Island Peak
via Everest Base Camp

Nepal | 6,189m



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via Everest Base Camp | Nepal | 6,189m



Island Peak, 6,189m is tucked away amongst the many striking summits of the **Khumbu Valley**. An unparalleled first expedition to 6,000m this spectacular summit is attainable to fit **trekkers with moderate technical skills**.

During this breathtaking expedition you're fully immersed in the **Nepal** experience by first trekking to the iconic **Everest Base Camp** via the spectacular **Gokyo Lakes**. It's the perfect place to acclimatise before the big push. Here you'll spend the day soaking up the incredible culture, Sherpa hospitality and jaw-dropping scenery. Initially dwarfed by the vast walls of its 8,000m neighbours Island Peak begins to make its presence felt – it's a mountain that takes pleasure in unveiling its secrets slowly! To reach the spectacular summit you'll be challenged continuously; rocky out-crops, broken glaciers sporting huge crevasses, a steep 200m head-wall and finally a knife-sharp ridge that brings you to the summit. It's not your average **trekking peak** but the rewards you experience resting at the top and taking in your achievement will empower you for years to come.

Meticulously supported by our highly experienced Western guides and Sherpa team you will be in safe hands as the expedition unfolds. We know the mountain and the valley intimately and will teach you every skill you need to achieve this spectacular goal.

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Physical - P3

This trip is physically tough. Frequent exercise is necessary to prepare properly for this expedition. Regular walking mixed with training at the gym to build up endurance and cardiovascular fitness is key. Expect to be able to do 8 hour days in hilly and often steep train, carrying a pack of 6-10kg in weight with the occasional extra long day.

Technical - T3

May involve harder scrambling or some trekking and climbing with ropes. If snow is encountered then glacier travel with ropes, ice axes and crampons will be necessary. Basic climbing skills are ideal, but these will also be taught (and certainly practiced) during the expedition and pre-summit phase.

Please note that the grading system used is a rough guide only.



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ITINERARY

DAY 1 : Depart UK

Today we depart the UK, usually from London Heathrow.

DAY 2 : Kathmandu

We'll arrive into Kathmandu usually by mid-afternoon and will transfer to our hotel, before some free time to explore the local area. We will meet back up late afternoon to go through kit checks and have a briefing, before heading out for what is sure to be a lively group dinner!

(D)

DAY 3 : Kathmandu to Mulkot

We have the morning to explore Kathmandu, a great opportunity to tour the city. In the early afternoon we depart for our transfer to the town of Mulkot, approximately 4 ½ hours drive. Here, we will spend the night ready for our early morning flight to Lukla and the start of our trek tomorrow.

(BD)

DAY 4 : Lukla (2,800m) – Phakding (2,610m)

We leave early for a transfer to Ramechhap (approximately 1 ½ hour drive) for our morning flight into Lukla, from where we begin our trek into the Khumbu region. The views from the plane are amazing, providing dramatic scenes of terraced hills and the distant Himalayan giants. After landing we meet our ground crew and begin our trek to Phakding.

Overnight in Phakding.

Trekking time: 3 – 5 hours

DAY 5 : Phakding to Namche Bazaar (3,440m)

Walking through a beautiful pine forest, we follow the trail north up the valley of Benkar, before trekking along the banks of the Dudh Kosi, cross roaring rivers on exciting suspension bridges.

As we enter the Sagamartha National Park, we begin to climb with breathtaking views to Namche Bazaar, the gateway to the Khumbu region.

Overnight in Namche Bazaar.

Trekking time: 6 – 8 hours

(BLD)

DAY 6 : Acclimatisation Day - Namche Bazaar (3,440m)

Today we rest and acclimatise in Namche Bazaar. Namche is the Sherpa capital and a bustling village crammed with markets and traditional Sherpa houses. We'll take an early morning walk to the Sherpa museum where we see views of Mt. Everest, Lhotse (the 4th highest peak in the world) and the beautiful Ama Dablam. The Sherpa Museum houses an exhibit of traditional Sherpa lifestyles and a fabulous photography display. Then, if we're feeling up to it, we head up a steep climb to the Everest View Hotel. Sitting at 3,800m it's a great place to keep pushing our acclimatisation, before heading back down to Namche Bazaar.

Overnight in Namche Bazaar.

Trekking time: up to 5 hours

(BLD)

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ITINERARY

DAY 7 : Namche Bazaar to Dhole (4,035m)

Refreshed from our time in Namche Bazaar we set out for a stunning, hilly and wonderfully varied day which takes us off the main Base Camp trail and towards Gokyo.

We climb the Khumjung hill and descend to the east of Namche down a broad valley leading to the Dudh Koshi from where the route turns north. We can visit Mohang, the birthplace of the re-incarnated Lama of Rongbuk Monastery of Tibet who is believed to have introduced Buddhism in the Khumbu region of Nepal. The trail descends in a series of steep switchbacks down a sandy slope to the Dush Koshi & Phortse Thanga after which it is an up hill climb to Dhole. Walking on a trail through a rhododendron forest, we'll pass a waterfall before reaching Tongba Village. We continue uphill a bit further to reach Dhole and a huge sense of achievement for a great day.

Overnight in Dhole.

Trekking time: 7 – 9 hours

(BLD)

DAY 8 : Dhole to Machhermo (4,410m)

An easier and shorter day after the previous days efforts.

A short climb out of the Dhole valley leads to vast views of the Himalayan giants. We gently trek uphill past Labarma and Luza villages before reaching Machhermo. There is a Chorten right before the Luza village. Throughout today's journey we will be walking above the Dudh Koshi River. We arrive at Machhermo for lunch and earn ourselves a restful afternoon to take in the views, relax and rest.

Overnight in Machhermo.

Trekking time: 3 – 5 hours

(BLD)

DAY 9 : Machhermo to Gokyo (4,800m)

We begin today by climbing a ridge for an excellent view down the valley to Kangtaiga and up towards Cho Oyu (8,153m). The valley widens and we descend to the riverbank before climbing onto the terminal moraine of the Ngazumpa Glacier. The trail levels out as it follows the valley passing the first lake, known as Longpongo, at 4,690m. At the sight of the second lake, Taboche Tsho, we're mesmerized by the shimmering turquoise blue sheet of water sparkling in the sun. Gokyo village stands by the third lake and Cho Oyu Mountain as a backdrop sets a spectacular view. After lunch, we explore around the third lake, Dudh Pokhari.

Overnight in Gokyo.

Trekking time: 3 – 5 hours

(BLD)

DAY 10 : Gokyo Valley: Acclimatisation Day

We can spend this day in a variety of ways. We can take a rest in the Gokyo Valley, we can hike to some additional lakes – Thonak Tsho and Ngozumba Tsho or if we want to, we can climb a hill, known as the Scoundrel's Viewpoint, located at the edge of Ngozumba Tsho. From here we get astounding views of Cho Oyu, Gyachung Kang, Everest, Lhotse, Nuptse and Makulu. Another treat is the view of the biggest glacier in the world – the Ngozumba Glacier.

There is also the opportunity to climb Gokyo Ri. Climbing to the top is fairly demanding (3-4 hours), but the scenery of Gokyo village, on the edge of third lake overlooked by Cholatse and the broad Nogzumpa Glacier, is magnificent. We are surrounded by panoramic mountains like Kusum Kanguru, Thamserku, Kangtega, Taboche, Cholatse, Makalu, Lhotse, Nuptse, Everest, Changtse, and Pumori. The sight of sunrays kissing Everest which towers over all the surrounding peaks is astounding.

Overnight in Gokyo.

Trekking time: up to 5 hours

(BLD)

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DAY 11 : Gokyo to Thagnak (4,695m)

If it's needed there is another opportunity this morning to climb Gokyo Ri.

After which we trek through the Ngazumpa Glacier. We'll have lots of short sharp ascents and descents and there may be some route finding involved as we move between big ice pockets. We'll climb out of the glacier and traverse along the edge of a mountain before meandering into Thagnak. It will be a short hike today, with an afternoon of rest to prepare us for the long hiking days and elevation gain to come.

Overnight in Thagnak.

Trekking time: 3 – 5 hours (+ Gokyo Ri if climbing today)

(BLD)

DAY 12 : Thagnak via Cho La Pass (5,420m) to Dzongla (4,900m)

Today is going to be one of the tougher days of the trip. The Cho La pass is not itself difficult, but the terrain is steep and includes a glacier traverse on the eastern side. We'll have a good rest at the top of the pass and our reward is some spectacular views including Ama Dablam, Cholatse, Lobuche East and Baruntse.

We'll need to walk over the glacier and pass through some broken terrain before we reach Dzongla Village. The village provides great views of some spectacular mountains along with Pheriche Village far below.

Overnight in Dzongla.

Trekking time: 7 – 9 hours

(BLD)

DAY 13 : Dzongla to Gorak Shep (5,190m) & Kala Paathar (5,550m)

We climb down from Dzongla and walk through a grassy trail while enjoying the view of Lobuche Peak. The trail curves through a wide river bed before rejoining the main trail and reaching Lobuche village. We then wind our way through the terminal moraine of the Khumbu glacier to our tea house at Gorak Shep, situated at the base of Kala Patthar. This was the original Base Camp used by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay on their successful ascent of Everest, before the Base Camp moved closer to the mountain on the edge of the Khumbu Icefall.

From Gorak Shep we ascend the non-technical Kala Patthar (5,550m) and are rewarded for our efforts by unbeatable views. From this lofty perch we can clearly see the summit of Mount Everest, Nuptse, Lhotse and Ama Dablam. This is simply an amazing panorama and we'll allow ample time to savour the rewards of your efforts.

Overnight in Gorak Shep.

Trekking time: 6 – 8 hours

(BLD)

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ITINERARY

DAY 14 : Gorak Shep & Everest Base Camp (5,364m)

We take the trail to Everest Base Camp through the once vast Gorak Shep Lake. We pass through rocky dunes, moraine and streams before reaching Everest Base Camp and (depending on the time of year) a sea of tents.

Located at the foot of the Khumbu Icefall, this can be a long and strenuous day but the satisfaction of reaching Base Camp amply rewards our effort. We'll spend a few hours at Everest Base Camp, giving you a chance to thoroughly explore this historic area, we then return to Gorak Shep.

If we haven't already climbed Kala Patthar, we have another chance today.

Overnight in Gorak Shep.

Trekking time: 4 – 6 hours

(BLD)

DAY 15 : Gorak Shep to Dingboche (4,410m)

We retrace our steps down the Khumbu Valley back to Lobuche village before continuing to descend down to Dingboche for the night.

Overnight in Dingboche.

Trekking time: 4 – 6 hours

(BLD)

DAY 16 : Dingboche to Island Peak Base Camp (5,100m)

Today we hike away from the trekkers heading to and from Everest Base Camp into the relative quietness of the Imja valley. Towering above us is the enormous Lhotse south face, one of the world's highest walls.

Ahead of us lies our own objective and as we approach, the route of ascent becomes more obvious. Island Peak Base Camp will be our home for a couple of nights and will be our first taste of expedition camping.

Overnight Island Peak Base Camp

Trekking time: 4 – 6 hours

(BLD)

DAY 17 : Island Peak Base Camp (5,100m)

Today the emphasis will be on resting up, ahead of the ascent. After breakfast your 360 guide will spend a few hours demonstrating the necessary skills needed to climb the headwall as well as moving on the glaciers. A few hours will also be allocated to checking if equipment fits and that everyone has what is needed for the ascent. The final dress rehearsal.

(BLD)

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ITINERARY

DAY 18 : Summit Island Peak (6,189m) to Chukung (4,730m)

Starting in the early hours after a light breakfast of tea and biscuits we climb up a rocky gully before traversing to the right along a short ridge before reaching the glacier. We rope up to cross the glacier until we reach the headwall and the fixed lines which take us up to the south ridge. We then follow this beautiful alpine ridge to the top and finally the summit of Island Peak! The summits we have come to know so well during our ascents take on a totally different perspective and a little time is spent taking in the 360° panorama.

There are a few options available to us over the next couple of days with where we stop to overnight. We may decide to camp an additional night at Island Peak Base Camp if we arrive later in the day, or head down the trail to one of the villages along the way and the comfort of a tea house.

Climbing time: 12 – 16hours+ depending on conditions

(BLD)

DAY 19 : Contingency day

A useful day which can be used for our descent or as an extra day to summit, weather depending. Flexibility is the key on expeditions!

For those wishing to either shorten the trip, or add some exhilaration to the expedition, you've also got the option of an amazing scenic helicopter flight back down to Lukla at this point – do chat to us for more information!

Trekking days down towards Namche will be in the region of 4 – 7 hours.

(BLD)

DAY 20 : Down to Namche Bazaar (3,440m)

Retracing our steps, we come back into familiar territory heading back to Namche Bazaar and the luxuries of internet cafes and a coffee shop!

(BLD)

DAY 21 : Namche Bazaar to Lukla (2,800m)

Crossing 9 suspension bridges, today's trek brings us right back to Lukla and the end of our expedition! Lukla can often feel like a bit of a thriving metropolis after our time out in the mountains! We'll make a start on celebrating our efforts, and enjoy a good night's rest.

Overnight in Lukla.

Trekking time: 6 – 8 hours

(BLD)

DAY 22 : Fly Lukla to Ramechhap. Transfer to Kathmandu

We return to Ramechhap on the earliest flight from Lukla, before our 6 hour transfer back to Kathmandu. The afternoon is yours to enjoy, shop for fascinating souvenirs, visit the palaces and markets, or simply enjoy some down time in this vibrant city. A couple of 360 favourites are the Monkey Temple, a Buddhist temple situated on a small hill that offers panoramic views of the city, and the Pashupatinath Temple, one of the most famous Hindu temples in Nepal. Tonight, we regroup for a celebration meal at the Roadhouse.

(BD)

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ITINERARY

DAY 23 : Depart Kathmandu

Today's timings are dependent on your international flights.

If 360 are securing your flights, you will either be departing Kathmandu on a day flight, arriving back to the UK the same day, or you will depart on an evening / night flight and arrive back into the UK the next day (Day 24).

This will be dictated by flight routes, times and costs and if you tick "flights included", then 360 team will do their utmost to find the most appropriate flights, giving you the best options. Please do let the office team know at the time of booking if you have a preference, and we will always do our best to accommodate.

(B)

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KIT LIST

Bags & Packs

Duffel bag 120ltr-140ltr

A 120-140L duffel bag to transport kit. A duffel bag is a strong, soft, weather resistant bag without wheels but with functional straps for carrying. Suitcases and wheeled bags are not suitable

Daysack

Approx. 40L capacity. Your day to day pack that you carry with your daily essentials, fitted with shoulder straps and importantly a waist belt

Waterproof rucksack cover

To protect rucksack from rain

Drybags

Nylon rolltop bags (or even just large plastic bags) that keep fresh clothing and other important items like passports and iPods dry in the event of a total downpour that seeps into your kitbag. Good for quarantining old socks

Small kit bag or light bag

This is for any kit you intend to leave at the hotel and could even simply be a heavy duty plastic bag

Padlocks x 2

For use on your kit bag for travel and on the expedition plus your hotel bag

Sleeping Gear

4 Season sleeping bag

You should get a sleeping bag rated to -20C and choose a sleeping bag that functions within the comfort rating of this temperature. A silk sleeping bag liner will enhance this rating on the coldest nights

Sleeping bag liner

Silk is best for keeping the bag clean and you a little warmer

Headwear

Warm headgear x 2

This can be a warm hat, beanie, balaclava, anything to reduce the heat loss from your head

Wide brimmed hat

Keeps the sun off exposed areas like ears and the nape of the neck

Buff/Scarf

Essential for protection from the sun and dust

Sunglasses

Worth spending money on good UV filters. For glacier work category 4 with side and nose protectors. Julbo is our preferred supplier

Ski goggles

Category 3 for days when it may be snowing and very windy. Very useful on summit day

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KIT LIST

Sunblock

Buy the highest SPF you can find as UV intensifies with altitude

Lip salve

Sun cream will not work on your lips and they are very susceptible to burn without proper protection

Upper Body

Base layer x 3

This is the layer closest to the skin and its principal function is to draw (wick) moisture and sweat away from the skin. You can also get thermal base layers for use at higher altitudes that provide an additional insulative layer while still drawing sweat during times of high exertion

Mid layer x 2

These are typically lightweight microfleeces or similar technology that provide varying degrees of warmth and insulation without being overly bulky or heavy to pack

Gilet (optional)

Optional - A great low volume additional layer to keep your core warm, whether down, primaloft or fleece

Light insulated jacket

A lighter jacket such as a Primaloft or lightweight down which can be worn at lower to mid altitudes is a great addition to your kit offering greater flexibility with layering

Soft Shell

These should be windproof (not all are) and insulative. They are mostly made of soft polyester and sometimes resemble a neoprene finish which makes them very mobile and comfortable to wear. While offering a degree of weather repellence, they are not waterproof

Hard Shell

Essential waterproof, windproof kit, should be big enough to fit over several other layers and breathable. Heavy and bulky ski jackets are not suitable for this expedition

Down jacket

These provide the best insulation and are worth every penny. Ask advice in the shop (or from us) when buying the jacket and say you want it rated to -25C and the assistant will recommend the correct fill for you

Warm gloves

Consider liners or a light polartec pair for lower altitudes and evenings, and a thicker waterproof pair like ski gloves for higher altitudes

Down mitts & waterproof mitts

Essential for higher altitudes and cold temperatures. To be worn with a liner glove underneath and waterproof & windproof layer over the top.

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KIT LIST

Lower Body

Trekking trousers x 2

These tend to be polyester so they dry quickly after a shower and weigh little in your pack. Consider perhaps a pair with detachable lower legs as an alternative to shorts

Softshell trousers

Windproof or thermal lined trekking trousers for higher altitudes and the summit phase. Thermal leggings can still be worn underneath if necessary

Long Johns

Thermal insulation for the lower body

Waterproof overtrousers

Like the jacket, an essential piece of kit to stay dry and should also be Goretex

Underwear

Merino or wicking material, not cotton. How many pairs you take is entirely up to you

Feet

Walking boots

Well worn in 4 season waterproof boots with mid to high ankle support

High altitude boots

These boots are double or triple layered to offer the best insulation and the warmest feet up high. Either La Sportiva G2 SMs, Scarpa Phantom 6000s, La Sportiva Spantiks or 8,000m boots are suitable. Make sure you can fit 2 pairs of socks for added warmth with room to wiggle your toes.

Trainers

For evening use and to give your feet a break once we reach the lodges and camp. It saves stomping around in heavy boots for the entire day.

Trekking socks x 4

Start with lighter socks lower down, working up to thicker pairs for higher up as it gets colder. Some people like a clean pair every day, others are happy to change every other day – that's a personal choice

High altitude socks x 2

These are especially thick to provide maximum insulation. Bring three pairs, keep one pair clean for summit day, and wear with a thinner inner

Spare laces

Just in case

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KIT LIST

Technical Equipment

Climbing harness

We recommend Petzl harnesses. Try a variety on in a shop before you buy to ensure a good fit. Legs clips are a good option and avoids having to step into the harness to put it on

Climbing helmet

A plastic helmet is more suitable rather than the expanded foam helmets available. Make sure you try it on in a shop with a woolly/fleece hat underneath

Screwgate karabiners x 4

We recommend that at least 1 screwgate karabiner is HMS. You will need up to two for your two slings, and one each for the jumar and figure-8.

Sling (60cm) x 2

60cm slings

Ice axe

A walking ice axe between 55cm and 65cm. Go to an outdoor shop and try different ones for weight and size so that you get one that feels good to you

Crampons

12 point mountaineering crampons with anti-balling plates that fit your specific boots (not ice climbing crampons)

Micro crampons

A smaller style of crampon, designed to give you a bit more grip on more icy terrain when full crampons are too much, or if you're wearing lighter boots. Microspikes can be invaluable on slippery slopes, and we would suggest they are carried in your day pack with you when higher up on the hill. Please note these cannot be hired in situ – but as they are only around £15, hopefully a good little investment for you anyway! (An example here, though other brands and styles are of course available.)

Jumar

Left or right handed, your choice. Also sometimes called an Ascender.

Figure of 8

Figure of 8 or other descendeur for abseiling if you can do so confidently. Your guides and climbing Sherpas will help you descend if you are not practised at abseiling alone

Hydration

Water bottles/bladder

3L equivalent – Camelbaks are useful at lower altitudes but have a tendency to freeze up at higher altitudes without insulation tubes, Nalgene bottles are better at altitude. We suggest a combination of a 2L bladder and 1L bottle or 2 x ½L bottles to put in your jacket for summit night

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KIT LIST

Water purification

Although generally all water is boiled some prefer to double up and add purification tabs as well. Always good to have in your bag

Pee Bottle (+ optional Shewee for the girls)

A good idea if you are storm bound at higher camps and for night-time pees in base camp. A 1ltr Nalgene bottle is a good option but do make sure you label it as your pee bottle!!

Toiletries

Wash kit

Keep it simple on the mountain. Essentials are toothbrush, toothpaste and deodorant. Moisturiser is advisable, everything else is a luxury!

Travel towel

Travel towels from the likes of Lifesystems are perfect

Wet wipes

These are great for washing when shower facilities become a thing of the past

Alcohol gel

A must have for good camp hygiene

Insect repellent

For early stages and once back down

Toilet paper x 3+

Not provided, you'll need to carry quite a bit but don't worry, you can pick this up along the way if you run out!

Nappy sacks or dog poo bags

Only needed to bag your toilet paper if you are caught short

Medications

Personal first aid kit

The 360 med kits are designed to be used in emergencies and akin to an A&E rather than a pharmacy on expeditions so please come prepared with useful meds for yourself such as painkillers (Ibuprofen / Paracetamol) plus blister plasters, plasters, antiseptic, rehydration sachets, any muscle rubs you wish to use etc.

Personal medication

Keep this in your daysack

Miscellaneous

Head torch

Bring spare batteries

Trekking poles

These tend to be a personal preference but help with your stability and can dampen the pressure on the knees coming down hill

Camera

Bring plenty of spare batteries and memory cards

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KIT LIST

Snacks

You will be fed very well and given snacks each day however we advise bringing a small selection as a little bit of comfort. Extra snacks can be bought en-route if needed. Energy gels and protein bars are not suitable for this expedition

Entertainment

Of course optional, but most trekkers like to bring an iPod, book, Kindle, cards etc for evening entertainment.

Solar Charger

These are useful to keep electricals charged but are a luxury rather than a necessity

Dental check up

We recommend you have a dental check-up before your trip. New fillings can be an issue at altitude if there is an air pocket left in the gap

Documentation

Passport

Don't forget this! Your passport should have at least 6 months validity. With your passport expiry date at least six months after the final day of travel.

Copy of passport

Just in case

Visa

A visa can either be obtained easily on arrival at Kathmandu airport, alternatively you can collect it from the Nepalese Embassy in London.

Money

You will need to carry some US Dollars with you. Please refer to our Finance FAQs for our recommended amount.

Travel insurance

Copy of own travel insurance details. And relevant contact numbers. We have a partnership with True Traveller and would recommend that you contact them when looking for travel insurance for your trip with 360. However, it is vital that you ensure that the insurance cover they offer is suitable for you, taking your personal circumstances (items to be insured, cancellation cover, medical history) into account. Many other insurance providers are available and we do recommend that you shop around to get the best cover for you on the expedition you are undertaking. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the appropriate insurance for your intended trip. To include medical evacuation and coverage up to the maximum altitude of this trip.

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FAQ'S

Country

What information can you give me on Nepal?

Nepal, officially the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, is located in the Himalayas with a population of approximately 27 million. Bordered to the north by the China, and to the south, east, and west by India and across the Himalayas lies the Tibet.

A monarchy throughout most of its history, Nepal was ruled by the Shah dynasty of kings from 1768, when Prithvi Narayan Shah unified its many small kingdoms. However, a decade-long Civil War by the Communist Party of Nepal and several weeks of mass protests by all major political parties led to elections for a constituent assembly in May 2008 which overwhelmingly favored the abdication of the Nepali monarch Gyanendra Shah and the establishment of a federal multiparty representative democratic republic. Kathmandu is the nation's capital and the country's largest city. Kathmandu Valley itself has estimated population of 5 million.

Nepal has a rich geography. The mountainous north has eight of the world's ten tallest mountains, including the highest point on Earth, Mount Everest, called Sagarmatha in Nepali. It contains more than 240 peaks over 6,096 m above sea level. The fertile and humid south is heavily urbanized.

How would you describe the Sherpa people?

The Sherpa people are the predominant ethnic group living in the eastern Himalayan region of Nepal. In 2001 there were approximately 150,000 Sherpas in Nepal. Their language is a variant of Tibetan. Sherpas belong to the Nyingmapa, the "Red Hat Sect" of Tibetan Buddhism. Allegedly the oldest Buddhist sect in Tibet, it emphasizes mysticism and local deities shared by the pre-Buddhist Bon religion, which has shamanic elements, in addition to Buddha and the great Buddhist divinities, the Sherpa also have believe in numerous gods and demons who are believed to inhabit every mountain, cave, and forest. These have to be worshiped or appeased through ancient practices that have been woven into the fabric of Buddhist ritual life. Indeed, it is almost impossible to distinguish between Bon practices and Buddhism.

Sherpas are highly regarded as elite mountaineers. They were immeasurably valuable to early explorers of the Himalayas, serving as guides at the extreme altitudes of the peaks and passes in the region, particularly for expeditions to climb Mt. Everest. Today, Sherpa is a term often used casually to refer to almost any guide or porter hired for mountaineering expeditions in the Himalayas. Sherpas are renowned in the international climbing and mountaineering community for their hardiness, expertise, and experience at high altitudes. It has been speculated that a portion of the Sherpas' climbing ability is the result of a genetic adaptation to living in high altitudes.

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FAQ'S

The Climb

What is the skill level of this climb?

Island Peak is technically a little more difficult than Mera Peak. It is recommended that climbers feel comfortable climbing grade 2 to 3 snow or ice routes. Even though little terrain of this nature is encountered on this mountain it will help you be within your comfort zone when climbing the more exposed sections.

While technical skills are not necessary for Island Peak, it is strongly recommended that climbers have a basic grounding in the use of crampons and ice axes.

How fit do I need to be for this expedition?

Climbers are expected to be in good physical condition. The better your physical shape the more you will be able to handle the demands of trekking to the base camp and then climbing the peak. Having a good level of fitness will allow you to enjoy the expedition far better and increase your chances of reaching the summit. Summit days can be from 12 – 16 hours long depending on the conditions.

How out of my comfort zone will I be?

Although you will be hunkered down in tea-houses for most of this expedition, you will be camping once we reach Island Peak Base Camp. You are likely to be cold and washing and toilet facilities will be limited. Your appetite may be affected by the altitude and as you get higher on the trek you may suffer shortness of breath and have difficulty sleeping. Remember that everyone on the trek is likely to be experiencing exactly the same symptoms, physical and mental.

Guides

Where do I meet my guide?

Your guide will either meet you at the airport in the UK or in Kathmandu. Specific details on this will be shared with you when you're close to your departure.

What is the guiding team composed of? How many guides? Climber to guide ratio?

Our 360 guides are some of the most experienced in the business. They spend many months a year climbing and trekking in Nepal and have established a close rapport with our ground crew.

Generally, your 360 leader will be in charge of the expedition and he/she will be assisted by the local guides. For the actual mountain phase (as opposed to the trekking phase) we have a 3:1 ratio between you and Climbing Sherpas to allow us to look after you properly.

Island Peak

via Everest Base Camp | Nepal | 6,189m

FAQ'S

Can I contact the others on the climb? How about the guide?

Generally about 1 month before your trip departure we will create a WhatsApp group where you can start to chat to your team members.

You can call our office at any time and talk to us and/or your guide to discuss any aspect of your expedition.

Health and Safety

What happens if there is a problem on the trek?

All our guides are in communication with each other by phone and radio. In addition the national park operates a rescue service. This service is linked by radio to the park headquarters. In the vast majority of cases of emergency rescue the problems can be attributed to altitude and if so the solution is immediate descent to lower altitudes. Our local mountain crew are all experienced in dealing with any problem that might arise. Our guides are either doctors or hold the highest standard of wilderness first aid qualifications and can handle any emergency to the highest level of competency, rarely requiring national park assistance.

Am I likely to suffer from altitude sickness on this expedition?

There are different types of altitude sickness. Although our acclimatisation regime ensures that everybody enjoys the best possible chance of getting high on the mountain, altitude related problems can happen. The most common of this is high altitude sickness, AMS (Acute Mountain Sickness).

Symptoms for this can include headaches, nausea and vomiting.
This sounds quite dramatic but generally this is just the process your body naturally goes through to adjust to the higher altitudes and the reduced partial pressure of the atmosphere. For some people the acclimatisation process takes a little longer than others.

For our guides this is all part and parcel of trekking at relatively high altitude and ascending a 6,000m peak. AMS might sound frightening but our guides are fully trained (and experienced) in helping relieve your symptoms and providing advice on how to best proceed.

Island Peak

via Everest Base Camp | Nepal | 6,189m

FAQ'S

What can I do to help prevent AMS?

In most cases AMS can be avoided by the following: drink plenty of water, walk slowly, stay warm and eat well – and listen and talk to your guides.
We recommend that you familiarise yourself with the various effects that altitude can cause. During your pre-climb briefing, we will describe altitude sickness to you in detail, and advise you how to cope with it.

The most important thing is not to fear it, but to respect it and to know how to deal with it and more importantly tell your guides how you feel. Our guides have seen every condition that the mountain produces, and they will always know how to deal with problems.

Is there a risk of getting HACE (High Altitude Cerebral Edema) and HAPE (High Altitude Pulmonary Edema) on the mountain?

HACE and HAPE rarely occur on this trek and our guides are fully trained in recognition of the onset of these problems and will deal with them at the first sign of their development.

Should I bring Diamox on the expedition with me?

Although we recommend you come armed with a course of Diamox or other high-altitude drug on this expedition, we do not recommend that take you these as a prophylactic during the trek or climb. We view Diamox as a treatment drug rather than a preventative medicine. Most adventure medics give similar advice, however we do appreciate this can be confusing, as many GPs (who aren't necessarily mountaineers) do suggest taking it as a prophylactic.

We pride ourselves on designing all our itineraries with acclimatisation very much front and centre and this expedition itinerary has been carefully designed to allow for your body to adjust to the altitude gradually, safely and comfortably. However, if you find that you are still having problems adjusting to the altitude (see our FAQ on Altitude Sickness) then your expedition leader or expedition medic will recommend the correct course of action regarding taking Diamox.

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FAQ'S

Should I take Diamox?

It is far preferable to take Diamox if and when needed during the course of the expedition. If you are already taking it and then start having altitude related problems you are left with few options but to descend to a more comfortable altitude which sadly often means that the summit is not attainable.

Furthermore, Diamox is a diuretic, meaning you will have to drink a lot of fluid to prevent dehydration. Of course, the upshot of this is you'll have to pee more which means you'll probably be having to get up more in the night and take cover behind rocks during the day. Another quite common side-effect is that it can cause your extremities to "buzz and tingle" including your fingers, toes and lips which can feel quite unsettling. Other side-effects can include dizziness and light headedness with loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea. Although all these side-effects are manageable when you have symptoms of altitude sickness, we personally believe it is counter-intuitive to take it unless necessary.

Of course, it is totally up to you, this is just our recommendation and we're not doctors. If you do decide to take Diamox on the advice of your doctor then please do let your leader know in situ so they are aware of this. We also suggest you take the drug for a couple of days a few weeks before travelling so you can experience the symptoms before taking them during the trek.

What happens if I am unable to complete the expedition due to ill-health or altitude sickness?

Unfortunately people can get ill in the mountains. Your expedition leader is constantly monitoring your health and should you get ill with either altitude sickness or any other illness he will be discussing your options with you from an early stage.

Should it become apparent that you are unlikely to be able to summit (without it being a life-threatening situation requiring a medivac) you will be turned around accompanied by one of our experienced sherpas at all times until the group rejoins you. As this is outside the itinerary you would need to meet any additional costs incurred as a result, and that is why we insist on travel insurance.

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FAQ'S

You advocate taking a small first aid kit, what should it have in it?

We advocate a little bit of self-help on the trek. If you have a blister developing for example then please stop take off your boot and treat it before it becomes a problem.

Your own first aid kit should contain: A basic blister kit, plasters, antiseptic, sun-protection, your own personal medication (sometimes your luggage might get to the tea-house/camps after you, so you may not be able to take your medicine according to the regime you are used to), basic pain relief (paracetamol/aspirin/ibuprofen), strepsils, anti-nauseau, a personal course of antibiotics if prone to illness etc.

Generally the best approach packing your first aid kit is to include such basic medications as if you would on a family or personal holiday.

Your 360 expedition leader and/or a local porter (we call the ambulance man!) carries a very comprehensive first aid kit which contains a wide range of supplies and medications. They are fully trained to use whatever is needed for any emergency that may arise. We advocate keeping this in mind when packing your own first aid supplies and keeping your own first aid kit as compact and light as possible.

Do I need to take Malarial drugs?

The Malaria protozoa generally do not survive over an altitude of 1,500m so once we have started the trek malaria poses no threat. (Lukla is at 2,700m). When visiting the lowland regions of Nepal or going to India it may be advisable to seek advice about if and when to take the malarial prophylactics. When visiting these places the chances of contracting malaria can be reduced by standard precautions such as sleeping under mosquito nets, applying insect repellent and wearing long sleeve shirts and trousers.

We advocate you visit your local doctor before departure to get the latest advice, MASTA Travel Health clinics, or many larger local hospitals have travel clinics.

What vaccinations do I need?

The following vaccinations are recommended:

- Hepatitis A
- Typhoid
- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
- Polio

This list is not absolute and it is important you should see your GP Surgery or travel clinic for latest recommendations and to ensure you are up to date on necessary vaccinations.

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FAQ'S

Training

Any tips on how a climber can maximise their chances of success?

The 360 training programs have been devised to be expedition specific. Use these as a guide but also feel free to contact us for individual advice on how to best incorporate the most suitable fitness program with your own lifestyle. The idea is to increase the intensity of the exercise over 4 to 6 months before you leave for the expedition. Concentrate on cardiovascular work-outs during the initial weeks by taking short runs when time allows and try to spend at least 2 weekends a month going on long duration walks (longer than 6 hrs) carrying a rucksack of around 10kg. As you get stronger increase this rate of exercise and the duration by walking every weekend and running 5km every second day.

A focused regime will not only prepare your body for carrying minor loads but will harden your body against the big days on the mountain itself. In addition the weekend walks will help break in your boots and get you used to your equipment.

In combination this will pay dividends when you reach Island Peak because even though you can't train for altitude your body will be ready for arduous days and you will be familiar with how to best use your equipment.

Food and Water

What is the food like in the mountains?

We stay in lodges known locally as tea houses and these have basic kitchens. Apart from generators there is no electricity in the Khumbu region and the food is usually cooked on big stoves and ovens fuelled by wood or yak dung. Despite this the range of food produced is fantastic and the menus are very comprehensive. The majority of the meals focus on fueling the hungry trekker by providing plenty of carbohydrates. Pastas, rice based dishes, spring rolls and pizzas are the staples. Every single ingredient is brought up either on a yak or by a porter and as such the menus get a little simpler as you get to the higher lodges. Most of our midday meals are also eaten at trail side restaurants and are usually accompanied by a hot drink or two. On top of well-balanced meals clients are provided with coffee, tea and snacks upon arrival into the lodge and at all mealtimes.

You are invited to bring along any of your favourite snacks and goodie bags from home as buying additional snacks from the lodges can be expensive. Concentrate on high energy foodstuffs such as Jelly Babies to give you that little boost on an arduous day.

Meals on the trek in and at base camp will include fresh fruits and vegetables. Lightweight nutritious foods are prepared higher on the mountain.

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via Everest Base Camp | Nepal | 6,189m

FAQ'S

I have food allergies, can these be catered for?

Absolutely, please inform the office of any allergies or intolerances and we will ensure that these are taken into account on the trek.

Where does the drinking water come from?

For the first days bottled drinking water will be used (up to Namche Bazaar). At the higher lodges we will use locally sourced drinking water from streams or springs. These are usually fresh being topped up from melt water above or by rainfall but we also increase their purity by treating the water with purification tablets or by boiling it. We always ensure that our drinking water is 100% bug free.

How often is fresh water available for replenishing during the day?

Before leaving the lodge in the morning you will fill your water bottles or camel bladder. If this runs low you will have ample more water to replace it with. For most walking days water can be replenished at the lunch time site.

Accommodation

What kind of accommodation is there on the trek?

The approach to Island Peak is through the Khumbu region. For the initial week of the trek lodges (known locally as Tea Houses) will be our accommodation. These are comfortable and offer good quality meals. The teahouses vary in their quality and style depending on their location. Generally they have a communal room downstairs, with one or two bedrooms above them. Some have shower facilities, some will just have a stand pipe, and there are shared toilet facilities. They use a type of wood burning stove in the main communal area. Other rooms are generally unheated.

There are no facilities for changing money in the teahouses. We recommend that you organise sufficient cash in Kathmandu, your local guide can advise on this.

There is electricity in many of the teahouses at lower altitudes, but not when you get higher and the teahouses become more basic. A top tip for making your batteries last a little longer is to put them in the inside pocket of your coat or under your pillow at night. Cooler temperatures drain battery life so keeping them warm will ensure they last longer.

Once on the glacier, we will be camping and you will be sharing a 3 man tent with another member of the team.

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via Everest Base Camp | Nepal | 6,189m

FAQ'S

What are the tea-house facilities like?

The tea-houses can be very basic and you will need to come with an open mind. Everything is brought up on the back of a porter so sometimes they might not feel much more than a basic shed. They can also be very difficult to keep clean so they can potentially feel a little grimy.

The higher up in the mountains we go, the more basic the facilities become. A hole in the ground will often serve as a loo which can be overwhelming and off putting. If there is a shower it will be a 'paid' experience and may be a bucket wash. Many don't bother as they don't look very inviting.

We ask that you keep in mind that this is an adventure, and try and take the situation in your stride. Hand gel and wet wipes are a must!

How will I stay clean?

There is no getting away from it, hygiene in tea-houses is very basic. They have a lot of demand and the weather and location don't help. Although its hard to embrace, it is part of the experience and you should approach it with a 'we're on an adventure' attitude.

You will be using hand gel frequently and will be washing with wet wipes.

Once back in Kathmandu you will revel in the delights of a flushing loo and running water!

Will I have my own room/tent?

Most altitude related symptoms manifest themselves at night. We therefore recommend room sharing from the onset of all our expeditions. Room share is always organised according to sex and where possible age groups. Obviously if you are climbing this mountain with a friend or partner then share rooms with them. If you have joined the team by yourself then it is highly likely that you will be sharing a room with your pre-assigned room buddy unless prior arrangements have been made. We use high quality 3 man tents to be shared between 2 people to provide extra space for your comfort.

If you would rather sleep solo, that's also possible to organise – please see the next FAQ.

If I want my own room how much will this cost?

We can make the arrangements for you to sleep solo throughout this expedition, if that's what you'd prefer.

If you want a single room in Kathmandu only, it will cost £125 and if you'd like a single room throughout your expedition it will cost £375.

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FAQ'S

Kit

What clothing should I wear on the mountain?

We advocate the beg, steal and borrow principle for first timers, instead of buying brand new stuff that may never get used again. The cost of equipment is usually a major deterrent for people coming onto trips in the first place.

Our guides usually start the walk wearing long, lightweight trekking trousers and T-shirts. Long trousers are recommended as a deterrent to insects, stinging plants and to act as sun protection. Sunglasses are worn for most of the trek as well as suitable sunhats.

Shorts can also be worn on the initial few days of the trek as the temperature is usually warm. Ensure that you apply sunprotection frequently, or buy a once a day product such as P20 if you're not very good at remembering to apply it. The prevailing conditions on the mountain will dictate what you will wear: if it is cold when you leave the camp in the morning then wear your fleece. As things warm up take advantage of the zipper system which most trekking clothing has – open and close the zips to adjust to your own preferred temperature. If you get too warm then take a layer off.

Waterproofs are needed on hand at all times. Island Peak is a huge mountain that creates its own weather system. It is not unusual to be caught out in an afternoon rainstorm low down on the trek. Waterproofs should be Goretex material or similar.

Over the top of your clothing you will wear a climbing harness and be attached to a rope when on high passes/summit day.

What do your guides wear on summit day?

On summit day it gets cold and temperatures of -20C are not unusual.

Typically our guides wear 2 sets of base layers (long johns), a thick fleece layer (top and bottom) and then on the legs waterproofs whilst on the upper torso a down jacket is worn. As the wind picks up near the summit ridge our guides will put on their windproof layer to ward of the wind chill. On their hands they'll wear a thin layer of fleece working gloves over the top of which a thicker set of ski gloves or mittens is worn. Their heads are covered by a thermal beanie hat or a thick balaclava and the hood of their down jackets. On their feet the guides wear one pair of thin socks and one pair of thick.

On summit day our guides wear snow goggles and use waterproofs as an invaluable windshield to protect them against the effect of wind chill when a strong wind blows.

How much kit can I bring with me?

The Kathmandu-Lukla flight has a strict 15kg weight limit which includes both your hand luggage and your checked luggage.

Your summit specific kit (which we often refer to as mountain hardware) will be packed into bags and flown out separately. You will be reunited with this kit at Lobuche East Base Camp and it will not be part of your 15kg.

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FAQ'S

What makes up my 'mountain hardware'?

Mountain hardware includes your high altitude boots, climbing harness, helmet, karabiners, slings, ice axe, crampons, jumar and your figure of 8.

What will happen to my mountain hardware during the climb?

All mountain hardware is flown out seperately to your main kit and is most often taken directly to Island Peak Base Camp by porters. You will not see this equipment again until you need it.

Once you are back down from the summit, this kit will once again be packed up and taken on by our amazing Sherpa support crew. You will be reunited with it in Rhamchhap.

What is the best type of footwear to use?

High altitude mountaineering boots are essential for climbing 6,000m peaks. You will only be using these for the mountain phase of the expedition and you wont be wearing them on the trek to Everest Base Camp. These boots should be double or triple layered. Either La Sportiva G2 SMs, Scarpa Phantom 6000s, La Sportiva Spantiks or 8,000m boots are suitable. Temperatures high on the mountain are usually well below -20 and only these mountaineering boots can withstand such conditions.

Ensure that you have tried the boots on before you leave home and that you can wear a thin and a thick pair of socks in them and still be able to wriggle your toes (adequate circulation).

Because of the huge variety of terrain encountered on the trekking phase it is very important to wear the right footwear. Trekking boots should be sturdy, waterproof, insulated against cold temperatures and offer adequate ankle support.

In addition it is highly recommended that your boots are well worn in to prevent the formation of blisters. A range of suitable boots are on the market and further advice as to which brand names are available can be found online or at your local gear store.

Crampons are worn for a majority of the time you spend on the glacier and for the actual summit day itself. Your crampons should preferably be of the easy “heel clip” variety (rather than the strap systems which are fiddly). It is not necessary to use specialist technical climbing crampons as standard 12 point all round crampons such as those from Grivel will do the job very well.

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FAQ'S

What clothing and footwear is appropriate when staying in the Tea houses and lodges?

There is no electricity above Lukla and lodges are heated by a pot-bellied stove fuelled with either wood or yak dung. These provide adequate warmth for the dining rooms but are not connected to the bedrooms. A thick fleece or light down jacket provides adequate warmth for inside the buildings. For footwear we suggest using either trainers (sneakers) or crocs. It is nice to get out of your trekking boots and to have something light to wear for the evenings.

How warm does my sleeping bag need to be?

Sleeping bags should be rated within the -20 C comfort zone. From the first camp upwards it is not unusual to experience frosty nights and a good nights' sleep is important to giving you the best chance to climb this mountain. Ensure you get a sleeping bag that has this temperature rating at this comfort zone rather then as its extreme zone.

Our guides take sleeping bags rated to well below -20C to ensure that they are warm at night. A 4 season sleeping bag can be enhanced by using an inner silk or fleece liner. The idea is to be as comfortable and warm as possible for the night and to ensure plenty of sleep for the arduous days ahead. Some clients have found the use of a "bivouac bag" to increase the warmth of their bag.

It is important to remember that down sleeping bags work by your own body heating the down that's inside the bag. Once you have warmed up the bag the down will retain the heat and ensure that you sleep at a temperature that's your own body temperature. For best results it is best to wear as little as possible when inside your sleeping bag. Our guides will often only wear a set of thermals in their bag. It is important for the bag to trap the heat. By wearing multiple layers of clothing your clothing will trap this heat and your bag will not function properly.

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FAQ'S

Are down jackets necessary?

They are highly recommended and are worth their weight in gold on summit day. Our guides wear them every evening above Namche Bazaar.

A layer system comprising of several layer of base layers, fleeces, jumpers and a thick coat will just about suffice on the climb but nothing beats the efficiency of a good down jacket (especially when topped with a water proof layer).

Are down mitts & waterproof mitts necessary?

Our guides say these are an absolute must for trekking at higher altitudes. Warm mountaineering gloves will not suffice. You should ensure that your warm gloves fit inside your down mitts, which in turn fit inside your waterproof mitts.

How much will my pack weigh during the trek?

A daysack is worn by the climber at all times during the trek. The content of this is mandatory and should include: a fleece (for when taking breaks or the weather changes); a full set (top and bottom) of waterproofs; sufficient water for the day; snacks; camera equipment; personal medication and a head torch.

Your day-to-day rucksack will weigh no more then 4 – 5 kilos and a rucksack of around 40 – 60 L capacity will more than suffice. This rucksack can be filled to the brim with extra stuff when checking in at the airport. Our guides for example put their down jackets or a thick fleece and a pair of mountain socks in this bag so as to free up space in their hold luggage.

It is important that your day sack has an adjustable waist belt to transfer the weight of your daily load onto your hips and from here onto your legs (strongest muscles) to do most of the carrying. Another handy feature would be a compartment in which to fit a camelbak.

Our main luggage will be carried by porters.

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FAQ'S

What do the porters carry? What is the correct porter weight?

Your porter bags should be off a soft material duffel bag or rucksack variety and should not be a suitcase or hard-bodied metal case. Furthermore they should weigh around 15 kg when packed for the trekking phase of the expedition. We have found this weight to be ample and usually everybody can plan to take only enough clothes and equipment needed for the mountain. Please bear in mind that on top of your load, porters will also have to carry a share of the food, kitchen equipment, camping equipment and their own survival gear.

Inside the porter bag should be a change of clothing, your clothing for higher up the mountain, sleeping-bag, personal toiletries etc. (see equipment list). Also take a pair of light footwear to wear at night and consider bringing a book or playing cards.

What clothing is suitable for when we come back from the mountains?

Kathmandu is at a relatively low altitude and daytime temperatures are warm. When in Rome do as the Romans. Shorts and T-shirts are fine to wear during the course of the day. Evening wear generally tends to be casual with long trousers and casual shirt appropriate for all hotels and restaurants. Nepalese are generally quite conservative in their dress code and are generally well dressed despite their situation in life. Your town and party clothes can be left in a safe lock up at the hotel and do not need to be taken up the mountain.

What other kit will I need?

Please review the equipment list. While all items are required there may be times when some of the items on the gear list may not be used (such as warm weather or changing conditions). The gear lists are created by the guides to ensure climbers be prepared to summit in any conditions.

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FAQ'S

Are there clothes washing facilities on the trail?

dried whilst on the trail, and realistically, the only time you might have chance for things to dry is when you're in Namche Bazaar for 2 nights. Get stuff washed and hung outside in the morning of your acclimatisation day and it should be dry by the time the sun sets, but only if it's not raining of course! Anticipate not washing kit and take as many pairs of underwear as you are comfortable with in this scenario. Don't overpack on the baselayers and midlayers though as there's a strict weight limit on the Lukla flight of 15kg.

Is it possible to rent equipment before I go?

It is possible to hire clothing and equipment before you leave from our partners Outdoor Hire (www.outdoorhire.co.uk/360-expeditions-kit-lists) where we have a 6,000m peak kit list set up and you can pick and choose hire items from this.

Expedition Kit Hire (www.expeditionkithire.co.uk) also have a range of high altitude mountaineering boots for hire along with warmer sleeping bags.

Is it possible to rent kit once I'm in Nepal?

We have a really good link to a great outfitter in Nepal, where they sell / rent quality outdoor kit at a fraction of the cost of the UK. The following items are available to rent when you arrive: down jackets, ice axes, crampons, sleeping bags, high altitude plastic boots, climbing harness, climbing helmets & jumars.

If you do want to hire any of these, please let us know in advance of the expedition so we can get a list together for our ground crew.

The Weather

What is the best time of year to climb in Nepal?

The best time to climb the Nepali 6,000m peaks is March to May and September to November. The later time frame is generally clear but colder with snow conditions more stable. The usual weather patterns which came with great predictability are changing however and it is not unusual to experience short spells of warm weather which is unprecedented.

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FAQ'S

How cold can it get?

The temperature at the top of the mountain can vary widely. Sometimes it is only a degree or two below freezing, but climbers should be prepared for possible temperatures as low as minus 25 degrees Celsius, especially in conjunction with wind chill. On the trek expect cold mornings (sometimes frosty). An afternoon rainstorm is not unusual at the lower altitudes.

Travel

Do I need to book my own flights to Nepal?

360 Expeditions will be booking flights on your behalf. We provide confirmation of flight times and departure terminal approximately eight weeks before your departure date. Please be aware that flight schedules are subject to change. Please ensure that you have checked your flight details before setting out for your flight.

Which internal airport in Nepal do we fly from?

The Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal announced in October 2022 that there were too many flights leaving Kathmandu to Lukla, and deemed it too dangerous to continue, which means there are no longer flights between Lukla and Kathmandu during peak trekking season. Peak season is defined as Apr 1st – May 30th and October 1st – November 30th each year. This change affected all airlines and tour operators in Nepal and means the only option to travel to/from Lukla by plane is now from Manthali airport in Ramechhap.

Insurance

Do I need special travel insurance for the trek?

You must carry individual travel insurance to take part in the expedition. We cannot take you on the mountain without proof of insurance.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the appropriate insurance for your intended trip. To include medical evacuation and coverage up to the maximum altitude of this trip.

Your insurance details are requested on the booking form, however this can be arranged at a later date. 360 Expeditions will be requesting your insurance details 8 weeks before your departure.

Entry into Country

My passport runs out 3 months after the trek, is this OK?

Your passport should be valid for 6 months after the date the trek starts. If it runs out before you may be refused entry. It is also advisable to have a couple of photocopies of your passport in case of loss.

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FAQ'S

Do I need a visa for Nepal?

Visas are compulsory for entry into Nepal for all foreign nationals. You can either apply for your visa on arrival in Nepal, or in the UK before you travel.

If you decide to apply before you go, you may be selected to attend the Nepalese Embassy to collect your visa. If this is the case, you'll be given a set day and time when you have to do this. If this happens and you can't make it to the embassy, there are a couple of options:
1. you can nominate someone to go on your behalf.
2. you can ignore the request to go to the embassy and sort your visa on arrival. There will be no issues getting your visa on arrival even if you've already started the process in the UK.

It is very easy to get your visa on arrival in Kathmandu and there are now electronic visa booths at the airport which take your photo, allow you to fill in all the relevant information and spit you out the completed visa application. You then just queue to pay your fee!

A 30 day visa costs US$50.

Finance

When is the money due for this expedition? What kind of payment do you accept?

Generally speaking deposits are due upon booking to secure your place as we need to book the international flights well in advance. The full amount should be paid 4 months prior to departure. However having said this our aim is to get you to the top of this mountain and we understand that everyone's personal financial situations can vary.

Please contact our friendly office crew to discuss a suitable payment plan should you find raising the funds to be difficult. We have been in your shoes and go by the motto of where there's a will there's a way.

What is your cancellation and refund policy?

Please read our terms and conditions careful before you depart. 360 Expeditions highly recommends trip cancellation insurance for all expeditions. Due to the nature and heavy costs of government and operator permits we must adhere to a stringent refund policy.

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FAQ'S

How much do we tip our local crew?

Our local crew work extremely hard to ensure that your expedition runs well. Although tipping is not compulsory once someone sees how hard the crew works and realises the minimal amount of money they get paid relative to us, tipping will seem the least they can do to say thank you. As a general rule we suggest around $220-$260 per client for the entire local crew to be shared amongst them.

Tipping your 360 leader is entirely your call.

Money: am I correct in thinking we only need to take US Dollars with us?

US dollars are readily recognised and are easily converted to the local currency. Upon arrival there will always be a bureau de change at the airport. These provide a better rate of exchange than your hotel. Buying gifts or small goods such as drinks or snacks with small denomination US dollars is not a problem. Getting change for a $20 bill when buying a $1 coke will be a problem. Larger bills are good for tipping your porters at the end of the expedition and a sufficient amount should be carried with you. Your 360 leader will remind you in the pre-expedition brief of the correct amount to take on the trip with you.

What additional spending money will we need?

The amount of money you will need depends on how many presents you wish to buy or how much you have to drink when you come off the hill. As a basic rule of thumb $250 should be more than adequate for any post expedition spending. Nepal is a relatively cheap place and when indulging in the local custom of haggling goods can be bought for very good value for money. Your 360 leader will be happy to point out the relative bargains and the suitable prices and where to get the best value for money.

The only cash you'll need to consider taking with you on the mountain is the local crew tips which are presented to them before we leave Lukla (see above) and for any additional snacks and soft drinks you wish to purchase from the tea-houses encountered en route. Additional supplies can be quite expensive though as all this is brought in by porters.

Electronics

Do we need a travel adaptor for the plug sockets in the hotel or are they the same as UK?

The voltage is 220v / 50Hz like the UK. Rectangular or round three-pin plugs are used. It is possible to recharge your electronic items and batteries for a small cost at all the lodges.

Island Peak

via Everest Base Camp | Nepal | 6,189m





360 EXPEDITIONS

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TRAINING PROGRAM

To begin 6 months prior to the expedition where possible.

1. CVS: Cardiovascular exercise which is low impact such as swimming, cycling, cross trainer, rowing.

2. Weekend walk should be done over undulating terrain. Only a light rucksack needs to be carried.

3. For specific exercises it is worth doing static squats and heel raises on a regular basis to improve leg muscles prior to the trip. Static squats are especially useful to help protect the knees. Please remember that it is still important to have a well balanced workout using a variety of muscle groups.

4. It is worth winding down and resting in the week leading up to the trip, doing several light walks to keep things going.

5. When walking going at a pace of a brisk walk with a light sweat and enough to feel breathless is recommended

6. During the program, rather than step up suddenly each month (example, going for 3 one hour walks each week during the weekdays in April to 3 one and half hour walks suddenly in May) it is better to build up gradually each week so there isn't a large transition (example, going for 3 one hour walks during week 1 in April, going for 3 one hour and ten minute walks during week 2 in April, going for 3 one hour and fifteen minute walks during week 3 in April, going for 3 one hour and twenty minute walks during week 4 in April)

6. It is important you seek medical advice prior to starting any training program, especially if you are not used to regular physical exertion

All the best with your training!

MONTH 1

OPT 1	OPT 2
2 x 30 mins weekday walk 1 x 1 hour weekend walk 1 x 10 mins CVS	1 x 30 mins weekday walk 2 x 1 hour weekend walk 1 x 10 mins CVS

MONTH 2

OPT 1	OPT 2
2 x 45 mins weekday walk 1 x 2 hours weekend walk 2 x 10 mins CVS	1 x 45 mins weekday walk 2 x 2 hours weekend walk 2 x 10 mins CVS

MONTH 3

OPT 1	OPT 2
2 x 45 mins weekday walk 1 x 2 hours weekend walk 2 x 10 mins CVS	1 x 45 mins weekday walk 2 x 2 hours weekend walk 2 x 10 mins CVS

MONTH 4

OPT 1	OPT 2
3 x 1 hour weekday walk 1 x 4 hours weekend walk 3 x 15 mins CVS	2 x 1 hour weekday walk 2 x 4 hours weekend walk 3 x 15 mins CVS

MONTH 5

OPT 1	OPT 2
3 x 1.5 hours weekday walk 1 x 5 hours weekend walk 3 x 20 - 25 mins CVS	2 x 1.5 hours weekday walk 2 x 5 hours weekend walk 3 x 20 - 25 mins CVS

MONTH 6

OPT 1	OPT 2
3 x 2 hours weekday walk 1 x 6 hours weekend walk 3 x 30 mins CVS	2 x 3 hours weekday walk 2 x 6 hours weekend walk 3 x 30 mins CVS

360 EXPEDITIONS



"Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty & well preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside in a cloud of smoke, thoroughly used up, totally worn out & loudly proclaiming 'Wow! What a Ride!' "

Dream it. Plan it. Live it.

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