Everest Medical Expedition II 2017

This time it's personal

Nepal - April 12 - May 1, 2017
Introduction

In 2015 I was the team leader of the Everest Medical Expedition 2015. Five minutes after landing in Nepal, a giant earthquake rocked the Khumbu region killing thousands. On that day I vowed to return to finish what we started. Please join me for an unforgettable life changing expedition to Everest Base Camp. On the way we will staff a general medicine clinic in a very remote village where many of the porters come from. While no technical mountaineering experience is required for this trip, it is extremely strenuous and requires a good fitness level and a tolerance of trekking up to 8 hours in one day. The reward is all around having ample opportunities to gaze upon some of our planet’s most impressive scenery. I have done this trek three times before and I promise you the trip of a lifetime. I personally know Binoy, the head guide, and I trust him with my life.

Itinerary

Everest Medical Expedition II 2017

US participants will leave on Wednesday night (12th April)
Day 1 (14th Apr). In Kathmandu (4396 ft.)
Arrive Kathmandu. Your group leader or the office representative from Mystic Himalaya Trekking will meet you at the airport and will transfer you to your hotel. Remainder of the afternoon is at leisure or if you want to do shopping and explore Thamel on your own you can do that on this day. In the evening group meeting is organized. Your trip leader will distribute sleeping bags and down jackets. After you have received your equipment, dinner is planned in one of the traditional Nepali restaurants where you will enjoy the local food along with traditional Nepali dancing. Overnight in Kathmandu.
Day 2 (15th Apr) In Kathmandu (4396 ft.)

Morning starts with a half day sightseeing tour around Kathmandu Valley. We shall be back to the hotel by noon. Afternoon is at leisure which gives you ample of time to wonder around Thamel or do some last minute shopping if you are interested. Evening is planned for the trek briefing. Overnight in Kathmandu.

Day 3 (16th Apr) Fly to Phaplu (7918 ft) and drive to Deusa (6560 ft)

We take an early morning flight from Kathmandu to Phaplu. The flight duration is only 30 minutes. After getting off at Phaplu we stop for a cup of tea in this beautiful location and then hike about 30 minutes to the nearby town called Salleri. From Salleri we drive to Deusa village. The driving is about 2 hours on a rough road but the view is very scenic. After lunch medical camp starts till 5 pm. Overnight at Deusa.

Day 4 (17th Apr) Full day medical camp at Deusa (6560 ft)

Today our medical camp starts from the morning till late afternoon. You will have time for tea/coffee breaks and lunch break. In the late afternoon we will depart for Phaplu for an early flight to Lukla. Overnight at Phaplu.

Day 5 (18th Apr) Fly to Lukla (9383 ft.) and trek to Monjo (9301 ft.) (Top notch lodge)

After breakfast we take a very short flight to Lukla. We normally use small airplanes but due to weather and irregular flights there could be opportunities to use a helicopter. This would garner additional costs to the group. As we land we become struck by the scale of huge peaks that surround the village which is only a taste of what is to come. We will have time to explore the village while the Sherpa crew sort and load your duffle bags. To assist with acclimatization, we allow two days for the walk up to Namche Bazaar. We will walk 6 to 7 hours today. Overnight at Monjo.

Day 6 (19th Apr) Monjo to Namche (11286 ft.) (Top notch lodge)

We follow the forested trail north up the DudhKosi valley to Jorsale, where we officially enter Sagarmatha (Mount Everest) National Park, established in 1976 as the first national park in the Himalaya to help protect an area of great environmental, religious, and cultural importance. (Sagarmatha National Park is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site.) We continue along the trail, crossing the DudhKosi and begin the steep climb up “Namche Hill,” amidst lovely forests of rhododendron, fir, and magnolia, to the Sherpa market town of Namche Bazaar. As we climb the steep hillside, we catch our first glimpse of Everest and the snowcapped panorama of Himalayan giants to come. Namche Bazaar is the unofficial capital of the Khumbu, the local center for trading and supplies. The town, filled with numerous
homes, trekker's inns, shops, and a small monastery, is beautifully situated in a terraced amphitheater facing the hanging glacier below Kwangde. We’ll check in to our lodge and have the afternoon free to explore Namche Bazaar. This is also a great place to pick up odds and ends you may have forgotten in Kathmandu. Overnight at Namche.

Day 7 (20th Apr) Namche (11286 ft.) (Top notch lodge)

We will spend a day in Namche Bazaar resting and allowing our bodies to become acclimatized to the altitude of 11,286 ft. Namche is a colorful village with many wonderful and interesting shops and vendors, fabulous food, and stunning views of the surrounding mountains. An early hike above town, before the clouds move in, will reward climbers with a spectacular Himalayan sunrise and views of Mt. Everest, Lhotse (the 4th highest peak in the world), and the beautiful Ama Dablam. On the way down, we can visit the Sherpa Museum that houses an exhibit on traditional Sherpa lifestyle and a fabulous photography display by a local Nepalese naturalist. One room highlights the Sherpa traditions and in another, Sherpa high altitude climbers are presented.

Day 8 (21st Apr) Trek to Debuche (12467 ft.) via Thyangboche (12687 ft.) (Standard local lodge)

We descend into the deep DudhKosi Gorge – one of the most beautiful valley walks on earth and to a fir forest where we begin to climb steeply to the site of the famous Tengboche Monastery. Destroyed by a fire in early 1989, the monastery has been completely rebuilt. Tengboche monastery is the spiritual center of the Khumbu and a training center for new monks. The Rimpoche of Thyangboche resides here and the area is considered holy and nothing may be hunted or killed. Expeditions to the world’s tallest peaks have traditionally stopped here to receive the blessing of the high lama. We will have time to visit the monastery and get the blessing from one of the high monks. Our descent from Thyangboche is only half an hour down to this beautiful village named Debuche for lunch and overnight stay at the same place. For those who are interested in visiting the Buddhist nunnery then it is close by. Overnight at Debuche.

Day 9 (22nd Apr) Debuche to Pheriche (14340 ft.) (Standard local lodge)

Today we head down to cross the ImjaKhola (River) on a nice metal bridge. The picture of AmaDablam from this bridge is just fantastic. From here we continue our trek to Pangboche. The hike along the ImjaKhola is very scenic. Arriving at the top of the ridge, AmaDablam and the great massif of Mount Everest hovers majestically above us. The spirituality and scenic value of the site never fails to impress. We stop for lunch at Orsho which is located on a beautiful pasture land and provides a spectacular view of Mount
Amadablam. After lunch we ascend gradually, high above the ImjaKhola, contouring up the valley side, we will cross the Khumbu river and turn up the Khumbu Valley to reach the picturesque village of Pheriche. Overnight at Pheriche.

Day 10 (23rd Apr) Rest day at Pheriche (14340 ft.) (Standard local lodge)

In accordance with our program of careful acclimatization, we spend a rest day at Pheriche. Your leader will advise on optional activities today. There is the option of taking a light acclimatization hike up the valley for a wider variety of photos of the valley and mountains of the Khumbu region. Or just relax around the lodge compound and write in your journal. There may be opportunities to visit the Pheriche hospital. Overnight at Pheriche.

Day 11 (24th Apr) Pheriche to Lobuche (16207 ft.) (Standard local lodge)

As we gain altitude, it is important to move at a slow, steady pace. From Pheriche the trail traverses through meadows before continuing along the lateral moraine of the Khumbu Glacier. Views of peaks, such as Amadablam, Cholatse, Tabuche and Lobuche will stay with us all along the trail in this contrasting and spectacular landscape. We eventually reach Thugla situated below the Khumbu Glacier. The trail from Thugla starts steeply to climb up to the top of the moraines. On the crest of the ridge, you pass a line of memorial cairns, built in memory of the Sherpas and climbers who have died on various Everest expeditions over the last 50 years. From here the view is spectacular, Pumori, Lingtren, Khumbutse and Lobuche are seen. After a few hours the track eventually leads to a small cluster of tea houses pleasantly situated at the foot of Lobuche Peak. Overnight at Lobuche.

Day 12 (25th Apr) Lobuche to Gorekshep (16942 ft.) (Standard local lodge)

About 3 hours of walk along the boulder fields and glacier debris to the edge of the Khumbu Glacier then continue up to Gorekshep nestled under the snow covered summit of Pumori and the sheer west face of Nuptse. Sunsets here can be stunning. The afternoon can be spent exploring or gazing at the peaks with the option of visiting Everest Base Camp if the weather is good and we are feeling fine. The trail to Base Camp contours along the valley side, the trail leads on to the moraine of the Khumbu Glacier and becomes quite vague, weaving between mounds of rubble. Keep an eye on your Sherpa guides and fellow trekkers on this section. The trek to the base camp can be achieved in around 5 hours, back and forth. For those visiting base camp in the spring, it is a chance to meet teams making an ascent of the mountain. From Base Camp we do not get views of Everest but we will be able to see the notorious Khumbu Ice Fall that flows from the Western Cwm, which is regarded as
technically the hardest and most dangerous section of the mountain. We get back to Gorekshep for a cup of tea. Overnight at Gorekshep.

Day 13 (26th Apr) Kalapathar(18,200 ft.) to Lobuche (16207 ft.) (Standard local lodge)

An early start is made to avoid the crowds that can converge on Kalapathar at some times of the year and to get the clearest views of Everest and the surrounding mountains. Kalapathar is the rocky hilltop below Pumori; it is a tough walk but the view from the top surpasses the wildest imagination. It will probably take a minimum of an hour and a half to reach the summit from Gorakshep, although lower viewpoints will provide views almost as good. All around are the giants of the mountain world, Everest, Pumori, Changtse, Nuptse and Lhotse. The Khumbu icefall can easily be seen and even the tents at Everest Base Camp can be picked out. After returning to Gorekshep, we will have a final last look at Kalapathar and the surrounding mountains before we descend to Lobuche for lunch. After lunch we retrace our trail back to Pheriche. Over night at Pheriche.

Day 14 (27th Apr) Pheriche to Namche (12467 ft.) (Standard local lodge)

Our path is along the old valley floor through the village of Pheriche. From Pheriche we cross the Khumbu Khola. We then descend to the small settlements at Orsho and Shomare. A little bit further down we get to Pangboche which is one of the major permanent villages in the Khumbu region. We follow the course of Imja Khola and cross the metal bridge and very soon we get to Debuche where we stop for lunch. From Debuche it is just 30 minutes of climbing through birch, silver fir and rhododendron forest to the ridge where Thyangboche monastery is located. We spend time taking pictures at the monastery with Everest and Amadablam in the background before descending through forest to the bridge over the DudhKoshi at PhunkiTanga where there are water driven prayer wheels. We then climb and contour around the hillside to Sanasa. From Sanasa our trail contours around the Shyangboche hill and finally gets to the thriving Namche village. If you wish you can celebrate with a glass of beer in one of the pubs here. Overnight at Namche.

Day 15 (28th Apr) Trek to Lukla (9383 ft.) (Top notch lodge)

From Namche our trail descends all the way down to the valley bottom where we cross the high suspension bridge on Dudh Kosi River. This is a lovely day’s walk, the descent is easy and relaxing with the hard work behind us and our return journey provides different views of mountains and villages that we passed on our ascent. We follow the Dudh Kosi River and get to Phakding where we stop for lunch. After lunch it is 2 and a half hrs to Lukla. In the evening you can enjoy a hot shower and soon after a farewell dinner with some celebratory drinks with our Sherpa friends and crew. Overnight at Lukla.
Day 16 (29th Apr) Fly to Kathmandu (4396 ft.)

We rise early in the morning to be ready for the arrival of your aircraft for the flight back to Kathmandu. Again, these flights are at risk of cancellation due to weather in the area. After we arrive back in Kathmandu we check in to our hotel. Overnight in Kathmandu.

Day 17 (30th Apr) Departure

Morning and afternoon at leisure. This is your chance to do some last minute shopping in the Thamel area of Kathmandu. There are some amazing specialty items to consider including beautiful pashminas or the famed Ghurkha knife. Since this is your last day in Nepal you do not want to over exert yourself. We will transfer you to the airport in the evening.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

• Expert leadership (Local Group Leader)
• Sherpas to assist you on the trek
• Porters to carry your luggage on the trek
• Accommodation in Kathmandu on bed and breakfast basis (two people sharing unless single supplement has been requested)
• Medical Camp arrangement that includes organization, food and accommodations.
• Trek Map
• While on the trek all the accommodation and food in local lodges are provided (two people sharing unless single supplement has been paid)
• Hot shower facilities in all our top notch lodges
• Electric blankets when available otherwise hot water bag is provided to you every night to keep you warm
• Mystic Himalaya Trekking provides you a down sleeping bag and down jacket and inner liner
• Portable Altitude Chamber (a life saving device in altitude)
• National Park entrance fees
• Duffle bag as a souvenir
• Welcome dinner in a traditional Nepali restaurant
• Group medical kit
• Airport transfers
• Sightseeing tour to Boudhanath Stupa
• Sightseeing tour entrance fees
• Kathmandu to Lukla to Kathmandu flights. Additional costs may be necessary if we need to take a helicopter
  • All transportations required in the itinerary
  • All staff Insurance
  • Warm clothing and other required trekking gear for porters like Gortex jacket & trousers, trekking shoes / boots, sleeping bag / blanket, woolen hat, woolen gloves, woolen socks, sun glasses etc.

WHAT’S NOT INCLUDED

• Your international flights
• Visa fees and visa extension costs
• Medical examination (if required) and vaccination costs
• Personal expenditure, bar bills, laundry, and telephone calls etc.
• Tipping at the end of the trip for the trekking staff. You should budget around US$ 100. You group leader will advise you more on this
  • Lunch and evening meals in Kathmandu
  • Personal clothing and equipment
  • Travel insurance
  • Optional trips
  • Charges incurred as a result of flight delays or cancellation which is beyond Alps in Nepal’s control. Although we provide insurance letter which you can claim to your insurance company.
  • Anything not mentioned in the trip cost includes list