eleven nights in teahouses on a twin-share basis, with private bathrooms in most lodges at Phakding, Namche and Lukla, and shared bathrooms higher up.
- On the trek: Breakfast, lunch and dinner every day from day 3 to day 13, with tea or coffee at every stop.
- In Kathmandu: Breakfast every morning, dinner on day 1 and day 14, and all three meals on the valley sightseeing day.
- Lukla flights: Both directions, from Kathmandu or from Ramechhap, depending on the month.
- Airport transfers: Pick-up and drop-off at Kathmandu airport in a private vehicle.
- Ramechhap drive: The early road transfer to Ramechhap, in the months when the Lukla flight departs from there.
- A government-licensed guide with wilderness first aid training leads every departure.
- One porter for every two trekkers, carrying up to 20 kg.
- A second guide for groups of nine or more.
- Wages, insurance, food and accommodation for every guide and porter, including cover for altitude and helicopter evacuation.
- Sagarmatha National Park entry permit
- Khumbu Pasang Lhamu Rural Municipality permit
- Kathmandu Valley tour: Swayambhunath, Pashupatinath, Boudhanath and Patan with a guide on day 2.
- Sleeping bag: Rated to -15°C, for the trek.
- Down jacket: For the trek.
- Duffel bag: Provided for the porter to carry.
- Luggage storage: Free of charge at our Kathmandu office, for anything you do not need on the trek.
- Farewell dinner: With a Nepali cultural show, in Kathmandu on day 14.
- First aid: A group medical kit, carried by your guide.

Not included

- International flights to and from Kathmandu
- Nepal entry visa, obtained on arrival
- Travel insurance covering trekking to 6,000 m and helicopter rescue, which is compulsory
- Lunch and dinner in Kathmandu, other than the meals listed above

- Hot showers, device charging and wifi in the teahouses, $3 to $8 each time
- Drinking water, snacks, and drinks other than tea and coffee
- Rescue and evacuation costs, which are covered by your travel insurance
- Excess baggage on the Lukla flight, about $1.50 per kilo over 15 kg
- A helicopter flight out, if you choose one, from $500 a seat
- Personal trekking clothing and equipment
- Tips for your guide and porters, usually $150 to $250 per trekker
- A single room in Kathmandu, available as an optional extra

Permits and other costs

Permit	Fee	Issued by
Sagarmatha National Park entry permit. SAARC nationals pay NPR 1,500. Children under ten enter free.	NPR 3,390, about $25	Kathmandu, or at Monjo on the way in
Khumbu Pasang Lhamu Rural Municipality permit. Valid for the first four weeks. NPR 2,500 after that.	NPR 2,000, about $15	Lukla, on arrival
TIMS card. No longer required in the Khumbu since 2018, when it was replaced by the municipality permit above. Some other operators still list it. Do not buy one for this trek.	Not required	-

Other cost	Amount	Note
Lukla flights, both directions	$350–420	about $500 via Manthali in the high season
Sagarmatha National Park permit	$25	NPR 3,390
Khumbu Pasang Lhamu permit	$15	NPR 2,000, the local permit
Teahouse bed	$5–20 a night	more expensive at higher altitudes
Meals on the trek	$25–35 a day	three meals and tea, no alcohol
Licensed guide	$30–40 a day	including their accommodation and meals
Porter, one for every two trekkers	$22–28 a day	including their accommodation and meals
Kathmandu hotel	$40–70 a night	three-star, four nights
Travel insurance to 6,000 m	$120–200	must cover helicopter rescue
Hot showers, charging and wifi	$3–8 each, each time	not included, paid in cash
Tips for the guide and porter	$150–250	per trekker, given at the end

Packing list

Two baggage limits, and the flight limit is stricter

Your porter carries a strict maximum of 20 kg, shared between two trekkers. The Lukla flight allows 15 kg in total, 10 kg checked and 5 kg hand baggage, and bags are weighed. In practice, the flight allowance is the main limit. Anything you do not need on the trek can be stored free of charge at our Kathmandu office. We provide the duffel bag, sleeping bag and down jacket, so you do not need to bring them.

Headwear and sun protection

- A sun hat with a brim, and a warm hat that covers your ears
- Two buffs or neck gaiters
- Sunglasses, category 3 or 4. Snow glare above Lobuche is strong
- Head torch and spare batteries. The climb to Kala Patthar starts at four in the morning
- Sunscreen SPF 50 and lip balm with sun protection

Clothing

- Three or four merino or synthetic base layers, not cotton
- Two mid layers: one fleece and one light insulated jacket
- Down jacket. We provide one; bring your own if you feel the cold at night
- A waterproof jacket and trousers that pack small
- Two pairs of trekking trousers, one lined
- Underwear for four or five days, washed along the way

Gloves and footwear

- Liner gloves and insulated outer gloves or mittens
- Trekking boots with ankle support, worn in before the trek. This is essential
- Four pairs of wool trekking socks
- Camp shoes or trainers for the evenings
- Gaiters, if you are travelling in winter or early spring

Bags

- Duffel bag for the porter, 20 kg maximum. We provide one
- Daypack, 30 to 35 litres, with a rain cover
- Dry bags or thick liners. Nothing stays waterproof for long on this trail

Sleeping

- Sleeping bag rated to -15°C. We provide one
- Silk or cotton liner, for warmth and hygiene
- Earplugs. Teahouse walls are made of plywood

Health

- Personal first aid kit: blister plasters, tape, painkillers and rehydration salts
- Diamox, if your doctor agrees, plus any regular medication
- Water purification: tablets, a filter or a SteriPen
- Hand sanitiser and wet wipes. There are no showers above Dingboche
- Throat lozenges. The dry cough known as the Khumbu cough is very common

Documents and money

- Passport valid for six months, plus two photocopies
- Four passport photographs for permits
- Travel insurance certificate showing helicopter cover to 6,000 m
- $300 to $500 in small notes. There is no cash machine above Namche

Altitude profile

Day	Place	Sleep at	Highest point
1	Kathmandu	1,400 m	-
2	Kathmandu	1,400 m	-
3	Phakding	2,651 m	2,840 m
4	Namche Bazaar	3,440 m	-
5	Namche Bazaar	3,440 m	3,880 m
6	Tengboche	3,860 m	-
7	Dingboche	4,410 m	-
8	Dingboche	4,410 m	4,900 m
9	Lobuche	4,940 m	-
10	Gorak Shep	5,164 m	5,364 m
11	Pheriche	4,371 m	5,545 m
12	Namche Bazaar	3,440 m	-
13	Lukla	2,840 m	-
14	Kathmandu	1,400 m	-
15	Kathmandu	1,400 m	-

Lukla flights

Flight delays are the most common problem on this trek. This section explains how they are handled.

Kathmandu or Ramechhap, depending on the month

Outside the two busiest periods of the year, the flight leaves Kathmandu and takes about 35 minutes. For most of March to May and late September to November, air traffic control moves Lukla departures to Manthali airport at Ramechhap to reduce congestion at Kathmandu. This means a four to five hour drive leaving Kathmandu at around two in the morning, followed by a twenty-minute flight. The trek is the same, but the night before is much shorter. We tell you which applies to your dates before you book.

Baggage allowance of 15 kg

The allowance is 15 kg in total: 10 kg checked and 5 kg of hand baggage. Excess baggage is charged at about $1.50 a kilo, and the limit is enforced because the aircraft is a nineteen-seat Twin Otter or Dornier and the runway is 527 metres long and sloping. Anything you do not need on the trek can be stored free of charge at our office in Kathmandu.

Flight delays

Lukla is closed by cloud several times a month in every season. Losing a day is common and losing two is not unusual, which is why day 15 is a spare day. If the flight is cancelled for more than three days, we change the itinerary to an equally good trek at a lower altitude rather than shorten this one, at no extra charge. If you prefer to fly out by helicopter on the day, it costs around $500 a seat and we can usually arrange it within a few hours.

Book your flight home with a day to spare

Whatever your itinerary, book an international flight that leaves at least one clear day after your scheduled return to Kathmandu. It is the least expensive way to protect your trip, and we often wish travellers had done so.

Accommodation

Teahouse accommodation

Every night on the trek is spent in a teahouse: a family-run lodge with one warm dining room, heated by a single stove, and a corridor of simple twin rooms behind it. Each room has two beds with a foam mattress, a pillow and a blanket. The walls are thin, so you will hear your neighbours. Bring a sleeping bag. After dark the dining room is the only warm place in the building, and it is where everyone eats, reads and talks.

Facilities at higher altitude

At Phakding, Namche and Lukla most rooms have a private bathroom. From Tengboche upwards, bathrooms are shared, and hot showers, battery charging and wifi are charged separately. Lobuche and Gorak Shep are the most basic nights: cold rooms, shared toilets and no shower. Gorak Shep is the highest overnight stop of the trek, and few people sleep well there.

Where we usually stay

In Kathmandu, Thamel Eco Resort. On the trek: Sherpa Guide Lodge or Hotel Beer Garden at Phakding, Hotel Tibet, Hotel Nest or Hotel Namche at Namche, Himalayan Hotel at Tengboche, Rivendell Lodge or Hotel Good Luck at Dingboche, Oxygen Altitude Home at Lobuche, Gorakshep Yeti Resort at Gorak Shep and Everest Eco at Lukla. If one is full in the high season, we book another of the same standard.

Where	Nights	Type	Room	Bathroom
Kathmandu	4	Three-star hotel	Twin or double	Private, hot water
Phakding	1	Teahouse	Twin	Private in most lodges
Namche Bazaar	3	Teahouse	Twin	Private, hot shower for a fee
Tengboche	1	Teahouse	Twin	Shared
Dingboche	2	Teahouse	Twin	Shared
Lobuche	1	Teahouse	Twin	Shared
Gorak Shep	1	Teahouse, the highest on the route	Twin, basic	Shared, no shower
Pheriche	1	Teahouse	Twin	Shared
Lukla	1	Teahouse	Twin	Private

Heating
One stove in the dining room, lit at dusk. Bedrooms are not heated at any altitude.

Hot shower
Available up to Dingboche for $4 to $8, heated by gas or solar power. None above Lobuche.

Charging
$3 to $5 per device in the dining room. Bring a power bank and keep it in your sleeping bag at night.

Wifi
Everest Link cards cost about $20 for 10 GB and work as far as Gorak Shep, though the connection is poor.

Phone signal
Ncell and NTC cover most of the route as far as Lobuche. Buy a SIM card in Kathmandu.

Water
Boiled water costs $1 to $4 a litre, depending on altitude. Please use this or water purification rather than buying bottled water.

Sleeping bag
Provided, rated to -15°C. It is lent for the trek and returned afterwards.

Bedding
A mattress, a pillow and a blanket. Your sleeping bag goes on top of these.

Meals

Meal	Time	What it is like
Breakfast	7:00–7:30	Porridge, Tibetan bread, eggs, chapati, pancakes, tea or coffee
Lunch	12:00–13:00	Dal bhat, fried rice, noodles, soup, momo, potatoes in every form

Dinner	18:30–19:30	Dal bhat, pasta, thukpa, curry and rice, soup to start
Tea	on arrival	Black, milk, lemon, ginger or masala tea. Included at every stop.

Diet	How we manage it
Vegetarian	Easily catered for throughout. Dal bhat is vegetarian and is the best dish on the menu.
Vegan	Manageable with notice. Tell us when you book so that the guide can order in advance.
Gluten free	Rice, dal, potatoes and eggs are safe. Bread, noodles and momo are not, and cross-contamination in a teahouse kitchen cannot be ruled out.
Halal	There is no certified halal kitchen on the route. Vegetarian food is the practical option.
Meat	Available, but we advise against eating meat above Namche, as it is carried up without refrigeration for two days.

A typical day

Time	What happens
6:00	Tea in your room, and a bowl of warm water for washing
6:30	Pack, and leave your duffel outside your door for the porter
7:00	Breakfast together in the dining room
8:00	Start walking. The guide sets a slow, steady pace
12:00	Lunch at a teahouse on the route, about an hour
13:00	Two to four more hours of walking, depending on the day
15:30	Arrive, have tea, check in, wash and rest if needed
17:00	Oxygen saturation and pulse measured and recorded
18:30	Dinner, and a briefing from the guide on the next day
20:30	Bedtime. At 4,000 m most people are asleep by nine

Difficulty and preparation

Difficulty 4 of 5

Demanding walking, but no technical skills required.

- Five to seven hours of walking a day for eleven days, with two days of eight to nine hours.
- Rough ground throughout: stone staircases, moraine and loose glacial rubble above Lobuche.
- You sleep at 5,164 m, where there is about half the oxygen available at sea level.
- No ropes, crampons, exposed sections or passes to cross. If you can walk the distance, you can complete the trek.
- Trekkers who turn back almost always do so because of altitude, not fitness.

Getting ready

12 weeks before: Build endurance
Do three cardio sessions a week, 45 minutes each, at a pace at which you can still hold a conversation. Walking, cycling, swimming or rowing are all suitable. This is the most important part of the plan.

10 weeks before: Add hill walking
Replace one session with a one-hour hill walk with 300 m of ascent. Add a second strength session: squats, step-ups, lunges and calf raises. Your thigh muscles work harder on the descents than on the climbs.

8 weeks before: Walk with a loaded pack
Start walking with the daypack you will use, loaded to 6 kg. Wear your trekking boots on every one of these walks. Blisters are the second most common cause of difficulty on the trek, and they can be prevented.

6 weeks before: Walk on consecutive days
Do one long walk of four to five hours at the weekend, then a second walk of two to three hours the next morning on tired legs. This is the most useful part of the plan, because the trek consists of consecutive walking days.

4 weeks before: Longest training day
Walk for six to seven hours with 800 m of ascent and the same descent. If you finish able to eat a meal and sleep normally, you are ready.

2 weeks before: Reduce training
Halve the amount of training but keep the same frequency. Training in the last two weeks will not improve your fitness and increases the risk of injury. Rest and sleep well instead.

Weather by month

This section shows the conditions to expect in each month. We do not run the trek in two of these months.

Month	Daytime on the trail	Night-time on the trail	Night-time at Gorak Shep	Conditions	Note
January	4°C	-10°C	-20°C	Hard	Clear and extremely cold. Most lodges above Dingboche are closed.
February	6°C	-8°C	-18°C	Hard	Cold and quiet, with the clearest air of the year.
March	10°C	-5°C	-15°C	Good	The season opens. Cold at night, few trekkers, and rhododendrons starting to flower at lower altitudes.
April	13°C	-2°C	-12°C	Best	The best month. Warm days, stable weather, and the forests below Namche are in flower.
May	15°C	1°C	-10°C	Best	The warmest trekking weather of the year. Hazier by late May as the monsoon approaches.
June	16°C	4°C	-6°C	Hard	The monsoon arrives, with cloud, leeches at lower altitudes and increasing flight cancellations.

July	16°C	5°C	-5°C	We do not run it	We do not run this trek. There are no views and flights are unlikely to operate.
August	16°C	5°C	-5°C	We do not run it	As in July. The mountains are hidden by cloud.
September	14°C	2°C	-8°C	Good	The monsoon clears during the month. Late September is green and clear after the rains.
October	12°C	-3°C	-14°C	Best	The busiest and most reliable month. Book several months ahead.
November	9°C	-7°C	-17°C	Best	Cold and quiet by the end of the month, with the clearest skies of the autumn.
December	6°C	-9°C	-19°C	Hard	Clear and very cold. Possible with the right equipment, and few other trekkers.

Averages from Nepal DHM station data for the Khumbu. Any given week can be ten degrees either side of these, and the wind at Gorak Shep makes minus fifteen feel like minus twenty-five.

Altitude and safety

Everest Base Camp is at 5,364 m, and you sleep one night at 5,164 m. At that altitude each breath contains roughly half the oxygen available at sea level, and training at home does not change how your body responds to it. Fitness and altitude tolerance are unrelated: strong young trekkers can get altitude sickness, while less fit older trekkers often do not. What helps is ascending slowly, which is the purpose of the two rest days, and telling someone early if you feel unwell.

What to watch for

- A headache that does not improve with water and paracetamol
- Nausea, or no appetite when you would expect to be hungry
- Dizziness, or feeling drunk without having had alcohol
- Breathlessness at rest, not only when climbing
- Poor sleep, or waking up short of breath
- A dry cough that gets worse over a day
- Loss of coordination, which requires immediate descent

How to prevent it

- Walk more slowly than you would like. Your guide will set a slow pace, and this is important.
- Drink three to four litres of water a day, even if you do not feel thirsty.
- Eat, even when you have no appetite. Loss of appetite is often the first effect of altitude.
- No alcohol above Namche, and no sleeping pills at any altitude.
- Climb high and sleep low: on the rest days you climb 400 to 500 m and return to sleep.
- Diamox is effective and worth discussing with your doctor before you travel.

What we do

1. Daily health checks
Your guide carries a pulse oximeter and measures your oxygen saturation and pulse every evening, and again on any morning you feel unwell. The readings are recorded, so any decline over three days is clear from the records.

2. Mild symptoms
You rest for a day where you are, or descend a short distance to the previous village and climb back the following day. Most cases are resolved at this stage and the trek continues.

3. Serious symptoms
Descent is the only effective treatment, and 500 m of descent is usually enough. This is not negotiable, and the decision rests with the guide.

4. Helicopter evacuation
Helicopter evacuation is available from anywhere on this route and can be arranged by phone. In daylight the helicopter is usually in the air within the hour. This is why your insurance must cover it and why we ask to see your policy: the cost is $3,000 to $5,000, and the helicopter will not fly without a payment guarantee.

5. Medical care on the route
The Himalayan Rescue Association clinic at Pheriche, at 4,371 m, is staffed by volunteer doctors during both trekking seasons and is on our route on day 11.

Your guide

Your guide

A government-licensed guide with wilderness first aid training leads every departure, and there is one porter for every two trekkers. Groups of nine or more have a second guide, so that nobody at the back of the group walks alone. We have run treks in Nepal since 1999. Our guides come from the hills they take you into, and most have walked this route more than fifty times.

Porters and luggage

Each porter carries twenty kilos, which is your duffel and one other. This is below the 25 kg limit set by the trekking association and well below the loads you will see on the trail. If your bag is over the limit, it is divided rather than added to another load. Porters carry duffels, not daypacks: your water, camera, jacket and snacks for the day stay with you.

Staff pay and insurance

Salary, insurance, food and accommodation for every guide and porter are included in the price you pay, not collected on the trail. All of them are insured for altitude and helicopter evacuation on the same terms we require of you. Porters in this industry have often carried excessive loads in unsuitable footwear for low pay, and we avoid this by including fair pay and proper equipment in the package price.

Tipping

Tipping is customary but not compulsory, and never replaces wages. For this trek, $150 to $250 per trekker for the whole team is usual, given together on the last evening rather than daily. Your guide will not ask for a tip, and would prefer it not to be given in front of the group.

Why travel with Earthbound Expeditions

A Nepali company, running treks since 1999

Earthbound Expeditions is a licensed trekking company based in Thamel, Kathmandu, and has organised treks in the Everest region since 1999. The team that plans your trip is the team you meet in Kathmandu.

Rated 5.0 on Tripadvisor

Travellers have reviewed us on Tripadvisor since 2008, more than 900 of them. You can read the reviews of this trek further down this page, each with a link to the original.

Guides and porters looked after properly

A government-licensed guide leads every departure, and one porter carries for every two trekkers. Their wages, insurance, food and lodging are included in the price, not raised on the trail.

An itinerary built for acclimatisation

Two rest days, at Namche Bazaar and Dingboche, let your body adjust before the highest nights, and a spare day in Kathmandu allows for delayed Lukla flights.

A briefing, and somewhere to leave your luggage

We brief you in Kathmandu before the trek and check your equipment, and anything you do not take up the trail is stored free of charge at our Kathmandu office.

Private departures at the group price

A private departure on your own dates costs the same as a group departure for a party of five or more, and can be arranged for one person.

Responsible trekking

We carry out everything we carry in that is not food, encourage boiled water rather than plastic bottles, and spend almost all of what you pay within the region you trek in.

Responsible trekking

Drinking water

A trekker drinking bottled water uses around forty plastic bottles on this trek, all of which have been flown or carried into a national park and have to be carried out again. Boiled water is available at every lodge for one or two dollars a litre, and we recommend you buy that instead. Bring water purification as a backup.

Waste

We carry out everything we bring in that is not food. The Khumbu has a rubbish problem that it did not create and cannot solve alone, and we make sure not to add to it.

Supporting local communities

The lodges are family businesses in the villages along the route. The guides and porters live in this district. The permit fees fund the national park and the rural municipality. Almost all of what you pay for this trek is spent within thirty miles of the trail, which is a good reason to book with a Nepali operator rather than a foreign company that subcontracts to one.

Local customs

Ask before photographing anyone. When you meet a mule train, stand on the mountain side of the trail, not the side with the drop, and let it pass. Monasteries welcome visitors but are places of worship: remove your hat and shoes, and if a service is taking place, wait.

Booking and payment

How to book

Write to us, or send a WhatsApp message, with your approximate travel dates. You will receive a personal reply from a member of our team who has walked this route. There is no obligation at any stage before you pay a deposit.

Deposit

A 30 per cent deposit secures your dates, and the balance is paid when you arrive in Kathmandu, in cash or by card. At the same time we ask for a copy of your passport, your insurance certificate and any dietary or medical information.

Payment

You can pay by bank transfer or by card through a secure link. Card payments carry a bank fee of about 4 per cent, which we show you before you pay. The balance in Kathmandu can be paid in US dollars, pounds, euros or Nepali rupees.

Cancellation

If you cancel more than 30 days before departure, the deposit can be transferred to any other date or trek we run, with no time limit. If you cancel within 30 days, the deposit is retained, because the permits, flights and crew have been booked by then. If we cancel for any reason other than weather, you receive a full refund.

Private and group departures

Both cost the same for a party of five or more. A private departure runs on your dates at your pace and can be arranged for one person. A group departure runs on the dates in the table above, with a maximum of eight people. Most people book privately, at no extra cost.

Late bookings

Ten days' notice is enough if flight seats are available, although in spring and autumn they often are not. We have arranged treks starting within four days. If you are already in Kathmandu, please visit our office.

Optional extras

Helicopter return from Gorak Shep

from $500 a seat, saves 3 days

Fly out from Gorak Shep or Pheriche to Lukla or directly to Kathmandu. Most people choose this to save time or to avoid the descent on their knees.

Everest scenic flight

$220, 1 morning

A one-hour flight along the range from Kathmandu, with a guaranteed window seat. It is a good alternative if cloud keeps Lukla closed.

Chitwan or Bardia, three days

from $390, +3 days

Travel south to the lowland jungle to see rhino, and possibly tiger at Bardia. A good way to recover after eleven days above 3,000 m.

Guided Kathmandu Valley tour

$95, 1 day

Bhaktapur, Patan and Boudhanath with a guide who explains the religious art and symbolism. Day 2 includes a shorter version of this tour.

Gokyo Lakes and Cho La

from $640, +5 days

Return by a loop over a 5,420 m pass and past the six Gokyo lakes. A demanding route, and one of the finest in the Khumbu.

Single room in Kathmandu

$180

A room to yourself for all four hotel nights. On the trek, lodges are twin-share only.

Luxury lodge upgrade in the lower Khumbu

Price on request

Where the route passes one, we book a premium lodge instead of the standard teahouse. Mountain Lodges of Nepal has lodges at Lukla, Phakding, Monjo, Namche and Deboche, and Everest Summit Lodges has lodges at Lukla, Monjo, Tashinga and Pangboche. Expect warmer rooms, better beds, private bathrooms in most rooms and a quieter dining room. There are no premium lodges above Pangboche, so the higher nights are in standard teahouses. We confirm which lodges have rooms on your dates before you book.

Frequently asked questions

Answers to the 19 questions travellers ask us most often. If your question is not listed, please ask and we will answer it and add it here.

Do I need any climbing experience?

No. The classic route involves no ropes, no crampons, no exposed sections and no pass above 5,000 m. It is a long walk on rough ground at altitude. If you can walk in the hills at home for six hours, you have the skills required.

How fit do I need to be?

You need to be able to walk five to seven hours a day, on consecutive days, with a light daypack. The training plan on this page is designed for a reasonably active person starting twelve weeks before the trek. Fitness does not protect you from altitude sickness, and a lack of fitness does not cause it.

How likely is it that I will not reach Base Camp?

On our departures, most people reach Base Camp. Those who do not almost always turn back because of altitude rather than fitness, usually between Dingboche and Lobuche, and usually because they continued with a headache instead of reporting it on the first day.

Is there an age limit?

There is no upper age limit. We have taken trekkers in their seventies to Base Camp and turned back trekkers in their twenties. The minimum age is twelve, accompanied by a parent. Walking experience matters more than age.

Can I do this trek on my own?

Yes. It costs $2,340 rather than $1,867, because the cost of the guide and porter is paid by one person rather than shared. Since 2023, foreign trekkers in Nepal's national parks must be accompanied by a licensed guide in any case.

How cold does it get?

At Gorak Shep, the highest overnight stop, expect -10°C to -20°C after dark, depending on the month. Daytime te mperatures on the trail are 10°C to 15°C in the trekking seasons and pleasant in the sun. Bedrooms are not he ated at any altitude, which is why you need a sleeping bag.

Is there wifi and a phone signal?

Everest Link wifi cards work as far as Gorak Shep and cost around $20 for 10 GB, but the connection is slow. Ncell and NTC mobile data cover most of the route as far as Lobuche. Buy a SIM card in Kathmandu, as you cannot register one on the trail.

Can I charge my phone and camera?

Yes, in the dining room, for $3 to $5 per device each time. Bring a power bank of 20,000 mAh or more and keep it inside your sleeping bag at night, because the cold drains batteries faster than use.

What happens if I get altitude sickness?

Your guide measures your oxygen saturation every evening and records it, so any decline is noticed early. Mild cases usually improve with a rest day or a short descent. If they do not, we descend, and if necessary we call a helicopter. Descent is the only reliable treatment.

What insurance do I need?

A policy that covers trekking to 6,000 m and includes helicopter evacuation and repatriation. We ask to see the certificate before you fly to Lukla. A rescue costs $3,000 to $5,000, and the helicopter will not fly without a payment guarantee, so it is important to have the correct cover.

How do I get a visa?

Most nationalities can obtain a visa on arrival at Kathmandu airport: $30 for 15 days or $50 for 30 days, payable in cash. Complete the online form within 15 days before arrival to reduce the waiting time. Bring a passport photograph and a passport valid for at least six months.

How much cash should I carry?

$300 to $500 in small notes, changed into rupees in Kathmandu. This covers hot showers, charging, wifi, drinks, snacks and tips. The highest cash machine is in Namche and is often empty, and no lodge above Namche accepts cards.

What if my Lukla flight is cancelled?

Cancellations happen several times a month in every season, which is why day 15 is a spare day. If the cancellation lasts more than three days, we move you to an equally good trek at a lower altitude at no extra charge, or you can fly out by helicopter for around $500 a seat. Always book your flight home with a clear day to spare.

Can I hire equipment in Kathmandu?

Yes, and it is inexpensive: down jackets and sleeping bags can be hired for $1 to $3 a day in Thamel. However, you will not need to, because we provide both, as well as a duffel bag. Boots are the item you should buy new and wear in at home.

Is the food safe, and can you cater for my diet?

Yes. The safest dish on every menu is dal bhat, which is freshly cooked and refilled free of charge. We advise against eating meat above Namche, as it is carried up without refrigeration. Vegetarian diets are easy to cater for, and vegan and gluten-free diets are manageable with notice, so please tell us when you book.

How heavy is my bag, and who carries it?

Your duffel is carried by a porter shared between two trekkers, with a strict limit of 20 kg between you. You carry a daypack with water, a warm layer, a camera and snacks for the day, weighing 6 to 8 kg. The 15 kg Lukla flight allowance is the main limit, not the porter.

Are showers available?

Up to Dingboche, hot showers cost $4 to $8 and are heated by gas or solar power. There are no showers above Lobuche, including at Gorak Shep. Bring wet wipes for the last four days; every trekker is in the same situation.

How many people will be in the group?

A maximum of eight, and departures run with a minimum of one. Groups of nine or more have a second guide. If you would prefer to travel only with your own party, a private departure on your own dates costs the same for five or more people.

When should I book?

For October and April, book three to six months ahead, because Lukla flights and the better lodges fill up first. At other times of year, six weeks is usually enough and ten days is possible.

Photos, videos and reviews of this trip:
earthbound.rajansimkhada.com/everest-base-camp-trek-follow-classic-route-it-is-safe-and-affordable