



Everest Base Camp Trek

The world's most awe inspiring mountain trek? It has to be the trail to Everest base camp. Your first stop is the Kathmandu valley and ancient streets of Bhaktapur. You have time to wander the narrow streets here and will be able to discover the temples and stupas that provide much intrigue in this fascinating city.

After exploring Kathmandu you fly to Lukla from where your trek to Everest commences. The trail follows the course of the Dudh Kosi, the 'River of Milk', gradually climbing through forests of rhododendron and magnolia. There are rest days at Namche Bazaar - the Sherpa capital and a great place to explore - and at Pangboche village (set below the distinctive peak of Ama Dablam) to help adjust to the altitude. We also have a side trip to Ama Dablam base camp to help with altitude acclimatisation. All the while as you are trekking, the peaks of the Himalaya will loom above you, providing outstanding views as you walk.

Approaching Base Camp & Kalar Patar the dramatic landscape around you changes as you continue to climb higher and higher. By the time you reach Lobuche, the

temperature has dropped and you'll be walking among frozen rivers in an icy wilderness. From here you make the trek to base camp itself in its dramatic location at the foot of the world's highest peak. The next day it's on to the final highlight - Kalar Patar (5545m), with stunning views of Everest and the Khumbu Glacier cascading below. From here you descend to Lukla, marvelling at what you have achieved and all the while with stunning views and fantastic scenery all around you!

Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive in Kathmandu.

Arrival in Kathmandu and transfer from the airport on a private vehicle to your hotel. Free evening with a short pre-tour briefing about the trek by RAW leader before dinner.

Day 2: In Kathmandu.

Guided tour around Kathmandu; includes visits to places of historic and religious significance, such as Boudhanath & Swayambhunath (commonly known as Monkey Temple), Hindu temples, Old palaces (in and around Durbar Square Area) and inner city market squares.

Day 3: Fly to Lukla (2820m/45mins) & trek to Phakding. (Altitude 2610m/4hrs approx)

An early morning stunning flight to Lukla the gateway to The Everest. Start of the trek from this region of the legendary Sherpa who have distinct features much apart from the Nepalese encountered so far. Trek north towards Phakding along meandering trails which are lined with stone walls, eventually leading to the night stop. (L, D)

Day 4: To Namche Bazaar. (Altitude 3440m/6hrs approx)

Following the Dudh Koshi, the trail heads north as it gently starts to rise through rhododendron and magnolia forests with giant fir trees to the village of Jorsalle, where the lunch break will be taken. After a brief stop-over for lunch, the climb proceeds towards Namche Bazaar, a delightful mountain village and so-called 'Sherpa Capital' of Khumbu. (B, L, D)

Day 5: Acclimatization in Namche Bazaar.

This particular day is utilized to get acclimatized to the high altitude. One can explore the local markets, mingle with the people, walk up to the Everest view point, visit the museum, and happily laze around and bask in the sun later in the afternoon. (B, L, D)

Day 6: To Tyangboche. (Altitude 3860m/5hrs approx)

The trail turns northeast from Namche along a tributary valley and the mountain views start to open up, becoming more dramatic as the steep climb approaches the holy ground of Tyangboche. Tyangboche monastery is the highest monastery in the world which offers amazing views with a myriad of impressive mountains, including Mount Everest, Mount Kwangde, Nuptse, Lhotse and Ama Dablam, and it is also the home to the highly revered Rinpoche, a Buddhist Monk. (B, L, D)

Day 7: To Ding Boche. (Altitude 4410m/5hrs approx)

Continue to trek from Tyangboche to Ding Boche. This region lies in high altitude; therefore agriculture is only barely possible, and the lives of the local Sherpas are Spartan by any standard. Much of the walking in this area is comparatively of gentle gradient, although a leisurely pace is recommended due to the high altitude.

(B, L, D)

Day 8: Acclimatization In Ding Boche.

It is time for another acclimatization day. There are day hikes available to Nagajun Hill (approx. 5050m) or Chukung village, which offers magnificent views of Amadablam, Makalu mountains and other peaks, as well as those of lakes and glaciers in that region.

(B, L, D)

Day 9: To Lobuche. (Altitude 4930m/5hrs approx)

Leaving Pangboche, the trail ascends gently but still at easy pace. Walking past frozen rivers, we reach Lobuche where stone houses sit amongst icy wilderness of stunning beauty. Once in Lobuche, sense of being close to the ultimate goal overwhelms you. (B, L, D)

Day 10: To Everest Base camp (5367m) & Gorakshep. (Altitude 5160m/9hrs approx)

The whole day of trekking to the Base Camp, and then back to Gorakshep. The trek Sirdar will navigate the Khumbu glacier as the trail makes its way to the Base Camp of Mount Everest. The infamous Khumbu icefall is seen imposing itself at the base of the tallest mountain on Earth. Eventually, the reverse set off descends back to Gorakshep for the night. (B, L, D)

Day 11: To Kala Patthar (5545m) & Pheriche. (Altitude 4240m/6hrs approx)

The day will start earlier than usual with the aim of reaching Kala Patthar before sunrise, the best vantage point for viewing Everest and the other surrounding peaks. A feeling of being in unison with the mighty nature overwhelms you as you ascend to the top of Kala Patthar. The views are amazing and Everest is breath taking. Continue to descend to sandy flat expanse of Gorakshep, and then to Pheriche where overnight break is taken. (B, L, D)

Day 12: To Tyangboche. (Altitude 3860m/4hrs approx)

Trek down back towards to Tyangboche. The trail descends gently, crossing Dudh Koshi through a wooden bridge. The trek continues downwards passing several yak herders and tea shops to Shomare. Leaving behind alpine meadows, the trail descends to Tyangboche for the night stop. (B, L, D)

Day 13: To Monjo. (Altitude 2700m/6hrs approx)

Descend to Monjo via Namche Bazaar where the trail descends steeply to Dudh Kosi river. Slightly warmer climate of Monjo greets you at this altitude. (B, L, D)

Day 14: To Lukla. (Altitude 2820m/41/2hrs approx)

The trail that is followed is fairly easy with some steady climbs through scrub forests with a final steep ascent that leads to a Tamang village and shortly thereafter to Lukla, where the time to relax in Sherpa ambience is abundant. (B, L, D)

Day 15: Optional day in hand in Lukla.

Day 16: To Kathmandu. (Altitude 1400m/45mins approx)

The flight back to Kathmandu is short but spectacular. The rest of the day can be spent exploring, shopping or simply just chilling out in numerous cafes in Thamel before the group meets for the end of trek celebration dinner at The Rum Doodle Restaurant.

Day 17: In Kathmandu.

Free day to explore around Kathmandu once again, or relax.

Day 18: Departure.

Transfer to airport by chartered vehicle. Or stay on and continue your adventure in Nepal.

Arrival Complications

We don't expect any problems (and nor should you!) but if for any reason you are unable to commence your group trip as scheduled, please contact Gopi Adhikhari in Kathmandu.

Tel: 977- 1-470-1243 or our Melbourne office: +61 3 9787 4366

Inclusions

Kathmandu sightseeing (Swayambhunath, Patan Durbar square and Buddhanath stupa)

return Air fare (Ktm/Lukla/Ktm)

Two experienced English speaking Guides who also act as your porters

Meals on trek (Breakfast, Lunch & dinner)

Permits & park entrance fees

Transport to and from airport

All Accommodation during the trek (teahouses)

3 nights accommodation in Kathmandu (3 star standard)

Donation to Sherpa memorial fund

Accommodation

Accommodation is a mixture of hotels and tea houses and we have chosen the best are available in the more remote locations. In Kathmandu we use good hotels which are very centrally located with comfortable rooms and facilities. Generally speaking, the accommodation on this trip is a good standard though some patience may be required in the smaller teahouses where the plumbing and standards of English may not always be as you like it! The further you get towards Everest base camp the more basic facilities become.

Meal Inclusions

Most meals are included in this trip and the food is generally of a good quality, though as you climb higher towards Base camp the variety does become more limited due to the lack of food being able to be grown locally. The only exclusion to your meal plan is on free days in Kathmandu. Please refer to the itinerary for exact inclusions.

We like to sample the best of local dishes and produce so you enjoy an authentic taste of the region which you're travelling through. Nepalese food is a mixture of different influences from India and Tibet, though western dishes are very widely available and there is a tremendous variety of restaurants in Kathmandu where you can find almost every cuisine at very reasonable prices.

In the Itinerary (B, L, D) stands for breakfast and lunch and dinner.

Transport

Any transport required is generally by private vehicle.

Physical Rating

Demanding

Adventures to really get you out there! Be prepared to tackle some big mountain trails with strenuous physical activity on many days at high altitude, often in windy and cold conditions. You will be walking between 6 and 8 hours a day following tracks that are usually well defined but confidence with mountain environments is required. You'll have the support of a local crew throughout but to participate fully it's recommended you attain a good level of physical fitness. Start a regular training program in the months leading up to the adventure as your goal is to be able to walk for 6-8 hours on successive days (include hill training). While mountain trekking experience is not needed, the fitter you are the more you will enjoy this trek.

Please refer to our walking guide as this provides good advice on how to start a fitness program.

<http://rawchallenges.com/guide-to-trekking.php>

Visas

Please note that visas are the responsibility of the individual traveller. The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information up to date as much as possible, but rules do change. It is important that you check for yourself.

Nepal:

You can easily obtain a visa on arrival by air (bring 2 passport photos), cost US\$30 for a single entry visa. Alternatively apply via the Nepalese consulate before you go which has offices in Brisbane and Melbourne. Please visit the following site to download forms:

<http://www.nepalconsulate.net.au/downloadforms.php>

If you would like someone to take the hassle out of your visa application please visit the following website:

www.visalink.com.au

Important Notes

1. Conditions and fitness

This is a trek that requires a good level of fitness as there are plenty of ascents and descents and the walking is very strenuous. The weather can be harsh with snow and frosts not unknown. Travellers need to be prepared for all weather conditions. Please ensure your fitness and quality of equipment you bring is adequate for harsh terrain and conditions.

2. Altitude

While our itineraries are designed to allow for adequate acclimatisation, you are likely to feel the effects of altitude sickness and oxygen deprivation whilst on this trek. Please be aware that your group leader may deem it unsafe for you to continue trekking at any time, and arrange for you to descend to a lower altitude. We have built in extra days at pangboche to help with acclimatisation and provide you with the best chances of successfully reaching EBC and Kala Pattar.

3. Trek delays or changes

Weather conditions in the Himalayas can change rapidly and our group leader may be forced to change the trip itinerary accordingly. Alternative itineraries will apply if this is the case.

Departing from Kathmandu at the end of the trip:

Please do not arrange any international flight departures before the afternoon of day 17. Although the aim is to leave Lukla for the short flight back to Kathmandu on the morning of day 15 or 16 it is important to note that if there is bad weather or low

cloud conditions the flights will not go. In this case we will return on day 17 and will be into Kathmandu by late morning.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory for all our trips.

We strongly recommend that you take out insurance the moment you register for a trip as you are then covered should you not be able to go in the event of illness or accident. Please send these details (name of insurer, policy number and their 24 hour emergency contact number) to RAW prior to departure.

We require that, at a minimum, you are covered for medical expenses including emergency repatriation. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance and the insurance company's 24 hour emergency contact number has been seen by your leader. If you have credit card insurance your tour leader will require proof of purchase of the trip and it's insurance (a receipt of credit card statement) with a credit card in your name. Contact your bank for details of their participating insurer, the level of coverage and emergency contact telephone number. Our preferred insurance company is CoverMore as they provide an excellent service. You can apply online directly by clicking on this link:

<https://b2c.covermore.com.au/index.jsp?alpha=AAV0231>

What to take?

You should pack as lightly as possible. All camping equipment (provided) as well as your personal gear are carried by porters. The recommended baggage load to be carried by a porter can NOT exceed 10-12kgs per person. There are safe storage facilities in Kathmandu for extra luggage and valuables before leaving on the trek. Suitcases are not permissible for this trip! The best container is either a backpack or a duffle bag. A comfortable daypack is required to carry items you will need during the day. Please note that you need to either bring or hire a 3 or 4 season sleeping bag. As we will be spending most of the trek away from towns there is no need to bring large amounts of money with you. Enough to cover some soft drinks, snacks or teas will suffice. Namche Bazaar is the main exception where many items of outdoor clothing / souvenirs can be found for sale.

Checklist (suggested list):

Travel Documents:

- Passport (with photocopies) and Nepal visa
- Copy of travel insurance
- Airline ticket
- USD cash
- Credit card

** Tip: use a money belt for security (put documents inside a plastic bag)

Please note that a tremendous variety of outdoor gear - aimed towards Trekkers - is widely available in Kathmandu at cheap prices. If you need fleeces, jackets, thermals etc these can be picked up very cheaply there.

Personal Items -

- - 1 Medium rucksack/backpack (carried by porters)
- - Waterproof pack cover / bin liner
- - 1 Inner sleeping sheet

- - basic First Aid supplies including moleskin for blisters (see the health section)
- - High factor sunscreen
- - Sunglasses suitable for high UV conditions
- - Toiletries (biodegradable)
- - Watch or alarm clock
- - Ear plugs (snorers in teahouse!)
- - Plastic bags for wet or dirty clothing
- - lip balm/chapstick
- - Wet wipes or antiseptic hand gel

Clothing

- - 1 Down jacket/all weather anorak
- - 1 Lightweight water and windproof jacket
- - 2 pair lightweight long trousers
- - 1 Fleece/warm sweater
- - 1 Sweatshirt/light sweater
- - 2 T-shirts (lightweight quick drying fabric) / long sleeved T-shirt
- - 2 Long sleeve cotton (or polypropylene) shirts
- - 1 pair strong hiking boots - broken in!
- - 3 Pairs heavy wool socks and 2 pairs light socks
- - 1 pair of knee length shorts
- - Warm hat and waterproof gloves
- - Underwear (including thermals)
- - Small towel
- - Sun hat - broad brimmed

Other Suggestions:

- - Camera and plenty of film
- - Adapter for recharging digital camera (Can be bought locally)
- - Spare batteries
- - Reading / writing material
- - Penknife (put in main luggage at airport)
- - Torch
- - Small calculator (when out bargaining!)
- - Photos of family or postcards of Australia (great way to have fun with locals you meet)
- - Phrase book, map and Lonely Planet guide
- - Small padlock for securing your luggage during flights

Local Dress

When packing be aware that dress standards are conservative throughout Asia. We will be spending a lot of time in the more conservative rural regions of Nepal. Please remember that as visitors to someone else's home it is our responsibility to fit with the local customs by wearing appropriate clothing (irrespective of what other travellers are wearing). Loose, lightweight, long clothing is both respectful and practical, as it provides protection from the sun. Please remove any headwear and shoes when entering Temples or people's homes. Your guide will give you more information on local etiquette.

Health

All RAW travellers need to be in good physical health in order to participate fully in the group travel experience. If, in the opinion of our group leader, any traveller is unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the

group, RAW reserves the right to exclude them from all or part of a trip without refund.

Please let us know of any medical conditions on the registration form and if you are currently taking prescription medicine as it is important that our leader is aware of your circumstances. We therefore ask that you read the itinerary in these trip notes thoroughly and then realistically self-assess your physical ability to complete the trip as described. Please consult with your doctor if you have any doubts.

There are no specific health requirements for entry into Nepal. However, you should consult your doctor or travel clinic for up-to-date information and prescriptions for vaccinations and anti-malarial requirements. We would suggest that you are up to date with immunisation protection against typhoid, polio, tetanus and hepatitis. Lowland Nepal is also a malarial risk area and we recommend that you take a course of suitable malarial prophylactics. As some vaccinations require a course over weeks or months, contact your doctor as early as possible prior to departure. Generally, six to eight weeks notice is adequate.

We recommend that you carry a First Aid kit as well as any personal medical requirements (such as a spare pair of prescription glasses). Please be aware that for legal reasons our leaders are prohibited from administering any type of drug including headache tablets/antibiotics etc. Your first aid kit should include:

- headache tablets
- diarrhoea treatment (both a blocker to bring relief from the symptoms and an antibiotic)
- band-aids
- antiseptic for cuts & scrapes
- lip balm
- insect repellent
- high factor sunscreen.

Given the physical nature of this trip we strongly advise bringing some sachets of an oral rehydration solution (available at chemists) as this aids recovery following activity and dehydration and also helps replace lost body salts should you suffer from 'gastro'. Just add a sachet to your water bottle each day. Please scroll down to the Special Safety Notes below for information on dehydration and altitude.

If you are 65 years or older a completed Medical Certificate is required. Please let us know and we can post you a copy which then needs to be signed by your GP and posted or faxed through to 03 9787 4366 prior to departure.

Money Exchange

Currency exchange rates often fluctuate. For the most up to date rates please refer to the following website:
www.oanda.com

Nepal: \$1 AUD = approx. 80 Rupees. The Nepalese Rupee is the unit of currency. There are many moneychangers in Kathmandu and Pokhara. Clean bills with no tears are best. ATM's are widely available in larger cities where you can withdraw money in local currency if you have a visa / mastercard or cirrus card. Credit cards can be used to advance cash in banks in major towns but attract a high fee. We recommend that you don't use money changers on the street. When changing money try and get a mix of denominations (your leader will advise you on this). Keep smaller notes with you when on the trek as it can be difficult to change larger notes once out of the city.

Spending Money

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping and tipping.

Any tip that you wish to give to your local guides or leader in recognition of excellent service is always appreciated. We recommend approx. US\$30 to go into a kitty to be distributed to the local team at the end of the trip. Usually we do this on the last night at the celebration dinner.

Emergency Funds

Please also make sure you have access to an additional USD\$400 or equivalent, to be used when unforeseen incidents or circumstances outside our control (eg. a natural disaster, or an outbreak of bird flu) may necessitate a change to our planned route. This is a rare occurrence but it is well worth being prepared!

Keeping In Touch - communication while on the road

If you need to be contacted while travelling we recommend that you set up an email address that can be accessed on the road. Email cafes are commonplace throughout the regions we visit. If someone wishes to contact you in an emergency we recommend that they refer to our Emergency contact. We don't recommend that family and friends try to contact you through hotels, as they are subject to change and the reception staff may not speak English.

Emergency Funds

In the case of a genuine crisis or emergency, please call the RAW Office on Tel: +61 3 9787 4366. Outside of office hours please call 0413 703 632

Your Fellow Trekkers

As you travel on a group trip you will be exposed to all the pleasures and maybe some of the frustrations of travelling in a group. We ask you to be understanding of the various needs and preferences of your group - patience with your fellow travellers is sometimes required for the benefit of everyone's travel experience.

Remember too that you have responsibilities to the group. If you are requested to be at a place at a certain time, ensure that you don't keep the rest of the group waiting. We have found time and time again that the very best trips we operate are those where the dynamics within the group work well - this takes just a little effort on your part.

Group Leader

RAW has both resident western and local leaders who lead our trips in this region. Generally speaking you will have a western leader with a larger group size supported by local leaders as well. Where the group size is smaller or with a private booking for a few people you will have a local leader. All our staff are first aid trained and experienced with the special nature and demands of active tours and are able to give you support and insights into the local culture.

The aim of the group leader is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. They will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends.

While not being tour guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the countries visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. We also use local area guides where we think more specific knowledge will add to the enjoyment of the places we are visiting - we think it's the best of both worlds.

Responsible Travel

We believe strongly in low impact or rather positive impact tourism. Broadly speaking this means that we try to minimise the negative aspects of tourism on the local cultures and environments that we visit and highlight the positive aspects. When we are cycling children will ask you for pens, money etc. It is always hard to resist giving them a small gift. However we ask you not to do this as it encourages a culture of begging and often parents will take their children out of school and get their children to prey on tourists. Ask your leader what is the best way to give.

A Couple of Rules

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on our trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for RAW travellers.

RAW's philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter, and in particular the local people who make our destinations such special places. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our group leader has the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

Safety

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure.

We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe-keeping of your passport, air tickets, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling.

Many of our hotels have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage.

Your leader will accompany you on all included activities however during your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your group leader will assist you with the available options in a given location, please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and makes no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Please also note that your group leader has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns.

Dehydration

Dehydration is the biggest risk when undertaking a physical challenge such as trekking over undulating terrain. It is so important to be aware of your fluid intake especially at altitude and to constantly drink water throughout the day (even when you do not feel thirsty).

Symptoms of mild dehydration include:

- flushed face
- extreme thirst, more than normal or unable to drink
- dry, warm skin
- cannot pass urine or reduced amounts, dark, yellow
- dizziness made worse when you are standing - weakness - cramping in the arms and legs
- sleepy or irritable
- headaches
- dry mouth, dry tongue; with thick saliva

The simplest way of monitoring your fluid intake is by checking the colour of your urine. If it is clear or slightly yellow you are well hydrated but once it is dark yellow you are in the danger zone and need to increase your fluid intake immediately.

Ensure that you bring some Gastrolyte sachets as these help your recovery after trekking with the replacement of electrolytes. Gastrolyte is also the recommended treatment for dehydration caused by diarrhoea ('gastro').

Acclimatisation and altitude sickness:

Altitude sickness has the potential to affect all trekkers from 2500m and higher. We ascend slowly and give our bodies plenty of time to adjust to the smaller quantities of oxygen in the air. However it is important to be aware of the normal altitude symptoms that you may encounter BUT NOT worry about:

- Periods of sleeplessness
- Occasional loss of appetite
- Vivid dreams at around 2500-3800m in altitude
- Unexpected momentary shortness of breath, day and night
- Periodic breathing that wakes you occasionally
- Your nose becomes bunged up
- Dry cough develops
- Mild headache

If you are feeling nauseous and dizzy be sure to let the main leader know and the person you are walking with so that we can monitor your condition. However at the altitude we go to there should not be any problems. More details will be given to you at the briefing on the first day.

RAW Newsletter

We have a free email newsletter full of travellers stories and experiences as well as news on new trips that we are running. Please send us an extract from your travel journal at the end of the trip. We would also love to receive any photos after the event as we are starting to build up a travellers album for each of our destinations on our website. We need resolution of around 1MB.

Please could you send a CD to: RAW Travel Photo album, Suite 1 7Davies Ave, Mount Eliza, VIC 3930.

If you have any suggestions to add more information to our trip dossier that you think other travellers would find useful please email: adventure@rawtravel.com. And of course email us if you have any questions leading up to the event.

The information in these trip notes has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and RAW Travel.