

Earthbound Expeditions

Everest Panorama Premium Trek

11 days, from US$2,485 per person

Duration **11 days**	Grade **Moderate**	Max altitude **3,880 m**
Start and end **Kathmandu**	On the trail **4 to 6 hours a day**	Best season **Mar to May, Sep to Nov**
Accommodation **Luxury lodges**	Meals **All meals on the trek**	Group size **Up to 8**
Getting there **Fly to Lukla**		

Everest Panorama Premium Trek Overview

A short Everest trek at a slow, comfortable pace: Namche, the Everest View Hotel and Tengboche Monastery, with heated rooms and private bathrooms every night, and nothing above 3,880 m.

Trek overview

Eleven days, six of them walking, and none above 3,880 m. You fly to Lukla and walk for two days up the Dudh Koshi valley to Namche Bazaar. You spend a day visiting the Sherpa villages on the plateau above Namche, then continue to Tengboche Monastery and sleep in the forest below it at Deboche. From there you return the way you came. The trek does not go to Base Camp, and the view of Everest is just as good.

Who this trip is for

This trek is for people who want to see Everest but do not want to spend three weeks trekking to 5,545 m. Most travellers on this trek belong to one of three groups: people in their sixties and seventies, families with children, and anyone with ten days rather than three weeks. It is also a good choice if you have had problems with altitude before.

Accommodation standards

In Kathmandu, Phakding and Namche, you stay in a five-star hotel and then the two best lodges in the lower Khumbu, each with a heated room, a private bathroom, hot water and reliable wifi. At Deboche, the best room has its own bathroom, but the only heating is a stove in the dining room. No warmer accommodation exists at 3,820 m.

Why the trip takes 11 days

Seven-day versions of this trek exist. They fly you in, walk you quickly to Namche and back, and have no spare day for weather and no second night anywhere. Our itinerary adds a day in Kathmandu, a full acclimatisation day above Namche, a night at Deboche rather than a rushed turnaround, and a spare day at the end in case the Lukla flight is delayed.

Key highlights of the Everest Panorama Premium Trek

- Everest, Lhotse and Ama Dablam from the Everest View Hotel (3,880 m)
- Tengboche monastery and the morning puja
- Khumjung, Khunde and Hillary's school and hospital
- The best lodges in the Khumbu, heated and en suite
- Five-star hotels in Kathmandu, and a spare day for the flight

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	2,610 m
4	Phakding to Namche Bazaar	5–6 hrs	11 km	3,440 m

5	Everest View Hotel, Khumjung and Khunde	4–5 hrs	8 km	3,880 m
6	Namche to Tengboche, sleep Deboche	5–6 hrs	10 km	3,820 m
7	Morning puja, back to Namche	4–5 hrs	10 km	3,440 m
8	Namche to Lukla	6–7 hrs	13 km	2,840 m
9	Fly to Kathmandu	-	-	1,400 m
10	Spare day in Kathmandu	-	-	1,400 m
11	Fly home	-	-	-

Day 1

Arrive in Kathmandu

We meet you at the airport and drive you to a five-star hotel with a garden. Rest for as long as you need. In the evening, we go through the route over dinner, check your packing and weigh your bag, because the Lukla baggage allowance is strictly enforced.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, arrival day Night: Five-star hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Dinner

Day 2

Kathmandu Valley sightseeing

A private car and an experienced guide take you to the hilltop stupa at Swayambhunath, the cremation ghats at Pashupatinath, the white dome of Boudhanath and the carved courtyards of Patan. We return to the hotel by late afternoon, because tomorrow starts before dawn and the following day is the most demanding of the trek.

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

Day 3

Fly to Lukla, walk to Phakding

The twenty-minute mountain flight gives views of the Himalaya, and the Lukla runway slopes uphill. From Lukla, the trail descends gently beside the Dudh Koshi to Phakding, three or four easy hours with time to stop. Your first mountain lodge has a heated room, a private bathroom and hot water.

Altitude: 2,610 m On foot: 8 km, 3–4 hrs Night: Mountain lodge, Phakding Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 4

Trek to Namche Bazaar

This is a long day and the only demanding one. The trail crosses the river on several bridges and passes the national park gate at Monjo, followed by the climb from the Hillary bridge to Namche: around 600 metres of ascent in two and a half hours. We stop often. Near the top, Everest comes into view through the trees, weather permitting.

Altitude: 3,440 m On foot: 11 km, 5–6 hrs Night: Mountain lodge, Namche Bazaar Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5

Everest View Hotel, Khumjung and Khunde

We climb the hill behind Namche to Syangboche and the Everest View Hotel at 3,880 m, the highest point of the trip, for coffee on the terrace with views of Everest, Lhotse and Ama Dablam. We then descend through Khumjung to visit the monastery and Hillary's school, pass Khunde hospital, and return to Namche to sleep at a lower altitude.

Altitude: 3,880 m at the hotel On foot: 8 km, 4–5 hrs Night: Mountain lodge, Namche Bazaar Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 6

Trek to Tengboche and Deboche

The trail follows the hillside with views of Ama Dablam ahead for most of the morning. It then descends to the river at Phunki Tenga and climbs steadily through forest to Tengboche Monastery at 3,867 m. We visit the monastery, then walk twenty minutes down to Deboche, which is quieter and more sheltered and has better beds.

Altitude: 3,820 m On foot: 10 km, 5–6 hrs Night: Lodge, Deboche Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7

Tengboche morning prayers and trek to Namche Bazaar

We walk back up to the monastery early for the morning puja, which visitors may attend if they arrive quietly and sit at the back. We then return along the same path, mostly downhill, through the rhododendron forest to Namche. You have a hot shower, same-day laundry and a comfortable bed.

Altitude: 3,440 m On foot: 10 km, 4–5 hrs Night: Mountain lodge, Namche Bazaar Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 8

Trek to Lukla

This is the last and longest day on the trail, though it is almost all downhill. You descend the height gained over the first two days, cross the bridges again, and walk back through Monjo and Phakding to Lukla. In the evening, we have dinner with the guides and porters to mark the end of the trek.

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

Day 9

Fly to Kathmandu

A short flight back to the Kathmandu Valley, usually in the early morning. The rest of the day is free for a bath, a massage or shopping in Thamel. In the evening, we have dinner together at a good restaurant, which is a welcome change after a week of lodge food.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, flight day Night: Five-star hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 10

Spare day in Kathmandu

We keep this day in reserve in case of weather delays at Lukla. If everything has run to schedule, the day is free: you can visit Bhaktapur, take a cooking class or relax in the hotel garden. If a flight was delayed earlier in the week, this day absorbs the delay so that your journey home is not affected.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: Optional 2–3 hrs Night: Five-star hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Breakfast

Day 11

Departure

We drive you to the airport in good time for your flight. If you are continuing to Pokhara, Chitwan or Bhutan, we will have arranged that too. Whatever your plans, include a spare day, as Lukla flights are often delayed by weather.

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

What's included

- Airport transfers & ground transport
- Senior licensed English-speaking guide
- Accommodation throughout the trip
- All permits & national park fees
- Meals as per the itinerary
- Five-star hotels in Kathmandu, four nights
- Premium lodges with heated en suite rooms on the trek
- Kathmandu to Lukla flights both ways, with taxes
- One porter per traveller rather than one for every two
- Filtered drinking water, wifi and same-day laundry at Namche
- Down jacket and duffel bag provided
- Farewell dinner in Kathmandu

Not included

- International flights
- Travel & rescue insurance
- Personal trekking gear
- Tips & personal expenses
- Nepal entry visa (on arrival)

Permits and other costs

Permit	Fee	Issued by
Sagarmatha National Park entry permit. SAARC nationals pay NPR 1,500. Children under ten are free. Included in your price.	NPR 3,390, about $25	Kathmandu, or at the Monjo gate on day 4
Khumbu Pasang Lhamu Rural Municipality permit. Covers the first four weeks, then NPR 2,500 after that. Included in your price.	NPR 2,000, about $15	Lukla, on arrival
TIMS card. No longer required in the Khumbu since 2018. It was replaced by the municipality permit above. You do not need to buy one for this trek.	Not required	Not applicable

Other cost	Amount	Note
Lukla flight, both ways	$360–420	about $500 via Manthali in peak season
Sagarmatha National Park permit	$25	NPR 3,390
Khumbu Pasang Lhamu permit	$15	NPR 2,000, the local municipality permit

Premium lodge, Phakding and Namche	$150–250 a night	compared with $5 to $20 for a standard teahouse bed
Best room at Deboche	$60–90 a night	private bathroom, dining room stove, no room heating
Five-star hotel, Kathmandu	$180–390 a night	four nights, compared with $40 to $70 for a three-star hotel
Food on the trek	$40–60 a day	lodge kitchens rather than standard teahouse menus, all included
Senior licensed guide	$35–45 a day	including their accommodation and meals
Porter, one per traveller	$22–28 a day	one per traveller rather than one for every two
Travel insurance to 4,000 m	$90–150	cheaper than the 6,000 m cover Base Camp needs
Tips, guide and porter	$150–250	per traveller, at the end

Packing list

Pack for six days, not eleven

Laundry at Namche is included and returned the same day, and you pass through Namche three times. This means you only need three days of clothes rather than six, which is important because the Lukla flight allows 15 kg in total and all baggage is weighed. We provide the duffel bag and a down jacket, and no sleeping bag is needed on this route because every bed has a duvet. Anything you do not take on the trek is stored free at our Kathmandu office.

Head and eyes

- Sun hat with a brim, and a warm hat that covers your ears
- Two buffs or neck gaiters
- Category 3 sunglasses. The sun at 3,800 m is stronger than it feels
- Headtorch, mainly for night-time visits to the bathroom at Deboche
- SPF 50 sunscreen and lip balm with sun protection

Clothing

- Three merino or synthetic base layers, not cotton
- One fleece and one light insulated jacket
- Down jacket for the evenings. We provide one if you prefer not to bring your own
- Waterproof jacket and trousers that pack small
- Two pairs of trekking trousers
- Underwear for three days, because laundry at Namche is included

Hands and feet

- Liner gloves and a warmer outer pair
- Trekking boots with ankle support, which must be broken in before the trek
- Three pairs of wool trekking socks
- Camp shoes or trainers for the lodges in the evening
- Trekking poles, which help your knees more on the descent than on the climb

Bags

- Duffel bag for the porter, 20 kg maximum. We provide one
- Daypack, 25 to 30 litres, with a rain cover
- A few dry bags, as rain and river crossings can soak your gear

Sleeping

- No sleeping bag is needed. Every bed on this route has a duvet, and we do not provide sleeping bags
- A silk liner, if you usually travel with one, though you will not need it
- Earplugs, for the night at Deboche, where the walls are thinner

Health

- Personal first aid kit: blister plasters, tape, painkillers and rehydration salts
- Any regular medication, in its original packaging
- One or two water bottles, as filtered water is free at every lodge
- Hand sanitiser, and wet wipes for the walking days
- Throat lozenges, as the dry, cold air affects most people

Documents and money

- Passport valid for six months, and two photocopies
- Four passport photographs for permits
- Travel insurance certificate showing helicopter cover to 4,000 m
- $200 to $300 in small notes. The ATM in Namche often runs out of cash

Altitude profile

Day	Place	Sleep at	Highest point
1	Kathmandu	1,400 m	-
2	Kathmandu	1,400 m	-
3	Phakding	2,610 m	2,840 m
4	Namche Bazaar	3,440 m	-
5	Namche Bazaar	3,440 m	3,880 m
6	Deboche	3,820 m	3,867 m
7	Namche Bazaar	3,440 m	-

8	Lukla	2,840 m	-
9	Kathmandu	1,400 m	-
10	Kathmandu	1,400 m	-

Lukla flights

The flight to Lukla is the least predictable part of this trip, and many short itineraries do not allow for delays. This section explains how we plan for them.

Flights from Kathmandu or Ramechhap

Outside the two busiest periods of the year, you fly from Kathmandu, which takes about 35 minutes. During most of the spring and autumn peak seasons, the aviation authority moves Lukla departures to Manthali airport at Ramechhap to reduce congestion at Kathmandu. This means a four to five-hour drive starting at around 2 am, followed by a twenty-minute flight. We tell you which applies to your dates before you book.

Baggage allowance of 15 kg

The allowance is 10 kg of checked baggage and 5 kg of hand luggage, and bags are weighed at the counter. Excess baggage costs about $1.50 per kilo. The aircraft is a nineteen-seat Twin Otter or Dornier that lands on a 527-metre runway built on a slope, which is why the limit exists. Anything you do not take on the trek is stored free at our office in Kathmandu.

Flight delays and the spare day

Cloud closes Lukla airport several times a month in every season. A delay of one day is common and two days is not unusual, which is why this itinerary includes a spare day in Kathmandu at the end. If a delay lasts longer, a helicopter seat costs around $500, and we can usually arrange one within a few hours.

Helicopter flights

Flying in by helicopter is a reasonable option during a week of bad weather, and it lands at Lukla in the same way as the plane. We do not fly travellers to Syangboche at 3,880 m to start the trek there, as some operators do. Gaining altitude from 1,400 m to 3,880 m in twenty minutes is a serious risk for altitude sickness, even on a route designed to avoid it.

Book your flight home with a spare day

Whatever the itinerary says, book an international flight that leaves at least one clear day after your scheduled return to Kathmandu. It costs very little to arrange and is our most important advice for this trip.

Accommodation

The lodges

At Phakding, Namche Bazaar and Lukla, you stay in premium mountain lodges. Rooms are twin or double and heated, with a private bathroom and hot shower. The dining rooms are warm and the food is cooked to a good standard. In Kathmandu, the hotel is five-star, with a bath in the room.

The night at Deboche

The one higher night is at Deboche, just below Tengboche, in the best lodge in that part of the valley. The rooms we book have their own bathroom, but the heating is a stove in the dining room, as it is everywhere at this altitude. Bring a sleeping bag or ask for extra blankets for that night.

Where	Nights	Type	Room	Bathroom
Kathmandu	4	Five-star hotel	Deluxe double or twin	Private, hot water, and a bath
Phakding	1	Premium mountain lodge	Twin or double, heated	Private, hot shower
Namche Bazaar	3	Premium mountain lodge	Twin or double, heated	Private, hot shower
Deboche	1	The best lodge below Tengboche, and a very good one	Twin or double	Private in the rooms we book
Lukla	1	Premium mountain lodge	Twin or double, heated	Private, hot shower

Heating

In your room at Phakding and Namche, by electric blanket and room heater. At Deboche, there is a stove in the dining room, lit at dusk, and a very warm duvet.

Hot shower

Every night of the trek, in your own bathroom, included. This is available on this route but not a day's walk higher up.

Charging

Free, in your room, at every lodge we use. Bring a power bank and keep it warm overnight, as the cold drains batteries faster than use does.

Wifi

Included at Phakding, Namche and Deboche, and fast enough to send photographs. If needed, Everest Link cards cost about $20 for 10 GB.

Phone signal

Ncell and NTC cover Lukla, Namche and most of the trail between them. Buy the SIM in Kathmandu, because you cannot register one on the trail.

Water

Filtered water is free at every lodge, refilled into your own bottle. We do not sell bottled water and ask you not to buy it in the national park.

Bedding

Mattresses, duvets and pillows throughout, and an electric blanket at Phakding and Namche. A sleeping bag is not needed on this route, and we do not provide one.

Laundry

Same-day laundry at Namche, included. On a six-day walk, this means you can pack three days of clothes rather than six.

Meals

Meal	Time	What it is like
Breakfast	7:30–8:00	Porridge, eggs cooked to order, fresh bread, fruit and filter or espresso coffee
Lunch	12:00–13:00	Dal bhat, soups, fried rice, momo and potatoes from the village fields
Dinner	18:30–19:30	Soup to start, then curry, pasta, thukpa or Sherpa stew, and something sweet
Tea	on arrival	Black, milk, lemon, ginger or masala tea, with a pot ready when you arrive

Diet	How we manage it
Vegetarian	Easy to provide, and often the best dishes on the menu. The lodges we use grow vegetables in their own greenhouses.
Vegan	Easy to arrange if you tell us when you book, because the guide orders ahead at each lodge.
Gluten free	Rice, dal, potatoes and eggs are safe and widely available. Bread, noodles and momo are not, and a small kitchen cannot guarantee separate preparation surfaces.
Halal	There is no certified halal kitchen on this route. A vegetarian diet is the practical option and is easy to follow here.
Meat	Meat is on the menu, but we recommend avoiding it above Namche, as it is carried up the trail by porters without refrigeration.

A typical day

Time	What happens
6:30	Tea brought to your room, often with mountain views from the window
7:00	Pack, and leave your duffel bag by the door for your porter
7:30	Breakfast together, at a relaxed pace
8:30	On the trail. The guide sets a slow, steady pace
12:00	Lunch at a lodge on the route, for at least an hour
13:00	Two to three more hours of walking, with stops for the views
15:00	Arrive at the lodge for tea and a hot shower, with your room ready
17:00	Oxygen saturation and pulse measured and recorded
18:30	Dinner, and a briefing from the guide on the next day
21:00	Bed, in a heated room

Difficulty and preparation

Difficulty 2 of 5

A moderate trek at an altitude most people manage well.

- Four to six hours of walking a day for six days, and one day of six to seven hours on the way out.
- One steep section: the 600 m climb from the Hillary bridge to Namche, which takes about two and a half hours.
- You never sleep above 3,820 m, where serious altitude illness is uncommon.
- Stone steps, forest paths and suspension bridges. No ropes, crampons, exposed sections or high passes.
- Every night has a private bathroom and a hot shower, which helps you stay comfortable and well rested through the trek.

Getting ready

8 weeks before: Build endurance
Walk three times a week for 45 minutes, at a pace at which you can still hold a conversation. This is the most important part of your preparation. Most people who find this trek difficult have not trained on consecutive days before arriving.

6 weeks before: Add hills
Replace one walk with an hour of hill walking, with 250 m of ascent. Add squats and step-ups twice a week. The climb to Namche is 600 m, and the descent on day 8 is longer. The descent is hardest on the knees.

5 weeks before: Train in your boots
From now on, do every walk in the boots you will trek in, carrying the daypack you will use, loaded to 4 or 5 kg. Blisters are the most common cause of discomfort on this trek, and they can be prevented by training in your boots at home.

3 weeks before: Walk on consecutive days
Walk for four hours on Saturday and for two hours on Sunday morning. This is the most useful training session, because the trek involves walking on consecutive days, and a single long walk does not prepare you for that.

2 weeks before: Longest walk
Walk for five hours with 500 m of ascent and the same descent. If you can finish this and then eat and sleep normally, you are ready for everything on this itinerary, including day 4.

1 week before: Rest
Halve the distance, keep the same number of walks, and sleep well. Training in the last week will not make you fitter and may cause an injury. Arrive rested.

Altitude and safety

The highest point where you sleep is Deboche at 3,820 m, and the highest point you reach is the Everest View Hotel at 3,880 m, for about an hour. At this height, each breath contains about two thirds of the oxygen it would at sea level. This is enough to make you breathless on stairs but not usually enough to make you ill. Serious altitude illness is uncommon below 3,900 m. This is the reason for this trek's route, and the reason we do not shorten the itinerary.

What to watch for

- A headache that does not improve with water and paracetamol
- No appetite at dinner after a full day of walking
- A poor night at Namche, waking often and short of breath
- Dizziness, or feeling as if you are drunk
- Nausea, particularly on the first evening at a new altitude
- A dry cough that gets worse over a day

How to prevent it

- Walk slowly on day 4. It is the only steep day, and it is when people most often push too hard.
- Drink three litres of water a day, even if you do not feel thirsty.
- Spend two nights at Namche before going higher. Day 5 is for this.
- Climb high and sleep low: on day 5 you go up to 3,880 m and return to 3,440 m to sleep.
- Limit alcohol at Namche, and do not take sleeping pills.
- Tell your guide the first time you have a headache.

What we do

1. Daily health checks
Your guide carries a pulse oximeter and records your oxygen saturation and pulse at each stop. The readings are written down, so any decline over two days is clearly visible.

2. Mild symptoms
You spend an extra night at the same altitude. On this route, this costs one day and nothing else. Most symptoms resolve at this stage, and the trek continues as planned.

3. Serious symptoms
Descent is the only effective treatment, and on this route it is easy: Namche is within a few hours of every point on the trek, and it is 440 m lower than the highest point you reach.

4. Helicopter evacuation
There are helipads at Namche, Syangboche and Lukla, and a helicopter can be in the air within an hour in daylight. This is why you need insurance, and why we ask to see your policy before you fly to Lukla.

5. Hospital on the route
Khunde hospital, built by Edmund Hillary in 1966 and staffed all year, is at 3,840 m on the village loop you walk on day 5. It is fifteen minutes from the trail.

Weather by month

Because this route stays low, February and December are suitable for this trek in a way they are not for the Base Camp trek. Only two months are unsuitable.

Month	Daytime on the trail	Night at Namche, 3,440 m	Night at Deboche, 3,820 m	Conditions	Note
January	6°C	-12°C	-15°C	Hard	Clear and very cold at night. The lodges we use stay open and heated.

February	8°C	-11°C	-14°C	Good	Cold nights, quiet trails and the clearest air of the year. A good month for this route.
March	11°C	-8°C	-11°C	Good	The season begins. Still cold after dark, and the rhododendrons begin to flower in the forest below Namche.
April	14°C	-4°C	-7°C	Best	The best month, with warm walking, stable weather and the forest at Deboche in full flower.
May	16°C	-1°C	-4°C	Best	The warmest walking of the year. Hazier towards the end of the month as the monsoon approaches.
June	18°C	3°C	0°C	Hard	The monsoon arrives. Cloud on most afternoons, and Lukla flights are often cancelled.
July	17°C	5°C	2°C	We do not run it	We do not run this trek in this month, because cloud hides the mountains.
August	17°C	5°C	2°C	We do not run it	Similar to July, with leeches in the forest below Phakding.
September	16°C	2°C	-1°C	Good	The monsoon clears during the month. Late September is green, clear and quiet.
October	13°C	-4°C	-7°C	Best	The busiest and most reliable month. Mani Rimdu usually falls in this month. Book early.
November	10°C	-8°C	-11°C	Best	Cold and clear, with fewer trekkers. The best light of the autumn is in the second half of the month.
December	8°C	-11°C	-14°C	Hard	Very cold at night and clear by day. Heated rooms make this month much more comfortable on this route than higher up.

Averages built from Namche station records and Khumbu climate data, adjusted for height along the route. Any given week can run ten degrees either side of these, and a clear night is always colder than a cloudy one.

Guides and porters

Your guide

A senior government-licensed guide with wilderness first aid training leads every departure, and there is one porter per traveller rather than one shared between two. Many travellers on this trek are older or are children, and this ratio helps the group stay together on the trail.

Porters and luggage

Each porter carries 20 kg, which on this trip is one duffel bag rather than two. This is below the 25 kg limit set by the trekking association and well below the loads you will see carried on the same trail. Porters carry duffel bags, not daypacks: you carry your own water, camera and jacket.

Staff pay and insurance

Salary, insurance, food and accommodation for every guide and porter are included in the price you pay, and are not requested from you on the trail. All staff are insured for altitude and helicopter evacuation on the same terms we require of you. Paying staff properly within the package price is essential to fair employment in the trekking industry.

Tipping

Tipping is customary but not compulsory, and it never replaces wages. On this trip, $150 to $250 per traveller 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 that it is not given in front of everyone.

Responsible travel

Drinking water

Every lodge on this itinerary provides filtered water free of charge, refilled into your own bottle, and we ask you to use it. A traveller buying bottled water uses twenty or more plastic bottles in a week, each flown or carried into a national park and each needing to be carried out again.

Waste

We carry out everything we bring in that is not food. The Khumbu has a waste problem that it did not create and cannot solve alone, and every operator should avoid adding to it.

Supporting local communities

The lodges are family businesses in the villages where you stay. The guides and porters live in this district. Permit fees fund Sagarmatha National Park and the Khumbu Pasang Lhamu Rural Municipality, and the hospital at Khunde is partly funded by visitor donations. Almost everything you pay for this trip is spent within a few days' walk of the trail.

Local customs

Ask before photographing anyone, especially children and monks. Stand on the mountain side of the trail when a yak train passes. Tengboche Monastery welcomes visitors but is a place of worship: remove your hat and shoes, put your camera away during the puja, and leave a donation.

Booking and payment

How to book

Write to us or send a WhatsApp message with your approximate travel dates and the number of people travelling. You will receive a reply from someone who has walked this route. Nothing is payable at this stage, and nothing is confirmed until you pay a deposit.

Deposit

A 30% deposit secures your dates and the lodge rooms, which are in short supply on this trip. The balance is due on arrival 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, your deposit can be transferred to any other date or trip we run, with no time limit. If you cancel within 30 days, the deposit is kept, because by then the flights, permits, crew and rooms have all been paid for. If we cancel for any reason other than weather, you receive a full refund.

Private and group departures

Both cost the same for a group of five or more. A private trip runs on your dates at your pace and can be arranged for a single traveller. A group departure runs on the dates above with a maximum of eight people. Most travellers on this trek book privately, as most are travelling as a family.

Late bookings

Outside October, three weeks' notice is usually enough. Availability depends on the lodge rooms rather than the flights: there are only a few lodges of this standard in the Khumbu, and in October they are fully booked months ahead. If you are already in Kathmandu, visit our office and we will check current availability.

Optional extras

A night at the Everest View Hotel

$390, +1 day

Sleep at 3,880 m at Syangboche, with a view of Everest from your window. We add an extra day beforehand so that you acclimatise gradually, which is why this is an optional extra and not part of the standard route.

Everest scenic flight

$220, 1 morning

A one-hour flight along the Himalaya from Kathmandu, with a guaranteed window seat. A good alternative if bad weather stops you reaching Lukla. It can be added on day 2 or day 10.

Helicopter to or from Lukla

from $500 a seat, saves a day

Avoid the drive to Ramechhap at the start, or a wait at Lukla at the end. Seats are shared when we can fill the helicopter, and it is chartered when we cannot.

Thame and the Bhote Koshi

$260, +2 days

Two days west from Namche to Tenzing Norgay's village at 3,800 m, on a much quieter trail. The best addition to this trek if you want more walking without going higher.

Chitwan luxury safari

from $690, +3 days

Travel down to the lowland jungle to see rhinos and, if you are fortunate, a tiger, staying in a lodge rather than a camp. A warm contrast to a week of cold mornings.

Single room throughout

$360

A room to yourself in Kathmandu and at every lodge on the trek. This is possible on this route because we stay at lower altitude, and is not possible on most Everest itineraries.

Frequently asked questions

Answers to the 28 questions travellers ask us most often. If your question is not here, contact us and we will answer it.

Is this trek suitable if I am worried about altitude?

Yes. It is one of the most suitable treks in the Everest region if you are concerned about altitude. You sleep no higher than 3,820 m at Deboche and reach 3,880 m for an hour at the Everest View Hotel. Serious altitude illness is uncommon at these heights, and the two nights at Namche before you go higher reduce the risk further.

How fit do I need to be?

You need to be able to walk four to six hours on rough ground, on consecutive days, carrying a light daypack. If you can walk in hilly country at home for half a day and enjoy it, you are fit enough. The climb to Namche is one demanding afternoon, and the rest of the trek is easier than most people expect.

Is there an age limit?

There is no upper age limit. We recommend this trek to people in their seventies who want to see Everest and have been told that Base Camp is too demanding, and it is the trek we run most often for families. The minimum age is eight, walking with a parent.

Is this trek suitable for children?

Most children over eight manage this trek well, often better than their parents, provided the days are kept short and nobody is hurried. For families, we always add an extra night at Namche, our team carries the daypacks, and the night at Deboche is optional if a child is tired.

What do I miss by not going to Base Camp?

You miss Base Camp itself, which is a moraine with tents on it, and the view from Kala Patthar, which is the best on the Base Camp trek. You still see the Khumbu: the forest, the villages, the monastery, and a view of Everest from the Everest View Hotel that is arguably better than the view from Base Camp.

Can I upgrade to Base Camp later if I feel strong?

Not during the trek. Base Camp requires a different acclimatisation schedule, and we do not change the itinerary on the trail. If you think you might want to reach Base Camp, book the Base Camp trek instead. Turning back early on that trek is easy, but extending this trek is not possible.

What does the premium version include?

Five-star hotels in Kathmandu rather than three-star, the best lodges on the route at Phakding, Namche and Deboche, a heated room with a private bathroom at every stop, one porter per traveller instead of one for every two, and a slower itinerary. The eleven-day schedule, compared with seven days, is part of what you pay for.

Is every room en suite and heated?

At Phakding, Namche and in Kathmandu, yes: each room has a private bathroom, hot water and heating. At Deboche, the best rooms have a private bathroom, but heating is provided by a stove in the dining room, not in your room.

Can I sleep at the Everest View Hotel?

Yes, we can arrange it, but it is not part of the standard itinerary. Sleeping at 3,880 m on your third night after Lukla is a larger gain in altitude than we recommend when you could sleep 440 m lower in Namche. If you would like to stay there, we add an extra day beforehand.

Is there a hot shower every day?

Yes, at every stop on this route, which is not the case higher up the valley. Hot showers are included and are in your own bathroom, not in a shared, coin-operated cubicle. Water is heated by gas or solar power, so after a cloudy day the water may be warm rather than hot.

Can I have a room to myself?

Yes, at every stop on this itinerary. This is unusual in the Khumbu and is one reason we keep the route low. A single room throughout costs $360 in addition to the trip price. The lodges we use have single rooms available, but the teahouses further up the valley do not.

How likely is altitude sickness?

Mild symptoms, such as a headache or a poor night's sleep at Namche, are common and usually pass. Serious altitude sickness is rare below 3,900 m. Your guide measures your oxygen saturation each evening and records it, so any decline is clearly visible in the figures.

What happens if someone becomes unwell?

We descend, which is easy on this route, because Namche is always within a few hours and Lukla within a day. Descent is the effective treatment. If the condition is serious, we call a helicopter, which can reach Namche or Lukla within an hour in daylight, and your insurance covers the cost.

What insurance do I need?

You need a policy that covers trekking to 4,000 m and includes helicopter evacuation and repatriation. This is cheaper and easier to buy than the 6,000 m cover needed for Base Camp, so tell your insurer which trek you are doing. We ask to see your insurance certificate before you fly to Lukla.

How cold does it get?

At Deboche, the highest overnight stop, expect around 0°C in October and as low as -14°C in January. Namche is two or three degrees milder. During the trekking seasons, daytime temperatures on the trail are 10°C to 16°C and pleasant in the sun. Your room is heated at Phakding and Namche, which makes the evenings much more comfortable.

How far do we walk each day?

Between 5 km and 13 km a day, which takes four to six hours at our pace. The last day, out to Lukla, takes six to seven hours. We stop for lunch every day, and we allow time at the monastery, at the Everest View Hotel and in Khumjung rather than passing straight through.

Is there wifi and phone signal?

Wifi is included and works well at the lodges we book, which is not the case at most lodges on this route. Ncell and NTC mobile data cover Lukla, Namche and most of the trail between them. Buy a SIM card in Kathmandu, because you cannot register one on the trail.

What is the food like?

At these lodges, the food is good and better than most people expect: soups, fresh bread, vegetables from the lodge greenhouse, and espresso machine coffee. We still advise against eating meat above Namche, because it is carried up without refrigeration. This applies at every standard of lodge.

Can you cater for my diet?

Vegetarian food is easy to provide and is often the best choice on the menu. Vegan and gluten-free diets are manageable if you tell us when you book, because the guide orders ahead at each lodge. Teahouse kitchens cannot rule out cross-contamination, so please take this into account.

How heavy is my bag, and who carries it?

A porter carries your duffel bag. On this trip there is one porter per traveller rather than one for every two, and the maximum load is 20 kg. You carry a daypack of around 5 kg with water, a warm layer and a camera. The Lukla flight baggage allowance of 15 kg is the stricter limit.

What permits do I need, and are they included?

You need two permits, and both are included in the price: the Sagarmatha National Park entry permit at NPR 3,390, and the Khumbu Pasang Lhamu Rural Municipality permit at NPR 2,000. A TIMS card has not been required in the Khumbu since 2018.

How do I get a visa?

Most nationalities can get a visa on arrival at Kathmandu airport: $30 for 15 days or $50 for 30 days, paid in cash. Completing the online form within 15 days before arrival makes the queue much shorter. Bring a passport photograph and a passport valid for at least six months.

How much cash should I carry?

Bring $200 to $300 in small notes, changed into rupees in Kathmandu. Almost everything is included on this trip, so this covers drinks, souvenirs in Namche and tips. There is an ATM in Namche, but it often runs out of cash, and no lodge on the route accepts cards.

Do I fly from Kathmandu or from Ramechhap?

It depends on the month. During the busiest periods of spring and autumn, the aviation authority moves Lukla flights to Manthali airport at Ramechhap. This means a four to five-hour drive, leaving Kathmandu in the early hours of the morning. At other times, you fly from Kathmandu, which takes about 35 minutes. We tell you which applies before you book.

What if the Lukla flight is cancelled?

Lukla flights are cancelled several times a month in every season, and day 10 is a spare day for this reason. If the delay is longer, we can book you on a helicopter for around $500 a seat, or move you to a lower-altitude trek at no extra charge. Book your flight home with at least one clear day to spare.

Can I skip the walk in and take a helicopter?

You can fly from Kathmandu to Lukla by helicopter, and in a week of bad weather this may be the only way to start the trek. We do not fly travellers directly to Syangboche at 3,880 m to start there. Gaining 2,500 m in twenty minutes is a common cause of altitude illness, even on an easy route.

When should I book?

For October, book three to six months ahead, because there are only a few lodges of this standard in the Khumbu and they fill up long before the flights do. For other months, six to eight weeks is enough. We have occasionally started travellers on the trail within a week, when a cancellation made a room available.

Can you change the itinerary?

Yes, and most travellers do. You can add a night at Namche, sleep at the Everest View Hotel, walk to Thame for a quieter day, or extend the trek to thirteen days for a more relaxed pace. For a group of five or more, a private trip on your own dates costs the same as joining a group departure.

Photos, videos and reviews of this trip: earthbound.rajansimkhada.com/everest-panorama-trek