



Instant Everest

Introduction

The Instant Everest trek has been devised to allow those with more limited time to trek into the heart of the Khumbu valley and enjoy the fantastic scenery of the Everest region. Within a timeframe of just 14 days we are able to trek to an altitude of 4000 metres at Tengboche Gumpa where the highest peaks of the Khumbu including Everest, Nuptse, Lhotse and Ama Dablam are lined up in front of us.

The acclimatisation programme is carefully designed to enable you to successfully adjust to the higher altitudes, and we have kept each day's walking to a maximum duration of approximately five hours. Unlike our other Everest itineraries which are generally camping trips, this shorter trek will be based on accommodation being provided in Sherpa Lodges. These are now of a relatively high standard and many are comparable in comfort with the best of the Alpine Refuges. Sleeping arrangements are generally in twin rooms but sometimes mixed dormitory accommodation is used. Meals are also taken in the lodges and these are always varied and tasty. We maximise our time in the high mountains by flying into and out from the mountain airstrip at Lukla. We spend two nights in the Sherpa capital Namche Bazaar before trekking through the villages of Khumjung, Phortse, Pangboche and Deboche. We reach the highpoint of our trek at the beautifully situated Monastery of Tengboche where we are literally surrounded by some of the most spectacular mountains on Earth.

Itinerary

DAY 1

Depart from London for the flight to Kathmandu. The airport and exact departure time will depend on the choice of carrier but typically we can expect to depart in the evening from Heathrow. Most flights to Kathmandu touch down somewhere in the Gulf, either for re-fuelling or a change of aircraft. Typically this would be at Doha, Dubai, Abu Dhabi or Bahrain.

DAY 2

Arrival into Kathmandu in the afternoon / evening. If the weather is clear the approach to Kathmandu Airport gives us a glimpse of the Himalayan chain. Passing through immigration and customs at Kathmandu can be fairly slow. Emerging from the terminal we are greeted by our Sherpa team with garlands of Marigolds, the traditional Nepalese welcome. We then transfer by private bus to our hotel. We stay at the comfortable Marsyangdi Hotel in the centre of the Thamel tourist district.

DAY 3

A free day in Kathmandu. We would have a private minibus at our disposal for the morning, allowing us to visit the various sights of the Kathmandu valley including the Monkey Temple (Swayambunath) the famous Stupa at Bodnath, the Ghats at Pashupatinath, and the temples of Bhaktapur.

DAY 4

We will need to be ready to leave our hotel by 5.30am for the flight up to Lukla in the Everest area. These flights are scheduled to go very early in the morning to take advantage of the best flying weather. We fly in small 18 seater propeller-drive 'Twin Otter' aircraft. The flight is very spectacular and can be a little bumpy, but the approach to the landing strip in Lukla is not to be missed! On arrival in Lukla we meet the team of Sherpas and porters who will be accompanying us on the trek. The porters take all our bags whilst we can have an early lunch in one of the lodges near to the airstrip. After this we begin the trek towards Everest, heading along the valley of the mighty Dudh Kosi – the

Milk River. We have about 2 hours 30 minutes walking to reach the village of Phakding. Altitude 2610 metres - 2.30 hours walking.

DAY 5

After breakfast we continue trekking along the Dudh Kosi river and after about an hour or so we reach the Sagarmatha National Park gates at Monjo. (Sagarmatha is the Nepalese name for Everest). We have to register here and will be able to see how many other trekkers have entered the Park this year. We cross a series of spectacular bridges and follow the river along its rocky shore before stopping for lunch at a pleasant village lodge. Continuing on from here we are soon forced to climb above the river and eventually arrive at another spectacular suspension bridge high above the river. We cross this and commence a long, slow ascent up quite a steep hill until we reach the large village of Namche Bazaar. We stay here in one of the comfortable village lodges run by a good Sherpa friend of ours. If we take a walk ten minutes above Namche we can look north and see Everest, along with Nuptse and Lhotse. Altitude 3440 metres - 5 hours walking

DAY 6

Leaving all our belongings in the lodge at Namche Bazaar, we make a day hike to the village of Thame where we will ascend to nearly 3900 metres. Thame is a very peaceful village which retains much original Sherpa character. This is a vital day for acclimatisation, and we will be following the dictum 'climb high – sleep low'. After lunch we return to our lodge in Namche. Ascent to 3820 metres. Return to 3440 metres - 4 hours walking

DAY 7

We continue trekking up into the Khumbu and climb the hillside above Namche to reach the pleasant village of Khumjung. Great views open up towards Ama Dablam and there are also fine views of Kang Tega. The trail then ascends across an open hillside to reach a small chorten atop the ridge. There is a small lodge situated here which offers welcome cups of tea and juice to trekkers. Then it's all downhill to Phortse Tenga, by the Dudh Kosi river. Altitude 3620 metres - 5 hours walking

DAY 8

From Phortse Tenga we cross the Dudh Kosi river via an exciting suspension bridge and climb up through forests to the main village of Phortse. Because it lies somewhat off the main trekking routes Phortse sees relatively little trekking traffic and is thus a very well preserved and traditional Sherpa community. From here a superb high level path climbs out of the village and contours around the hillside heading towards Pangboche. This is one of the most spectacular paths in the Khumbu and gives outstanding views of Ama Dablam across the valley. Views to the head of the valley including those of Everest and Lhotse are also superb. Altitude 3750 metres - 5 or 6 hours walking

DAY 9

From Pangboche we now begin our return journey. We have a leisurely day of trekking which takes us down the Dudh Kosi and across a small suspension bridge spanning a deep chasm. We soon reach the small lodge at Deboche where we will be spending the night. We then ascend to the famous Gumpa at Tengboche and will be able to spend the afternoon at leisure, taking photographs and exploring the Gumpa.

DAY 10

From Deboche we return to Tengboche and then begin the long descent back down to the Dudh Kosi river at Phuki Tenga. This is a delightful place for lunch and it is not uncommon to see chamois in the forests around here. There is also a network of water-driven Buddhist Prayer Wheels. Following lunch we climb steadily uphill to the hamlet of Sanasa. Tibetan traders are often to be found here and this is a good place to acquire Tibetan jewellery or handicrafts. For the final section of the trek back to Namche Bazaar the path contours around the hillside in a spectacular situation, high above the Dudh Kosi river valley. We return to the Himalayan Lodge which we left four days earlier. Altitude 3440 metres - 5 or 6 hours walking

DAY 11

An early start for the long day back down the Dudh Kosi valley to the airstrip at Lukla. What took us two days to cover on the way in will take just one day going out as we will have gained a little fitness and will now be better acclimatised. The day can be broken with a pleasant lunch in Phakding before the final section back to Lukla. Altitude 2840 metres - 5 or 6 hours walking

DAY 12

Early morning flight from Lukla back to Kathmandu. If the flight is on time we should be back at our hotel by 10am and with the rest of the day free in Kathmandu.

DAY 13

The morning will be free. After lunch we transfer to the airport for our flight back to the UK

DAY 14

We arrive into London Heathrow Airport in the early morning.