The Long Trek to Everest Base Camp, Nepal *New for 2021*

A more leisurely approach to Everest Base Camp with an ascent of stunning Pikey Peak, in addition to Base Camp and Kalar Pattar.

Group departures

See overleaf for departure dates

Holiday overview

Style	Trek
Accommodation	Hotels, Tea Houses
Grade	Strenuous
Duration	24 days from London to London
Trekking / Walking days	On trek: 18 days
Min/Max group size	4 / 12. Guaranteed to run for 4
Trip Leader	Everest Sherpa Sirdar
Land only	Joining in Kathmandu, Nepal
Max altitude	5,545m/18,188ft, Kala Pattar, Day 19

Private Departures & Tailor Made itineraries available

tel: +44 (0)1453 844400 fax: +44 (0)1453 844422 info@mountainkingdoms.com www.mountainkingdoms.com

Mountain Kingdoms Ltd, 20 Long Street, Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire GL12 7BT UK
Managing Director: Steven Berry. Registered in England No. 2118433. VAT No. 496 6511 08

Last updated: 08 April 2021

Departures

2021 Dates:

Fri 26 Mar – Sun 18 Apr
Fri 05 Nov – Sun 28 Nov

2022 Dates:

Fri 25 Mar – Sun 17 Apr
Fri 04 Nov – Sun 27 Nov

Group prices and optional supplements
Please contact us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or visit our website for our land only and flight inclusive prices and single supplement options.

Please be aware that the option of a single room is not available in the tea houses. Please see the 'Your Accommodation' section of this itinerary for further information.

No Surcharge Guarantee
The flight inclusive or land only price will be confirmed to you at the time you make your booking. There will be no surcharges after your booking has been confirmed.

Will the trip run?
This trip is guaranteed to run for 4 people and for a maximum of 12. In the rare event that we cancel a holiday, we will refund you in full and give you at least 6 weeks warning. Many trips do fill up quickly – we advise you to book early if you want to secure a place(s) on the dates of your choice.

Insurance
We offer a travel insurance scheme - please contact us for details.

Private Departures
We can also offer this trip as a private holiday. A Private Departure follows exactly the same itinerary as the group departure but at dates to suit you (subject to availability) - please contact us with your preferred dates.

Tailor Made service
We pride ourselves on the level of quality and choice we provide for our clients who want a fully tailor made holiday. A holiday will be created especially for you by one of our well-travelled experts. They will be able to advise on the accommodation best suited to your needs, the sights you should visit (and those to avoid!) and the best walks and activities matched to your ability. In short, we will work together with you to create your perfect holiday.

If you would like to explore the idea of a Tailor Made holiday with Mountain Kingdoms then please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or see the Tailor Made pages of our website for further inspiration.

Your guide

Your Everest trek will be led by one of our highly experienced Sherpa Sirdars, the majority of whom have climbed on, or summited Everest. They have an intimate and expert knowledge of the history, culture and nature of Nepal and will make your trip a memorable experience.

Phura Dorjee, on the summit of Everest and one of our popular guides for this trek.

Your trip highlights

- Follow in the footsteps of early expeditions on the original trail to Everest Base Camp
- Enjoy fabulous views from Pikey Peak, said to be Edmund Hillary's favourite views of Everest.
- Visit both Everest Base Camp and Kala Pattar and trek through beautiful Sherpa villages
- Trek in the company of highly experienced Sherpa leaders, some of whom are Everest summiteers
- Stay in a four star hotel in Kathmandu with a walking tour of the city's key sights

At a glance itinerary

Day 1-2	Fly London to Kathmandu.
Day 3	Drive from Kathmandu to Dhap in the Solu Khumbu.
Day 4-6	Start trek to Jhapre and trek to Pikey Peak Base Camp.
Day 7	Ascend Pikey Peak and descend to Junbesi.
Day 8-11	Trek original Expedition Trail to Phakding.
Day 12-13	Trek to Namche Bazaar and rest day.
Day 14-16	Trek to Thyangboche and Dingboche and an acclimatisation day.
Day 17	Trek to Lobuche.
Day 18- 19	Everest Base Camp and Kalar Pattar and descend to Pangboche.
Day 20-21	Trek to Namche and Lukla.
Day 22-24	Fly to Kathmandu. At leisure and fly home.

Trip summary

This wonderful new trip offers a more leisurely approach to Everest, visiting Pikey Peak, famed for its fabulous Himalayan panorama, and following part of the original expedition trail to Everest. This itinerary, as well as being very beautiful, offers the best possible acclimatisation and chances of success at the higher altitudes.

This is an exciting and challenging trek which takes you from the lower elevations of Solu up into the very heart of the Khumbu region, culminating with a visit to Base Camp and an early morning ascent of Kala Pattar offering magical views of Everest and the surrounding peaks. An ascent of Pikey Peak on the way-in offers you a truly unforgettable panorama of the Himalaya from Dhaulagiri and Annapurna in the west all the way to Kangchenjunga in the east, with Everest and the peaks of the Khumbu in between. You will also have the opportunity to visit the delightful Sherpa villages of Solu which in recent years have hardly been visited by trekkers because most now miss out this region with the flight to Lukla.

By the time you join the more standard Everest route you will be fit and well-acclimatised. Excellent acclimatisation is key to ensuring that you reach and enjoy all your objectives on this trek. Starting with a drive in to the village of Dhap you trek through the heart of Sherpa country, from the lower villages of the Solu up to the higher valleys of the Khumbu. You will climb Pikey Peak and enjoy the amazing mountain views from there and visit the lovely village of Junbesi and the spectacular monastery of Taksindhu before joining the main trail from Lukla up to Namche Bazaar. Two nights are spent in Namche Bazaar, the Sherpa 'capital', where you can enjoy a wander around the shops and even surf the internet. You will visit the famous Thyangboche Monastery and have more acclimatisation time in the village of Dingboche with time to ascend nearby Nagarzong Ri for wonderful all round views. Continuing to Lobuche you then have time to visit both Base Camp and Kalar Pattar for the classic views of Everest.

With between five and seven hours walking each day, this trip is suitable for fit trekkers looking for a memorable challenge and the extended time at altitude will ensure a high success rate. If you have the time then this trip offers the ultimate trek to Everest!

Your trip itinerary

Day 1: Depart London.

Depart London on your overnight flight to Kathmandu.

Overnight: In flight

Day 2: Arrive Kathmandu. Group transfer to hotel.

On arrival in Kathmandu you will be transferred to the Shangri La Hotel. This is a very comfortable hotel situated to the north of Thamel, the tourist district of Kathmandu. It has a lovely garden with a swimming pool and several excellent restaurants. The bustle of Thamel, with all its restaurants, shops and bars, is a 20 minute walk or 10 minute taxi ride away.

Overnight: Shangri La Hotel, Kathmandu

Day 3: Drive from Kathmandu to Dhap, 2,650m/8,694ft - 6-7 hours driving.

Today you drive to Dhap, a long drive which firstly takes you east along the valley of the Sun Kosi River, down to the lowlands and then up through the foothills into the mountains to reach Dhap, a small village in the lower Solu Khumbu region and the starting point for your trek. The Solu Khumbu is the homeland of the Sherpa people.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 4: Trek to Jhapre, 2,690m/8,825ft - 5-6 hours.

Today you set off on your trek. It's an easy trekking day to get you started. Leaving the roadhead, an undulating path takes you through forest of rhododendrons and sub-alpine flowers, with endless views of the foothills stretching away. The valleys here are steep sided, with terraced fields carved into the hillsides growing of rice and vegetables. You will enjoy a relaxed day walking on quiet trails through this unspoilt, quintessentially rural Sherpa region.

After about 5 hours walking you arrive at Jhapre, a quiet mountain village perched above a deep valley with views of Everest and Numbur Himal. Today you will have a bit of an introduction to Sherpa culture - in Jhapre there's a pretty little Buddhist gompa and a stupa, evidences of Sherpa Buddhist culture which, along with numerous mani walls alongside the trail, you will get accustomed to seeing during your trek. You will overnight in a tea house in Jhapre.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 5: Trek to Bulbule, 2,980m/9,777ft - 3 hours.

Leaving the village of Jhapre, you follow a trail up to a grassy ridge with all round panoramic views. You then follow the trail heading higher up into more alpine type vegetation. Then, ascending gradually, you trek past Buddhist stupas and mani walls, and for even better views you can make an optional diversion to Lamje Bhanjyang at 3,480m/11,417ft for a panorama, including Everest. You arrive at the little village of Bulbule where you will overnight.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 6: Trek to Pikey Peak Base Camp, 3,640m/11,942ft – 5-6 hours.

Soon after you leave Bulbule the path splits and you turn right to Pikey Peak. You may see yaks grazing and pass by the huts of the yak herders, as well as a long mani wall, more evidence of the strong Buddhist faith of the region. You contour the hillside below Taklung Danda and through some fine forest. If you are doing this trek in the spring the rhododendrons should be in bloom. You then ascend further for a couple of hours to reach Pikey Peak Base Camp. From Base Camp it is a relatively short climb to the summit at 4,065 m/13,337ft but unless the afternoon is very clear it best to leave the climb to the summit till the morning when it is more likely that you will have clear skies and unobstructed views.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 7: Visit Pikey Peak, 4,065m/13,337ft, for sunrise - 2-2½ hours. Descend to Junbesi Village, 2,700m/8,858ft - 5-6 hours.

After an early breakfast you climb along a series of switchbacks for a couple of hours to reach the summit of Pikey Peak, festooned with many prayer flags. From here, if the weather is clear, you should get the most fabulous unobstructed views over the Himalayan range, from Annapurna and Dhaulagiri in the west as far as Kanchenjunga away to the east. To the north you will see Everest, Thamserku, Kangtaiga, Khatang and Karyoling, with Manaslu, Gaurishankar, Dorje Lakpa, and Langtang to the west. Pikey Peak is a truly wonderful viewpoint and will give you a great taster for what is to come. Edmund Hillary is said to have commented that the view from here was his favourite in all Nepal.

After marveling at the views you start the descent from the summit and head downhill, entering rhododendron and pine forest and continue descending to Lamjura La, where you will join the main Jiri to Everest route, formerly the original Everest walk-in trail, used by so many expeditions and trekkers on their way to Everest in the past. There is then a long descent down on a good trail through fir and rhododendron forest, passing several mani walls and stone chortens, to emerge into farmland and finally the large village of Junbesi. Junbesi is a traditional Sherpa village set in a beautiful open position with Numbur Mountain towering overhead and is considered a cradle of Sherpa culture and architecture.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 8: Trek to Takshindhu, 3,071m/10,075ft – 5-6 hours.

You leave Junbesi on an enchanting trail through the forest. You cross the Junbesi River and climb the Salung ridge to reach a corner from where you have more superb views of the great peaks, including Everest, Makalu and Chamlang. From here you drop down to the Ringmo Khola and climb to Ringmo, 2,805m/9,202ft, a pretty Sherpa Village, famous for its apple, peach and apricot orchards. The Ringmo Apple House was a favourite stop here for generations of trekkers over the years. From Ringmo you climb to reach the Takshindhu La at 10,075ft/3,071m for more gorgeous views. Takshindhu is famous for its magnificent monastery located just below the pass, one of the largest and most impressive monasteries in the Solu Region. You will spend the night in a lodge in Takshindhu.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 9: Trek to Khari Khola, 2,040m/6,693ft – 5-6 hours.

From Takshindhu, the trail is mostly downhill, down into a huge valley, to reach the Dudh Koshi River. For the first hour you descend through a forest of hemlock, oak and rhododendron to reach the village of Nunthala 2,270m/7,450ft. From here, it is another couple of hours downhill, passing through cultivated terraces and agricultural farmland, dotted with small Sherpa and Rai settlements. You finally reach the bottom at the raging Dudh Kosi River which you cross on a suspension bridge. You then have a gradual climb for an hour to the pretty Rai village of Jubing. Unlike the Buddhist Sherpas the Rais are a Hindu ethnic group and it is interesting to see the difference in their villages. From Jubing the trail meanders uphill, with a steep section of about an hour to arrive at the large village of Kharikhola.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 10: Trek to Puiyan, 2,796m/9,173ft - 4-5 hours.

From the bridge in Kharikhola the trail climbs steeply uphill for about an hour to reach Bupsa, a small settlement with 5-6 lodges and great views of the surrounding landscapes. You then climb uphill through alpine forest to reach the Khari La Pass, 2,880m/9,186ft, and then continue through bamboo forest for a further two to three hours to reach the small Sherpa village of Puiyan where you will stay overnight.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 11: Trek to Phakding, 2,610m/8,563ft - 5-6 hours.

From Puiyan you climb for an hour or two before coming to the ridge overlooking Lukla and Surkhe. A 45 minute descent brings you to Surkhe, incidentally the home of Pasang Lamu, the first Sherpa woman to climb Mount Everest. In Surkhe, Lukla with its famous airport is almost directly above you but it would be a very steep climb to reach Lukla from here. Instead, from Surkhe you cross a small bridge over a stream and the trail then climbs more gently for a couple of hours passing through the villages of Mushe and Chaurikharka, and through giant boulders, to reach Choplung, where the main trail from Lukla comes in from the right to join your route. From this point you will be on the main Everest trail and you will find it to be considerably busier with trekkers who have flown in to start their trek from Lukla airport, local people, porters and pack animals carrying goods up to Namche. You continue to follow this main trail, gently up and down, until you cross a long suspension bridge into the village of Phakding and your tea house for the night.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 12: Trek to Namche Bazaar, 3,445m/11,302ft - 6-7 hours.

Today is quite a long day but by now you should be fitter and well-acclimatised so will find it considerably more easy going than if you had just flown in to Lukla. From Phakding your trail leads upstream along the valley, through areas of conifer trees and several more small villages. About 2-3 hours walking will bring you to Chumoa, 2,743m/8,997ft, a small and picturesque village of about 25 houses located below Thamserku Mountain and close to the entrance to the Sagarmatha (Everest) National Park. You cross the Monjo Khola and pass through Monjo village, and continue to the park gates at Jorsale where you complete entry formalities. You then walk on alongside the river to arrive at the confluence of the Imja Drangka and the Nangpo Drangpo, which combine to form the Dudh Khosi. Crossing the river on a high bridge you start the steep climb to Namche. Near the halfway point up the hill, if the sky is clear, you should get views of Everest and Lhotse. You then continue the climb, less steeply now, to arrive in Namche.

Namche is the largest and most prosperous village in the Khumbu. Thamserku, 6,618m, and Kwangde, 6,224m, loom to the east and west and the sacred mountain Khumbila, 5,707m, dominates the skyline to the north behind the village. The narrow streets at its centre are a mixture of traditional and modern, with Sherpa homes mingled with cafes and shops selling trekking and climbing equipment, foodstuffs, tennis shoes and Tibetan boots. Don't be surprised if, after the exertion of the climb and the rise in elevation, you feel a little tired and head-achey. You will feel better after a cup of tea and a rest.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 13: Acclimatisation day at Namche Bazaar.

'Climb high, sleep low' is the mantra for good acclimatisation. To aid your acclimatisation further it is a good idea today to, at the very least, walk up the hill to the Park Headquarters and visit the interesting Sagarmatha National Park Museum. From here there are the first really good views of Everest and Ama Dablam - a wonderful panorama.

If you are feeling energetic you might also make the worthwhile excursion to the Everest View Hotel, situated above the village of Khumjung. Although rather an ugly building and out of keeping with its surroundings, there are very good views from its terrace and you can have a cup of tea, or a glass of hot lemon there and enjoy the scenery. It would then be possible to descend from here to visit the gompa in Khumjung and return to Namche by a different route.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 14: Trek to Thyangboche, 3,863m/12,674ft – 6-7 hours.

Today, you firstly have a steep pull up out of Namche village, past the Park HQ and Museum, to reach a corner of the trail turning north. You then follow a high trail which winds round the hillside above the river. From this airy trail you have fabulous views of the mountains across the valley, principally Thamserkhu and Kang Taiga. You pass through the small settlement of Trashinga before dropping down to the river which you cross on a suspension bridge. You climb for a few minutes to the small hamlet of Phunki Tenga, remarkable for its series of water driven prayer wheels. From here it is a further 2-3 hours to reach Thyangboche, ascending through beautiful forest to arrive at a large welcome gateway and a huge chorten, which you pass to arrive at the monastery. The setting of Thyangboche Monastery is magical, with the most amazing mountain views. It will probably be cloudy by the time you arrive in the early afternoon, but is normally clear first thing in the morning so it will be worthwhile getting up early for the sensational views of Everest and Ama Dablam.

There is a good visitors' centre at Thyangboche and you should also be able to visit inside the temple for the afternoon prayer ceremony. Visitors are welcome but you should sit quietly on the right hand side of the temple. A small donation is appreciated!

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 15: Trek to Dingboche, 4,350m/14,271ft - 6 hours.

You will probably be woken in the early hours, while it is still dark, by the sound of horns and cymbals as the monks have their first prayers of the day. You will have time to visit the monastery in the morning if you did not go yesterday.

Leaving Thyangboche, your path descends through trees to Deboche where the small and atmospheric nunnery is worth a visit. You pass further houses and mani walls as the path continues along the river valley amongst the trees. After crossing a bridge over a picturesque gorge, the path gradually climbs, with stunning views of Ama Dablam ahead. There are numerous fantastic photo opportunities in both directions, and frequent chortens and mani walls are passed as height is gained to reach the village of Pangboche. This is a very picturesque village with stone-walled fields and there is a very interesting monastery set in trees at the top of the village. This is probably the oldest monastery of the Khumbu region, possibly dating back as far as the first introduction of Buddhism into the Khumbu. There used to be a 'yeti' scalp and claw kept here, but they were stolen some years ago.

You continue from Pangboche and the path ascends above the village with the sparse landscape now reflecting the height. You pass some yak herders' cottages and walled fields at Orsho before crossing a stream and making a final steep ascent to Dingboche. The village of Dingboche is set in a stunning position, surrounded by high peaks. In summer months they grow barley here - possibly the highest altitude in the world at which this crop is grown. For acclimatisation you need to spend two nights around the 4,000m level and Dingboche, lying in a sheltered spot above the Imja Khola is generally more attractive for this than Pheriche, another settlement at similar altitude situated on the other side of the ridge.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 16: Acclimatisation day, Dingboche. Side trip to Nagarzong Ri.

There are several opportunities for interesting acclimatisation walks from Dingboche. The most spectacular of these is to walk up the ridge behind the village to make an energetic ascent of Nagazong Ri. This is a steep, but not technically difficult ascent to a summit at 5,083 metres, from where there are stunning views of Makalu

and Amphu Laptse. You can take in the small temple of Nagartsang Gompa on the way down - there is a nice sheltered terrace here from where you can enjoy the views. You will descend in time for lunch in the village.

In the afternoon you might care to walk across to the village of Pheriche to visit the Himalayan Rescue Association clinic; one of the doctors there often gives a talk about high altitude acclimatisation in the afternoon. If these options don't appeal, it is possible to walk up the valley beyond Dingboche to the yak grazing pastures at Chukhung, 4,730m, a 4-5 hour round trip.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 17: Trek to Lobuche, 4,931m/16,178ft - 5-6 hours.

This morning you ascend the ridge to a large chorten above Dingboche Village and it is then an easy walk up a wide, grassy plateau. The peaks of Tawoche and Cholatse tower above you and it is possible to see Pheriche Village in the valley below to your left. At the tiny hamlet of Duglha you reach a jumble of rocks which mark the terminal moraine at the base of the Khumbu glacier. You ascend steeply up this moraine to reach the top where there are many memorial cairns to those who have died on Everest. The landscape is now wild and rocky and there is a real feeling of being high in the mountains.

Following the stream (often frozen) at one side of the moraine you soon reach the cluster of houses at Lobuche. This rather bleak spot was once a yak grazing settlement and was then inhabited only during the summer months, but now it is open throughout the winter serving trekkers and climbers and is the jumping off point for Everest Base Camp and Kala Pattar. Sunset over Nuptse is particularly spectacular from here. It is worth walking over to the moraine to view the moraine covered glacier behind it.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 18: Trek to Everest Base Camp, 5,300m/17,388ft, return to Gorak Shep, 5,165m/16,945ft. 6-7 hours.

This is the big day for the trek to Base Camp. An early start is essential to get there before any cloud comes down and it will probably be very cold when you set off. Make sure to have something for breakfast even if you don't feel like it as you will need the energy. You are at high altitude, so take some snacks to keep you going along the way and be sure to have your water bottle filled when you set off.

Leaving Lobuche you head northeast, along the side of the Khumbu Glacier through jumbled moraine and shattered rock. There is almost no vegetation here. Even so, small convoys of the delightful Tibetan Snow Cock can often be seen along the way or heard calling from the hillsides. You make several energetic ups and downs across the moraine and descend to Gorak Shep where it is worth having a reviving cup of tea and a snack.

From Gorak Shep it is still a long, fairly arduous trek to base camp, initially following the top of the moraine and then descending onto the boulder-strewn glacier. In the climbing season you may follow mountaineering groups, or yaks carrying supplies, but at other times there are just a series of small cairns to mark the route. After a couple of hours you reach the base camp area from where, although you do not have views of the actual summit of Everest, there are sensational close-up views of the terrifying Khumbu ice-fall and the surrounding scenery of ice seracs and tumbled rocks. At this altitude the return to Gorak Shep will feel like quite a long way and will use up your remaining reserves of energy.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 19: Ascend Kala Pattar, 5,545m/18,192ft, trek down to Pangboche 3,985m/13,074 - 7 hours.

At Gorak Shep you will be ideally placed for an ascent of Kala Pattar in the clear of the morning before cloud comes in to obscure the summit of Everest. Although not far this is a tough ascent of approximately 2-3 hours until you finally reach the rocky summit of Kala Pattar at 5,545m - quite literally the high-point of your trek. From the summit of Kala Pattar there are great views of the summit of Everest as well as other Himalayan giants - Pumori, the Tibetan peak Changtse, Nuptse, Lhotse and countless other needles and snow fluted ridges. You can also look down on the Khumbu Glacier where base camp is located during the climbing season in late spring.

You will then descend to Gorak Shep and take the trail back down to Lobuche. From Lobuche you follow the path down as far as Dughla and then instead of taking the trail over to the left to Dingboche you descend to the flat valley bottom and it then quite a short distance on the flat to reach Pheriche. From Pheriche you further retrace your way down the valley to reach the village of Pangboche.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 20: Trek to Namche - 6-7 hours.

From Pangboche you descend to cross a suspension bridge and then climb through woods to reach Thyangboche. You then descend all the way to Phunki Tenga to cross the river and climb up past the villages of Tashinga and Kangzhuma. If you are feeling energetic you could take a side trip here to visit the villages of Khumjung and Khunde if you have not already visited, otherwise you take the wonderful high trail which roller coasters round the hillside high above the Dudh Kosi River. Again you have fabulous views of the mountains across the valley - principally Thamserkhu and Kang Taiga. You descend into Namche to spend the night.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 21: Trek to Lukla. 4-5 hours.

good opportunity to shed a layer or two. You descend to the valley of the Dudh Kosi and continue for a short way past the checkpoint at Jorsale and then continue down the valley towards Lukla, your anticipation of hot showers and beers tempered by the realisation that you are coming to the end of your Everest adventure and leaving this magical region. You retrace your earlier route as far as Phakding and on to Chablung, before you turn off left, above the village of Chaunrikharka, to take the trail towards Lukla. You need to keep something in the tank for this final, long uphill climb to reach Lukla - it's a bit of a sting in the tail! As you approach Lukla houses and hotels proliferate and after your long trek Lukla will seem like quite a metropolis. On arrival you can finally relax and enjoy a celebratory beer.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 22: Fly to Kathmandu. Transfer to hotel.

You fly back to Kathmandu by scheduled flight. Sometimes these flights are delayed by bad weather; Nepalese pilots say they don't fly in cloud because their clouds have big rocks in them! Though in recent years these delays are much less frequent than they used to be. Flights out of Lukla can be delayed due to either fog in Kathmandu or wind or cloud on passes on the way to Lukla; These delays can be very frustrating and if you are delayed we ask that you be patient. Please be reassured that our staff in Lukla and in Kathmandu will be doing everything possible to ensure you fly out and to minimise any inconvenience if delays happen. Your final day of leisure in Kathmandu does of course provide a valuable 'cushion' against missing your flight home to the UK should the Lukla flight be delayed.

Overnight: Shangri La Hotel, Kathmandu (Meals: B)

Day 23: Half day sightseeing in Kathmandu and at leisure until your transfer to the airport for your flight home.

In the morning there is a half-day guided sightseeing tour. You will visit Boudhanath Stupa, then Kathmandu Durbar Square with its many temples and palaces. You will end your tour in Kathmandu's busy main bazaar, Thamel, the ideal opportunity to pick up a souvenir before you head home.

Later in the afternoon there will be a group transfer to the airport for your overnight flight back to London.

Overnight: In flight (Meals: B)

Day 24: Arrive UK.

Our grading system

The Long Trek to Everest is graded as a strenuous trekking holiday, as described below.

Strenuous
Our strenuous trekking holidays can involve anything from 10 to 30 days on trek and are often in remote areas, far from 'civilisation'. Rest days are interspersed but there may be up to 7 consecutive days of hard walking. Most treks reach altitudes of at least 4,900m/16,000ft and there will be a great deal of ascent and descent. The majority of our strenuous treks utilise camping, tea house or mountain lodge accommodation.

These holidays are suitable for fit individuals who have regular experience of mountain walking.

Trip altitude

Important - please be aware that this trip involves travel at altitude. Whilst all our itineraries are carefully designed to optimise acclimatisation to high altitudes, participants on this trip are likely to experience some symptoms of being at altitude. The Dossier pack we provide when you book your holiday includes comprehensive advice on safe travel at altitude. If you require further information or advice on travel at altitude prior to booking please contact the office to speak to an experienced member of our team. Alternatively we recommend www.medex.org.uk as a good source of information.

What the price includes

Mountain Kingdoms aims to offer the best value for money. We do not charge extra for meal packages or apply local charges and try to ensure that all the key elements of your holiday are included.

What's included:

- ✓ An English-speaking Sherpa leader
- ✓ Economy class return air fares from the UK & UK Departure Tax (flight inclusive bookings)
- ✓ Single, timed, group airport transfers for international flights on arrival and departure
- ✓ All road transport by private vehicles
- ✓ Domestic flight Lukla to Kathmandu and airport transfers
- ✓ Sightseeing where specified
- ✓ Good standard hotel accommodation (4 star) in Kathmandu on twin share bed and breakfast basis
- ✓ Most meals - All meals on trek plus tea and coffee
- ✓ An evening fill up of your water bottle with drinking water and morning 'bed tea' on trek
- ✓ Trek staff and porterage of your kit bag
- ✓ Free use of a good quality down jacket, down sleeping bag and fleece liner (supplied in-country)
- ✓ Oxygen (to be administered by the trek guide in the rare case of a medical emergency)
- ✓ Sherpas/porters properly insured
- ✓ Park fees
- ✓ Carbon offsetting with the Ecoan Tree Planting Project (for clients taking our flight inclusive option)
- ✓ A free Mountain Kingdoms kitbag.
- ✓ Option to join one of our pre trip meets in the Cotswolds

Airport transfers

The cost of a transfer to/from the airport is included in the price of your holiday. This is a single group transfer which is arranged to coincide with the timings of the group flights. If you book your own flights which arrive/depart at different times to this, or we book flights at your request that have different timings, we will be happy to provide a quote for a separate transfer. Please contact us should you require any further information.

What's not included:

- × Travel insurance
- × Visa fees
- × Lunch and evening meals in Kathmandu
- × Optional trips
- × Airport departure taxes (if applicable), excepting UK Departure Tax
- × Tipping

Water-to-Go Reusable Bottle Campaign

We have joined the campaign to help cut down on the use of plastics and, in particular, single-use water bottles. To do this we have teamed up with the revolutionary company, Water-to-Go who have developed a multi-use drinking bottle with a reusable filter that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants. This makes water from virtually any source safe to drink and significantly reduces the need for travellers to buy bottles of water wherever they are in the world.

Our clients who are not given a free Mountain Kingdoms kit bag for their holiday (these are required for certain treks), will instead receive a free Mountain Kingdoms Water-to-Go bottle. These unique Water-to-Go bottles can also be purchased from us at a discounted rate. For further information about our campaign visit For further information about our campaign visit https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign.

Your accommodation

Shangri La Hotel, Kathmandu

The Shangri La Hotel is a 4* hotel of character, just a stone's throw from the British Embassy and only a 20 minute walk or short taxi ride into the popular tourist area of Thamel. The hotel has a swimming pool, a lovely, landscaped garden, and a choice of restaurants and bars. Recent entertainment additions include a casino and fitness centre.

Tea Houses

In Dingboche, Lobuche, Gorak Shep and Pheriche you will stay in tea houses. These are more basic than the 'luxury lodges' although they still have twin-bedded rooms and plentiful good food. Sleeping bags will be provided for these nights.

For various reasons, it is not possible to guarantee single rooms in tea houses. If you are travelling without a companion and would like a single this may sometimes be possible upon payment of a small supplement on the spot (usually around $10). Alternatively, if the tea house has an odd number of guests on the night you may be lucky and find yourself in a room on your own. However it is more likely you will share with someone (of the same sex obviously). This would most likely be someone within your group but when the tea houses are busy, it could even be someone else. Be prepared for this! We do however offer the option of a single room in your hotel in Kathmandu for a supplement.

Meal arrangements

B&B in Kathmandu. All meals on trek. Most meals are included: 21 breakfasts, 19 lunches, 19 dinners.

Flight arrangements

Flight inclusive from price

Our 'Flight inclusive from' price is based on the best fare available at the time of printing. As airfares change on a constant basis, this should be used only as a guide price. Rest assured that, at the time of booking, we will endeavour to get the best possible price for the flights you need. Remember, the earlier you book the greater your chances of securing the best fare.

Flight inclusive packages booked through Mountain Kingdoms are protected through our ATOL bonding scheme.

Flight upgrades and regional Airports

Please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 for flight options from regional UK airports, Business Class upgrades, alternative airlines and stopovers. Please also check our website for the most up to date flight inclusive 'from' prices.

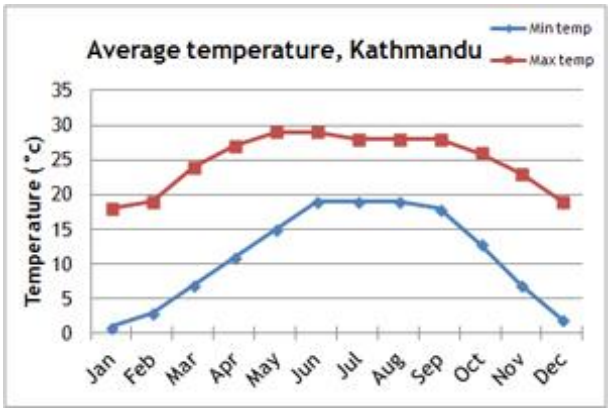
Further information

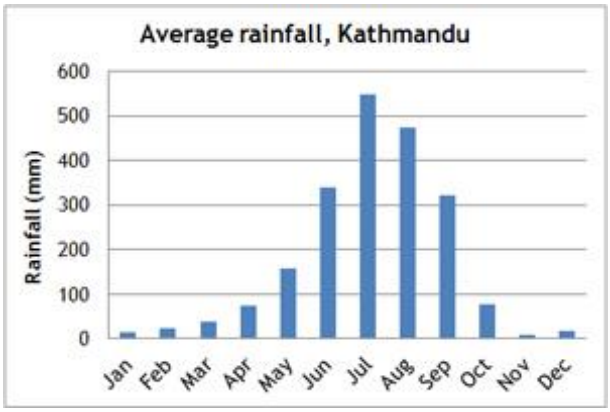
When we receive your booking, we send you a full Trip Dossier which contains details of any visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. If you do have queries at this initial stage do call us on 01453 844400 and we will be pleased to offer advice.

The nature of adventure travel

Every effort will be made to keep to this itinerary but we cannot guarantee that things may not change, either before you travel or while you are away. By its very nature, adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected, particularly in more remote areas. A variety of factors such as adverse weather conditions, changes to local schedules and difficulties with transportation can all contribute to the need to make changes to the itinerary, often at the very last minute. Our Operations Manager and your Trip Leader will make every effort to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary and minimise the impact of any changes, but an easy-going and flexible nature is a real asset! Please note that all timings and distances given are approximate.

Climate information





Extensions

Extending your holiday

If you would like additional inspiration on how or where to extend your holiday please call us on 01453 844400. Alternatively, you can download a range of extension information sheets on our website, at www.mountainkingdoms.com.

Alternative to taking the domestic flight out of Lukla

Our standard itinerary returns to Lukla and takes the flight back to Kathmandu from there, but if you prefer not to take this domestic flight, it is possible to trek out instead. You will leave the group near Lukla and trek for two further days plus a day driving back to Kathmandu. You would then fly home the following day. If you are interested in this option, please speak to our office about it prior to making your booking.

Extra nights in Nepal

If you would like to extend your stay in Nepal, you can add extra nights at your group tour accommodation or choose from our range of distinctive properties in Pokhara and the Kathmandu area. We can offer luxury resorts, heritage hotels, tranquil lodges and characterful cottages. Our selection includes Dwarika's hotel in Kathmandu and its sister property - Dwarika's Resort at Dhulikhel, Pavilions Himalaya at Pokhara, Tiger Mountain Pokhara Lodge and Shivapuri Heights Cottage. Individual extension leaflets for all these options can be downloaded from our website or requested from our office.

Kathmandu Valley sightseeing excursions

We can arrange half day or full day sightseeing tours taking you to the key cultural attractions of central Kathmandu or the Kathmandu Valley including the World Heritage Sites of Bhaktapur and Patan. Your tour will be led by an English-speaking guide and you will have a private vehicle and driver.

Wildlife extensions in Nepal - Chitwan, Bardia & Koshi Tappu

Visit Chitwan or Bardia National Parks home to a rich variety of birds and animals including elephant, rhinos, leopard and Bengal tiger. Stay in a comfortable lodge and enjoy a range of wildlife viewing activities. Alternatively visit the renowned Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve -one of the finest birdwatching and wildlife areas in all Asia.

Lumbini

Enjoy a three day extension to the birthplace of Buddha, one of the most important Buddhist pilgrimage sites in the world. Take the short flight from Kathmandu, and spend two nights in a comfortable 3* hotel, just steps from the Lumbini temple complex, with a full day to explore the fascinating UNESCO World Heritage Site in the company of your expert local guide.

Why book this holiday with Mountain Kingdoms?

- Our carefully designed route offers a more leisurely approach to Everest, trekking part of the original expedition trail to Everest, and offering the best possible acclimatisation.
- Fabulous mountain panorama from Pikey Peak and Kala Pattar.
- Our route takes you to beautiful Sherpa villages which are little visited nowadays.
- Our Sherpa leaders are second to none! Many are Everest Summiteers themselves.
- Your gear will be portered for you so all you need to carry is a small daypack
- We carry oxygen on this trip which our guide will administer in the rare event of someone suffering the severe effects of high altitude mountain sickness
- The option of walking out from Lukla at the end if you do not wish to take the domestic flight.
- Our maximum group size is 12 for this trip. This provides for a genuine small group travel experience and helps reduce the negative aspects often associated with larger trekking groups.
- Our office team have extensive experience of travel throughout the Himalaya and especially Nepal. We would be glad to talk to you about the detail of either this trip or any of the other tempting tours and treks we offer in this part of the world.
- We offer a flexible service and can extend your holiday with extra hotel nights, upgrades and other exciting activities.
- As part of our commitment to 'Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency', we will be carbon-offsetting all international flights booked through us by donating funds to the Ecoan Tree Planting Project in Peru.
- We are an IATA accredited agent and work directly with some of the world's major airlines. If you wish to fly with a specific airline, from a regional UK airport or on alternative dates to the main group we would be happy to arrange this for you. Please contact our Flights Manager, April, for flight options, quotes and further information.

If we've tempted you to take your next holiday with us, we advise you to check availability and you can do this via our website: www.mountainkingdoms.com or by calling the team on +44 (0)1453 844400. Bookings can be made online, by phone or by completing a booking form and returning it to us. We can also provisionally hold places if you need time to consider your options.

Mountain Kingdoms – distinctly different

Truly independent

In an age where many so-called 'independent' travel companies have in fact been bought out by multi-national giants, we remain fiercely independent with all the benefits this offers our clients.

Value for money prices with an emphasis on quality

We are not in the business of cutting our itineraries and services to the bone to offer eye-catching cheap prices. We use some of the best airlines, and typically 3 or 4 star hotels in cities. We include the majority of meals and private transport for road travel. We use excellent equipment and appoint well-trained staff and leaders. Last year, over 98% of our clients rated their Mountain Kingdoms holiday as 'excellent' or 'good'. We are members of AITO and bound by their quality charter.

Complete financial security

You can book with us confident that your holiday has full financial protection. Flight inclusive holidays are financially protected by the Civil Aviation Authority under ATOL licence number 2973 and 'Land Only' holidays are covered by a bond secured with ABTOT.

No Surcharge Guarantee

Your peace of mind is important to us so we have a No Surcharge Guarantee on all Land Only and Flight Inclusive bookings. This means that there will be no change to the price of your holiday once we have confirmed your booking, regardless of fluctuations in exchange rates or fuel prices.

Award winning Responsible Tourism

We feel strongly that all our holidays should benefit local communities, protect the environment and respect local traditions, religion and heritage. You can read more about the charities we support and our Responsible Tourism commitments and initiatives on the following page or at www.mountainkingdoms.com.

Genuine small group travel

Almost all of our holidays have a maximum group size of just 12, plus leader. This provides more contact with your leader, readier access to off-the-beaten-path areas, greater interaction with local communities and a reduced environmental impact.

Loyalty Discount

If you have previously travelled with us we recognise your loyalty with a discount on future trips.

Booking your holiday – it couldn't be easier

Once you've chosen your Mountain Kingdoms holiday you can book online, call the office or complete and post a booking form which can be found in our brochure or downloaded from our website. If you would like to a hold a place on one of our trips, whilst you make up your mind, please give us a call to make a provisional booking. This is a no-obligation, no-cost booking and we will hold your place until space comes under pressure or we need your decision.

Comprehensive information

When we receive your booking we send you a full trip dossier which contains details of visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. In fact, everything you need to know to give you peace of mind and allow you to prepare for your trip of a lifetime.

RESPONSIBLE TOURISM STATEMENT
CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLAN

TOURISM DECLARES CLIMATE EMERGENCY

For over 33 years, Mountain Kingdoms has been offering people the chance to visit amazing places on this extraordinary planet. We now offer trips to all corners of the world, but we are conscious that inevitably our holidays have a detrimental impact on the world around us, and we want to do all we can to reduce our carbon emissions. We are a signatory to Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency, along with a growing number of like-minded, reputable tour operators. For more information, please visit www.tourismdeclares.com

From 2020 onwards, we will be focusing on how we can reduce the carbon emissions that our holidays produce, and how to counterbalance this carbon by supporting carbon offset measures. Here are some of our current and future plans to minimise the impact of our business as a whole:

Carbon Offsetting

Already doing:

- ✓ We have been offsetting carbon since 2007, but will be increasing our donations to the **Ecoan tree planting project** in Peru this year. This is with a trusted partner where the funds go directly to a project where the community plants trees on its own land.

Will do:

- ✓ We are working on making our carbon offsetting more accurate and targeted.
- ✓ In future, we will add to that a further estimate for carbon produced by hotels, local road travel, trains and internal flights to arrive at a carbon offset sum for each trip we operate.
- ✓ Carbon offsetting will be included in our holiday prices. For our Flight Inclusive holidays it will include the international flight and any emissions produced by inland travel and accommodation. Our Land Only prices will include the cost of offsetting emissions caused by inland travel and accommodation.

Reducing Carbon Emissions

Already doing:

- ✓ We already offer the majority of our customers a free filtered water bottle which means they can instantly cut down on their single-use plastic consumption. This will be an ongoing project.
- ✓ We already predominantly use locally owned hotels, but will continue to ensure that, where possible, we use these rather than multinational chains.
- ✓ We have joined the Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency initiative to stand alongside like-minded travel companies, to work together to initiate best practices to make tourism as sustainable as possible.

Will do:

- ✓ We will re-evaluate our flights to make sure we are using the most fuel efficient airlines with the youngest fleets and, where possible, direct flights for each trip.
- ✓ We will stop offering unnecessary optional flights – for example our Everest sightseeing trip.
- ✓ We will eliminate unnecessary staff flights wherever possible.
- ✓ We will look at minimising internal flights.
- ✓ We will be asking all our worldwide agents and suppliers to look at their own carbon footprint and encourage them to reduce it.
- ✓ We will promote our more low impact trips to give customers an informed choice.

As part of our wider commitment to Responsible Tourism, we will continue to support a number of charities with whom we have had a long standing relationship over many years. These include: Shiva Charity in Nepal (Ginette Harrison School), Simien Mountains Mobile Medical Service and Porter Welfare, as well as setting aside a sum for emergency disaster relief should the need arise.