



EVEREST BASE CAMP & THE SACRED LAKES OF GOKYO



En-route to Everest Base © Ann Foulkes, trekMountains

Grade:	Demanding / Strenuous 	Land-only duration:	22 days
Max altitude:	5623m	Trekking days:	17 days
Dates:	We can run this on dates to suit you for a minimum group size of 1. The 2 main trekking seasons in Nepal are Spring and Autumn. Contact us at info@trekmountains.com with your preferred dates		
		Price:	From £1645

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Trek description

Our trip takes in the all the best parts of trip to the Everest region: Kala Patar, Everest Base Camp, the Cho La Pass, the turquoise holy lakes at Gokyo and the sublime view of Everest and a host of other Khumbu peaks from the summit of Gokyo Ri across the Ngozumpa glacier. We spend time acclimatising on our ascent via the Gokyo valley, which is much quieter than our descent which is down the Khumbu valley.

This trek is harder than the classic Everest Base Camp & Kala Pattar trip as more time is spent above 5000m. The Cho La is not a technical pass, it is a high pass subject to changes in weather conditions and is suited to those who are comfortable in a mountain environment. The pass does involve some scrambling over big boulders. After the pass, you descend onto a section of ice, and for this reason you should take a walking ice axe and crampons that will fit onto your trekking boots. Recommended are the [Kahtoola Microspikes](#) as they will fit onto any boot – available mail order from [George Fisher](#).

Why book with trekMountains?

Our trek allows you 2 nights at Gorak Shep – the highest overnight spot for trekkers on this route. This means that you have 2 days, plenty of time, to devote to spending time both at Kala Pattar (which offers the best close-up views of Mt Everest itself), and also at Everest Base Camp. In our opinion, itineraries that only offer 1 night at Gorak Shep are just too rushed for the majority of trekkers to accomplish what is for most, their dream of seeing Everest and of also standing the at Everest Base Camp, looking up from the Khumbu Icefall to this majestic mountain of legends.

Acclimatisation is very important, both for your safety and for your enjoyment of the trek. We therefore have included acclimatisation days at Namche and at Macchermo. Our trek also includes an extra contingency day to help cope with any problems encountered with acclimatisation, weather or flight delays. We consider this extra day to be very important. For any problems encountered with flights, baggage delays etc we have also scheduled a complete day in Kathmandu at the start and the end of the trek. Usually these days in Kathmandu can be spent exploring this fascinating city. However, on the occasions when bags are delayed or flight problems occur, we are sure you will be particularly glad that these days have been built into the itinerary.

Are you looking for a similar challenge in a more remote area?

Some of our other treks that might interest you are:

- Naar Phu - Nepal
- Kangchenjunga & the Singalila Ridge – India
- Chomolhari Trek – Bhutan

Looking for something easier?

- Everest Base Camp & Kala Pattar - Nepal
- Annapurna Sanctuary – Nepal
- Singalila Ridge - India

Not sure? Please email or call us – we consider it very important that you find the right trek for you and we pride ourselves in our ability to help you find the most appropriate trek.

OUTLINE ITINERARY

Walking and journey times are approximate

Day 1 Arrive Kathmandu

You will be met at Kathmandu's airport and taken to your hotel. We will arrange a briefing, and the rest of the day is free to rest or to explore this incredibly diverse city.

Day 2 Free day in Kathmandu

We can arrange city tours for you to explore Kathmandu. See the section later in this document on **Kathmandu sightseeing options**. Alternatively you may prefer to rest at the hotel, or to explore the endless shopping possibilities in Thamel, the tourist part of Kathmandu



*Yak in front of the Khumbu Ice Fall, Everest Base Camp
(Ann Foulkes)*

Day 3 Fly Kathmandu to Lukla, trek to Phakding 3 hours trekking

An early start is required for the short, exciting mountain flight along the Himalaya from the busy domestic terminal at Kathmandu airport to the mountain airstrip at Lukla. On landing at Lukla, we will meet some of our trekking crew here. We will stay in this busy little town for a short while to allow the porters to sort their porter loads once the trek bags are unloaded from the plane. You will want get your trekking poles from your kit bag and also fill up your water bottles here. Lukla is at an altitude of 2827m, which is around 1400m higher than

Kathmandu, so you are likely to notice the difference in air temperature as soon as you get off the plane, and will probably find yourself reaching for a fleece jacket. The trek then begins, along a well constructed path. On the path you will see trains of dzos carrying loads. Always stand on the uphill side of the path from any animals, and make sure you do not cross any bridges at the same time as them. From Lukla, our easy first day of trekking actually descends slightly to our first overnight stop by the Dudh Kosi River at Phakding, (2600m).

Day 4 Trek Phakding to Namche Bazaar 3440m 5 hours trekking

After breakfast our trek recommences along the banks of the river. In and out of shade, up and down steps cut into the bank, you will quickly want to take a layer off as soon as you start walking in the sun. After an early lunch by the river, the first real test of the trek reveals itself. The path crosses a high suspension bridge, and starts to climb up through the woods towards Namche Bazaar. The path zig-zags through the trees, which offer some shade, but ascent is made more difficult due to the lack of oxygen at this altitude. It is very important to take your time and drink plenty of water on the way up to help yourself with acclimatisation. Part way up there is a levelled platform area, and from here, if the clouds are kind, you may get your first glimpse of Everest. Finally Namche Bazaar appears - the Sherpa capital and former trading centre with Tibet. There are many steps up through the town. This will be home for the next two nights, as it is important to take it easy here, and to allow your body to acclimatise.

Day 5 Namche Bazaar acclimatisation day

To help with acclimatisation, it is important to spend today taking things easy. Even if you haven't noticed the effects of altitude up to this point (lucky you!), you should still spend a second night at this altitude before progressing higher. If you are feeling good we recommend that you go with your trekking crew for a half day walk up to the Everest View Hotel for a coffee and hopefully some excellent views of Everest, Lhotse, Nuptse and Ama Dablam. Return to Namche for an afternoon of rest and last-minute shopping. Namche Bazaar is well worth exploring, with its excellent Sherpa museum, Buddhist monastery and distant views of Everest. Those who want to walk further could go to one of the nearby villages such as Khunde, or Thame

Day 6 Namche Bazaar – Kangjuma 3620m via Khumjung and Khunde

This interesting walk to the villages of Khumjung and Khunde has been added into our route to further aid acclimatisation, which will be invaluable later on in the trek before we ascend above 4000m. There are spectacular views of Ama Dablam to be had from Kangjuma.

Day 7 Kangjuma - Dole 4040m (3½ - 4½ hours)

Soon after Kangjuma the path splits. The path to the right leads up the main trail to Everest Base Camp via the Khumbu Valley. We take the much quieter left-hand trail to the Gokyo Valley. Himalayan tahr and musk deer can sometimes be seen on this part of the route if you are lucky. We follow through rhododendron and birch forest up the left-hand side of the Dudh Kosi Valley heading towards Dole which is 1-2 hours walk from the old check post at 3680m. The hill behind Dole is a good vantage point for sunset views of 6685m Kangtega and 6608m Thamserku.

Day 8 Dole - Machermo 4410m (3½ - 4 hours)

Another short day of walking, though it is necessary to stop here to restrict our rate of ascent. It is very important to ensure that we stick to the guidelines for ascent to enable us to acclimatise properly.

Day 9 Machermo acclimatisation day

We have an acclimatisation day and a local walk on the ridge behind Machermo with fantastic views of the surrounding peaks. This will enable us to gain height during the day, returning to spend a second night at the same altitude. This is a very important aspect of our trek and will undoubtedly assist with the success, as well as with our enjoyment of it. Community Action Nepal, our sister charity, has supported the building of 3 porter shelters on this trek. The first of these is here at Machermo, and today would be a present a good chance to see this shelter for ourselves.

Day 10 Machermo - Gokyo 4790m (4hours)

Our route today takes us further up the Gokyo Valley, to the first of the sacred lakes and past the path we will take later which leads to the ascent route for the Cho La. Continuing on up the valley we come across the second and third sacred lakes, marked by small piles of stones. The village of Gokyo is by the third lake, Dudh Pokhari, and we can see Gokyo Ri to the north of this lake. There are a couple of tea houses here, and CAN's newest porter shelter is being built here. These shelters provide vital shelter for all porters, regardless of the company they are working for. We can appreciate just how important good quality shelter is when we are at 4790m.

Day 11 Contingency / extra acclimatisation day

A spare day in case of bad weather or the need for extra acclimatisation. If this day is not needed on the ascent, we can use it to have an extra night at Gokyo for acclimatisation, or at Gorak Shep, devoting a whole day to

climbing Kala Pattar. A good thing to do today would be to walk further up the Gokyo Valley to the 5000m "Scoundrels' View" of Everest by the 5th lake at Ngozumpa Tsho.



From Gokyo Ri (Ann Foulkes)

Day 12 Gokyo Ri 5340m – Dragnag 4700m (5 hours)

We can start today with an ascent of Gokyo Ri if we didn't climb it yesterday. Depending on your acclimatisation and your confidence on rougher ground, the ascent typically takes around 2 hours, with the descent around half that time. Gokyo Ri offers a fantastic view of Everest and countless Khumbu peaks, and many consider the view from here to surpass the view from Kala Pattar even though Kala Pattar is much nearer to Everest. Returning to Gokyo, we descend the Gokyo valley and across the Ngozumpa Glacier to Dragnag where we overnight (walk around 2 hours). While crossing the glacier the route is not very obvious. Being a glacier, it is important to follow the sherpas carefully along the cairned route.

Day 13 Dragnag – Dzongla 4850m via Cho La 5420m

The Cho La is a steep ascent, and can appear to be rather intimidating when you are at the foot of the pass. The pass can change in nature quite a lot – sometimes it is too snowy to cross, sometimes icy and sometimes without any snow or ice. If the descent is icy an ice axe is a helpful tool. If there is too much snow to cross the pass, or if people are finding the going rather tough there is the option of retracing our steps back down the Gokyo valley and ascending the Khumbu valley from Phortse. There is limited accommodation at Dzongla, so it might be necessary to continue on to Lobuche. This additional trek can take 2-3 hours. Today is a long and tiring day, but the length of the day is very dependent on the strength of the group.

Day 14 Dzongla – Gorak Shep 5100m (8 hours)

From Dzongla we skirt round on the path above Dughla, with 6119m Lobuche East and 5245m Awi Peak on our left, and 5806m Pokalde opposite us as we join the main Khumbu valley. We take lunch at Lobuche

before continuing on to Gorak Shep. The trail gets rougher as we traverse the Khumbu glacier debris where an adjoining glacier flows down from Changri La. Our overnight stay is at Gorak Shep (5100m).



Setting off to cross the Cho La (Ann Foulkes)

Day 15 Gorak Shep - Everest Base Camp – Gorak Shep (7-8 hours)

Today we visit the modern-day Everest Base Camp location. The Khumbu ice fall dominates above the part of the glacier that expeditions use for their Base Camps, and trekkers in the spring may well see the climbing expeditions camped here. We return to Gorak Shep, the site of the old Base Camp.

Day 16 Gorak Shep - Kala Pattar – Dingboche (or Pheriche) (7-8 hours)

Kala Pattar (5623m) is a steep, but not technically difficult climb. From its summit we may enjoy uninterrupted views of Everest's black south west face, seemingly dwarfed by its neighbouring giant Nuptse. Khumbu's tortured ice field stretches away to the south in an unbroken panorama of snowcapped mountains.

After retracing our steps along the glacial moraine to Lobuche, we descend the Imja Khola Valley to the village of Dingboche,

(4350m). Alternatively we can stay at nearby Pheriche (4280m).

Day 17 Dingboche - Kangjuma

A delightful day of easy walking is ahead of us as we cross first yak meadows and descend into the alpine zone. We continue our descent of the Khumbu passing through Deboche (3757m) and Pangboche with its 300 year old monastery containing wall paintings and Tibetan manuscripts. It is a climb up to Thyangboche Monastery in a magical setting that commands impressive views of shapely Ama Dablam. Dropping down from Thyangboche we traverse along pine-wooded paths to reach Kangjuma.

Day 18 Kangjuma – Monjo

From the lovely spot at Kangjuma we return along the easy Balcony Path to Namche Bazaar. From here the deep valley of the Dudh Khosi drops away as we retrace our steps to Monjo

Day 19 Monjo to Lukla

The last day of trekking is undulating, and the sting in the tail is the final pull up to Lukla where we will stay in a tea house for our final night in the Khumbu. We will no doubt pass fresh-faced trekkers just embarking on their trip.

Day 20 Fly Lukla to Kathmandu

Weather-permitting, we fly from the tiny mountain airstrip back to Kathmandu, with a last chance to glimpse the mighty snow-capped Himalaya in the distance. Overnight at our group hotel.

Day 21 Free in Kathmandu

A chance to do some shopping, explore at leisure or merely relax in the hotel gardens.

Day 22 Depart Nepal

We will transfer you to Kathmandu airport for your international flights. Alternatively, you may prefer to extend your stay in Nepal – please refer to our **Himalayan extensions itinerary** for ideas.

Whilst we expect that the trek will run as per the itinerary, participants should accept that there is a possibility of changes being necessary subject to local conditions.

Kathmandu sightseeing options.

Boudnath - the largest Buddhist stupa (temple)

Pashupatinath – close to Boudnath, Pashupatinath is Kathmandu's equivalent of Varanasi. Many Hindus are cremated on the banks of the river here. This is very holy place for Hindus where you will find many Hindu sardhus (holy men) dressed in orange.

Swyambunath -affectionately known as the Monkey Temple

Durbar Square - this square is host to a large temple complex, where Hindu temples sit next to Buddhist stupas

Half day tours can be arranged for visits to Boudnath and Pashupatinath, or to Swyambunath and Durbar Square. Alternatively, all four sights can be visited in one day.



Coloured dyes, Pashupatinath
© Ann Foulkes, trekMountains



Boudnath Stupa
© Ann Foulkes, trekMountains

Everest View Flight – fly to see the world's highest peak. We can arrange to take you to the domestic airport for a morning flight to Mt Everest. These flights only take off if the summit of Everest is clear – if it isn't, the cost of your flight will be refunded.

Flights:

You are welcome to book your own international flights for this trip. If there is a group of you we may be able to book your international flights for you – please contact us.

We will book the Kathmandu – Lukla flights for you.

No flights should be booked until you have received written confirmation from the trekMountains office that your departure is guaranteed to run.

Lukla flights:

These flights can only happen in clear weather, and sometimes there can be delays. We try to pre-empt any potential problems by putting a contingency day in addition to the acclimatisation days into our itinerary to try to ensure that you are still can have a safe acclimatisation programme even if your flight to Lukla is delayed by a day.

Should you be really unfortunate, and suffer extended delays to a flight to Lukla, we will do our very best to get you to the Everest region. Your safety is paramount to us, both when travelling and when trekking. If delays jeopardise your chances of safely trekking in the Everest trek due to the acclimatisation required, we will endeavour to offer you an alternative trek, which is likely to be in the Annapurna or Langtang regions (which are not dependant on flights).

On your return after the trek, we have also scheduled a completely free day in Kathmandu to try to ensure that you can still make your international flight even if your Lukla flight is delayed by a day.

Please note that the ability of planes to fly to or from Lukla is weather dependant, and completely out of the control of trekMountains. Any additional costs incurred by delays to flights are your responsibility, though we would advise you to keep all receipts as you may be able to claim some compensation from your travel insurance company. During times of delayed Lukla flights, accommodation in Kathmandu and Lukla can be stretched to capacity, so our first choice of accommodation may not be possible. We would ask for your understanding if those circumstances apply to you. What we do promise is that we will do our very best to keep you as comfortable and as informed as possible.

Minimum numbers and our pricing policy:

This trip is advertised based on a 2 person price based on twin sharing rooms. It can, however, be run with just 1 person.

We can offer this trip as a trip just for your party on dates to suit you. If the 2 person twin share price is not relevant to your party, we will quote according to the number of participants and the number of single / shared rooms that you require.

Alternatively, you may prefer that we open up the trip to other bookings. In that case, if there are less than 2 of you in your party we will give you a price based on the number of participants so that the trip can be guaranteed immediately. The final price will reduce as more trekkers join the trip.

The Price Includes:

- Transfers between Kathmandu airport and hotel accommodation
- Accommodation for 4 nights in Kathmandu in rooms with bathroom and inclusive of breakfast
- Return flights between Kathmandu and Lukla, including departure taxes for internal flights where applicable
- Participation in the trek as per itinerary, tea house accommodation on a shared room basis, all meals on trek, Sirdar (head guide), porters or dzos (carrying a maximum of 15 kg personal equipment per participant); trekking permit

Not Included:

- International flights
- Nepalese visa (please refer to our document "Preparing for your trek: Nepal" for latest prices)
- Lunches and dinners whilst in Kathmandu
- Sleeping bag
- Travel insurance
- Tips
- Items of a personal nature such as drinks, laundry, telephone calls and souvenirs (allow approximately £250 spending money)

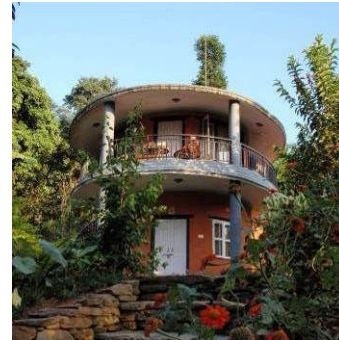
Single rooms: If you are travelling alone, you will be matched up to share with someone of the same gender. Single rooms can be provided at extra cost in the hotels (payable in advance), and in the tea houses (payable locally) subject to availability.

Preparing for your trek: please see our document "Preparing for your trek to Nepal" at <http://trekmountains.com/pre-trek/> for all the advice you need about visas, insurance, money, equipment, and medical matters.

Extension Options:

- **Extra nights** are available in Kathmandu in our group hotel, and in Pokhara in our choice of accommodation:

Pokhara: choose either to stay in hotel accommodation in Pokhara's popular Lakeside district or in a delightful Nepali family-run guest house overlooking the lake. The guest house is best suited to those wanting an authentic time with a Nepali family, and a time of tranquillity and space – it is in a quiet location in a village which is 40 minutes walk from the centre of Pokhara.



Pokhara Guest House accommodation © Ann Foulkes trekMountains

- **Extension packages** can also be organized in **Nepal, Tibet or Bhutan**. Please refer to our **Himalayan extensions itinerary** for more details.



*Potala Palace, Tibet
© Ann Foulkes trekMountains*



Drukgyel Dzong, Bhutan © Pam Pickett

Extensions and extra nights should be arranged prior to booking international flights