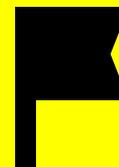


EVEREST BASE CAMP TREKS | 2019



BEN'S WELCOME

Welcome to your Best Life Adventure. I'm really excited you're interested in joining us for the adventure-of-a-lifetime to Nepal and and trek to Everest Base Camp at the top of the world.

For generations, the lure of Mt Everest has captivated thousands, from extreme pioneers to everyday adventurers. Boasting the highest point on earth, Mt Everest is certainly justified in her cult-like status and international popularity.

When it comes to a Best Life Adventures, being able to say you've visited the world's highest mountain is just the beginning. Our EBC Trek is so much more than a hike in the Himalayas, with inherent bragging rights and sexy social media content. We'll be climbing deep into the high-altitude heart of Nepal – the Khumbu region – immersing ourselves in raw cultural experiences and encountering a number of spectacular attractions on the way – the least of which will be Mt Everest.

Nepal is a fascinating, deeply spiritual country that's steeped in history, and our journey will take you off the standard tourist trail to understand and appreciate life in this precious part of the world. It will also give you the rare opportunity to disconnect from the digital world and reconnect with nature at its finest. Most importantly, our EBC trek will push you outside of your comfort zone, so you discover what you're truly capable of. As Sir Edmund Hilary once said, "It's not the mountain we conquer, it's ourselves."

For all of these reasons I've mentioned, your journey to Everest Base Camp will be a life-changing experience – one I hope kick-starts a life of bigger and bolder adventures!



TREK MANAGEMENT

My priority is to lead a safe expedition, which still embodies a sense of adventure and provides an appropriate level of mental and physical challenge. It is also my mission to nurture a supportive comradeship between my trekkers, as well as a memorable connection with local Sherpas and villagers.

Over the course of our journey, we'll walk alongside some incredible Sherpas who have been part of the trekking and climbing community for years. I worked with our lead guide, Lakpa Sherpa, for three months in 2016, when we were filming the TV series *Everest Air*. Lakpa is a wonderful human being, who speaks fluent English and Mandarin and has summited Everest five times and K2 twice. He'll be with us throughout the trek and is our man-on-the-ground, responsible for booking flights and accommodation and offering extensive mountain first aid training. His favourite drink is Yak milk.

I have also arranged porters/yaks to carry the bulk of our luggage throughout the trek. You will only need to carry a daypack with basic items such as water, a camera, a change of clothes and any medication you need. My team can source rental equipment (e.g. sleeping bag or down jacket). Get in touch with me if you'd like to rent gear, so we can get it ready for your arrival in Nepal.

When it comes to the trek itself, your safety is paramount. Getting everyone up to EBC *and* back is our goal and we'll be assessing everyone's health, fitness and blood/oxygen levels as we go. If you feel unwell at any time (e.g. stomach problems, nausea or headaches), report this to a guide or me immediately. It's much easier to treat things early on rather than deal with a more serious complication later that may require emergency evacuation. Remember, the higher you are, the less oxygen there is to help the healing process.



If the Best Life Adventures team or Pioneer Adventures deem you to be too unwell to continue on and keep up with the group at any stage of the trek, we will make arrangements for you to be evacuated back down to Lukla using the most suitable transport – your own two feet, donkey, horse or helicopter. Descending is the only real cure for Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS). If we tell you to descend, our decision is final.

ITINERARY INTRODUCTION

Over recent years the trek to EBC has become increasingly popular as the condition of both the trail and the lodges improve. Bar a few recent improvements, we will be trekking along the same trail Hillary and Tenzing took more than 60 years ago. While the lodges provide basic accommodation they have come a long way in recent times with big improvements in the area of twin share private rooms, food preparation, toilets and general hygiene.

The trek passes deep into Sherpa country past cultivated fields hundreds of years old, small villages, Buddhist Monasteries, the Sherpa capital of Namche Bazaar, and of course some of the world's highest mountains. Above Namche the tree line disappears and the stark but spectacular scenery of the Himalaya continues all the way to Base Camp at 5365m.

The trek is not technically difficult. It is on a well-marked and maintained trail with the real challenge being how you handle the altitude and acclimatise. If this trek was at sea level it could be done in three long days but at altitude it will take 11 days, with nine days for walking and two days for acclimatisation. A normal day trekking will require 2.5 to 3 hours of walking in the morning and the same in the afternoon.

The trek reaches a high point of 5600m at Kala Pattar, a small peak offering views of Mt Everest and the Khumbu Icefall. Ironically, the views from base camp are relatively unimpressive (in the words of mountain writer Ed Douglas, 'Everest is like a grossly fat man in a room full of beautiful women'). Far more stirring are the graceful lines of surrounding peaks, such as Ama Dablam, Pumori and Nuptse, which we will catch a glimpse of en route to EBC.

Meeting point: Our start and end meeting point in Kathmandu is Hotel Tibet. If you're arriving in the city a day or more before the rest of the group, or want to hang around for a few days after, book through me to get the best prices.

Flights: As soon as you know your flight details into Kathmandu, please forward me your itinerary complete with the full names of any other people you are travelling with.

We will have a taxi and guide waiting for you at the airport to take you directly to the hotel. There will also be a taxi to take you back to the airport at the end of the trip.

We will book all return domestic flights from Kathmandu to Lukla and will add names to these bookings closer to the time. Each trekker has a weight allowance of 15kg on this flight, including hand luggage. You may leave as much as you like safely in Hotel Tibet.

There's the option to take a scenic helicopter flight around the Khumbu Valley and over Everest Base Camp and it really is the experience of a lifetime and costs US\$500, paid for in cash. If you're interested check the box on your expedition dashboard.

QUICK ITINERARY

<p>DAY 1</p> <p>Compulsory group welcome at hotel. Optional Cultural Sightseeing Day (\$USD50 pp).</p>	<p>DAY 2</p> <p>Transfer to Kathmandu Airport. Fly to Lukla (2804m). Trek 9km to Phakding (2610m).</p>	<p>DAY 3</p> <p>Trek 12km to Namche Bazaar (3340m).</p>	<p>DAY 4</p> <p>Rest and acclimatisation in Namche. Excursions to experience Nepali culture plus a short, return acclimatisation walk.</p>	<p>DAY 5</p> <p>Trek 10km Namche to Tengbouche (3860m).</p>
<p>DAY 6</p> <p>Trek 12km from Tengbouche to Dingbuche (4410m).</p>	<p>DAY 7</p> <p>Rest and acclimatisation day in Dingbuche.</p>	<p>DAY 8</p> <p>Trek 12km from Dingbuche to The Pyramid, 1km past Lobuche (5050m).</p>	<p>DAY 9</p> <p>Trek from The Pyramid to Gorek Shep (5170m). Rest, then ascend Kala Pattar for sunset (5545m), overnight in Gorek Shep. Total trek is 11km.</p>	<p>DAY 10</p> <p>Trek to Everest Base Camp (5365m). Take the photos and soak it all in. Trek down to Pheriche (4250m). Total trek is 16km.</p>
<p>DAY 11</p> <p>Trek 12km from Pheriche to Namche (4410m).</p>	<p>DAY 12</p> <p>Trek 21km down to Lukla.</p>	<p>DAY 13</p> <p>Fly from Lukla to Kathmandu. Nepalese Cultural Dinner. Overnight hotel in Kathmandu.</p>	<p>DAY 14</p> <p>Best Life Adventures expedition ends. Flight out of Kathmandu.</p>	<p><i><u>This itinerary is subject to change.</u></i></p>

DETAILED ITINERARY

Here is our standard trekking itinerary (if you opt for any Luxury Add-Ons this last few days of the itinerary will be different), which Lakpa and I have created for you. Our goal is to give you the best possible chance of reaching EBC by following the normal acclimatisation process. This will also give you quality time to soak up the local mountain culture and experience aspects of Nepalese life that even the most intrepid traveller rarely gets to see. During our visit to Nepal we'll throw in a few authentic Nepali cultural experiences to give you a taste of the true Himalayan way of life, and equip you with some new skills to take home with you. This won't be like any other EBC trek – it will be unforgettably unique.

Note: This itinerary is subject to change but will give you a rough idea of what to expect each day



DAY 1

- *Compulsory group welcome at hotel*
- *Optional Cultural Sightseeing Day (\$100 USD pp)*
- *Overnight in hotel in Kathmandu (1350m)*

DAY 2

- *Transfer to Kathmandu Airport*
- *Fly to Lukla (2804m)*
- *Trek to Phakding (2610m)*

If the mountain Gods are with us and the flight is on time you will arrive in Lukla around 7-9am, so you can have breakfast and start walking mostly downhill for your first day. The 9km hike to Phakding should take 3 hours. When you arrive, you can check into your room and spend the afternoon relaxing and acclimatising. Make sure you keep well hydrated; 4 to 5 litres of water a day is essential all the way through the trek.

DAY 3

- *Trek to Namche Bazaar (3340m)*

You get to cross famous suspension bridges, while gradually moving uphill towards the entrance to the Sagarmatha National Park and the Everest Region. Next, you head downhill for a short time before levelling out onto flat ground and mixed terrain. The trail follows the river to the final high suspension bridge before you begin the quad-burning 'Namche Hill', and it can take 2 hours to reach the Sherpa village of Namche Bazaar, where we will be based for two nights at 3340m. Today's trek is around 12km or 5 hours, with plenty of breaks along the way.

DAY 4

- *Acclimatisation day in Namche*
- *Excursions to experience Nepali culture and an acclimatisation walk to Khumjong village and back down again*

DAY 5

- *Trek Namche to Tengbouche (3860m)*

Today we hike towards Tengbouche, at 3860m. After ascending out of Namche, the first 2 hours are relaxed walking, traversing the left hand side of the valley, high above the river below. The trail descends down toward the river for our lunch stop. From here it will take 2 – 3 hours to hike up the long hill to the town of Tengbouche, home to a stunning monastery and coffee shop that sells the best apple crumble. There are 5/6 hours of hiking today, covering 10km.

DAY 6

- *Trek Tengbouche to Dingbouche (4410m)*

From Tengbouche, we travel to Dingbouche, at 4400m. The trail heads up and down hills before crossing the river and then uphill towards Pangbouche for lunch (Pangbouche was one of the villages on the trail that suffered most from the recent earthquakes), which usually takes 2-3 hours. From there it is a gradual uphill trek towards the Imja Valley with views towards Island Peak and an hour later arrives in Dingbouche. The total trekking time will be 5 to 6 hours. The distance will be 12km.

DAY 7

- *Acclimatisation day in Dingbouche*

DAY 8

- *Trek Dingbouche to Lobuche (4910m) and onto [The Pyramid](#)*

From Dingbouche we head to Lobuche, at 4900m. The trail heads back towards the Khumbu valley and becomes a long and slow trek across a beautiful elevated route towards Dugla, where we stop for a while to eat lunch and rest. This usually takes 2 hours and after lunch, from Dugla to Lobuche, will be an additional 3 hours with plenty of rest stops. After stopping at Dugla we have a long up hill section over the Thukla Pass which tops out at the Everest Memorial, before heading on to Lobuche. We've been lucky enough to secure some very unique accommodation at The Pyramid – a high-altitude research station. We will be trekking for 12km over 5 hours today.

DAY 9

- *Trek Lobuche to Gorek Shep (5170m)*
- *Rest, then ascend Kala Pattar for sunset (5545m)*
- *Overnight in Gorek Shep*

Today's trek is very beautiful and unique, crossing loose rock and Glacier moraine. The up and down trail into Gorek Shep takes approximately 3 hours. We have lunch here and rest before hiking up Kala Pattar to see the sunrise/sunset over Everest (weather permitting). This is a difficult 3 hour uphill hike, but well worth it for the amazing views of Everest. We will finish under head torch and stay in Gorek Shep overnight. You'll feel every bit of the altitude and 12km trip.

DAY 10

- *Trek to Everest Base Camp (5365m)*
- *Take the photos and soak it all in*
- *Trek down to Pheriche (4250m)*

We wake up early, enjoy a hearty breakfast and trek for 3 hours to reach Everest Base Camp, where we will spend time basking in the glory of the world's highest mountain! The hike back to Pheriche is another 5 hours, bringing this long day to end after a total of 8 hours of hiking. Today is very challenging for most people, covering 16km.

DAY 11

- *Trek down to Namche Bazar*

Today we will trek from Pheriche back to Namche Bazar. It is another long day and can take approximately 9 hours. As you are heading downhill, to lower levels of altitude, and you can cover the ground quicker than on the way up. When you get back to Namche you will enjoy the delights at the Namche Bakery or play a few rounds of pool at Cafe Danfe before resting up for the long walk back to Lukla. Today's journey is 22km.

DAY 12

- *Trek down to Lukla*

This is another long day and can be one of the hardest, as your body is tired from the trek. You start the day going back down Namche Hill and then tackle the long stretch back to Lukla. Today's trek can take up to 8 hours and covers 21km.

DAY 13

- *Fly from Lukla to Kathmandu*
- *Nepalese Cultural Dinner*
- *Overnight Hotel Tibet*

DAY 14

- *Flight out of Kathmandu.*



LUXURY ADD-ONS

OPTION 1 – THE LUXURY WIND-DOWN (+ \$1800 AUD)

- *Two night's accommodation at The Pyramid*
- *Helicopter flight from EBC to Lukla*
- *Two nights luxury accommodation at Gorkana Forest Resort*

After staying at Everest Base Camp for a night to soak up the majesty of the Khumbu Glacier, take to the skies with a private helicopter flight back to Lukla for an overnight stay, before returning to Kathmandu. After the exertion of the last week trekking, you'll be pampered, massaged and brought back life in the salubrious surroundings of Gorkana Forest Retreat for the next two days. With an indoor pool, 18-hole golf course, luxury spa and yoga retreat you'll be back in perfect condition in no time at all. This option is the same duration as the standard trek and includes a 90-minute massage treatment.



PACKING

Equipment List: We'll issue you with an equipment list for the gear I recommend you take on the trek. It is a guide only, so please feel free to adjust it to suit yourself.

Equipment Hire: Sleeping bags and down jackets can be hired from Kathmandu for approx. \$40 USD per item. If you hire a sleeping bag, I suggest you bring your own sleeping bag liner. Please let me know as soon as possible if you would like to hire gear and I will arrange it for you: ben@bestlifeadventures.com.

Packing: Suitcases are not suitable for trekking in Nepal. All of your belongings should be packed into a sturdy duffle bag (we will supply you with one in Kathmandu) or backpack. Items you don't want to get wet (e.g. cameras) should be packed in dry bags or waterproof bags. Anything you don't want to get damaged or broken should go in Tupperware containers. You can leave your suitcase or an extra bag at the hotel in Kathmandu whilst you're away trekking with a change of clothes for the return flight home.

Day Pack: When we're actually on the trek you only need to carry a daypack with you. Your main bag will be taken on by porter or yak to the teahouse where we'll stay at the end of that day. The daypack should contain wet weather gear, a base layer, camera, water, snacks and any medication you may require.



MOUNTAIN LIFE

Accommodation & Food: All standard accommodation is twin share in Kathmandu and while trekking. All main meals are covered while on the trek. Feel free to bring additional snacks (they can be bought in Kathmandu or en route to EBC).

Showers: Some, but not all, of the teahouses on the trek have basic gas showers. They're not guaranteed to be hot (you may need to pay a little extra for this luxury). It's a good idea to take a pack of wet wipes with you. It will be possible to wash from a small bowl each day.

Clothing: You tackle most of the journey in a t-shirt and shorts, but you should be prepared for a change in weather; carry a waterproof/warm jacket and long pants in your daypack. You can wear joggers to EBC, but I strongly recommend a quality pair of hiking boots. While trekking, your clothes will become smelly and dusty. For the evenings, you will need to change into a set of 'lodge clothes', consisting of: base layers (top and bottom); a pair of tracksuit pants plus a fleece or down jacket; and, a pair of sandals/thongs with thick socks to give your feet a rest.

Climate: Depending on the time of year, temperatures range from 5c to 25c for early winter temperatures and 20c to 30c for summer in Kathmandu. Once on the trek, the first few days generally require light clothing regardless of the season. Outside temperatures at the higher lodges at night will be below zero and we may get snowfall on some of the trekking days as we get closer to EBC. Generally, days will be fine with some windy and cold spells up high, but nothing that a good down jacket won't fix.



TRAINING

Trekking to Mt. Everest Base Camp is about endurance. You have to be able to walk with a 4-7kg pack for up to 8 hours a day, for a number of days. You need strength in your legs as there are a few demanding sections on each route. Strong, conditioned legs make it easier to walk uphill and downhill for sustained periods of time. General aerobic fitness allows the body to function efficiently with less oxygen. A fit body is more likely to withstand the stress of consecutive days of hiking and camping. Finally, a positive mental attitude can work wonders for you when fatigue, doubts, and sickness arise.

Trekking poles are recommended but not essential on the trek to Everest Base Camp and during your training. Spend time training with your gear on and in your backpack. Each climber should know how the gear works and that it fits properly. Wear your boots while you are doing your training hikes. Make certain that they are comfortable and won't give you blisters.

The best exercise that you can do to prepare for EBC is hiking. You should start training for climbing EBC at least two to four months prior to your departure. If you've never hiked before, lace up your boots and start with shorter time intervals, a slower pace and no weight in your day pack. Gradually increase all of the above as your fitness level improves. Remember, on the trek you will walk slowly for prolonged periods and carry no more than 9kg, including two litres of water. Also, aim for four aerobic sessions each week.

On the following page, I've recommended a weekly training program to best prepare you for the EBC trek. If you can hit these targets, you'll be laughing (and enjoying a healthy lifestyle).



WEEKLY TRAINING PROGRAM

HIKING | 2 SESSIONS

Increase the time interval/distance and keep a slow pace. Try to train 3 times a week, for at least 60 minutes per session. Gradually build up the length of time on your feet and distance covered. If you can do day hikes for four to six hours, with moderate elevation changes (305m) while carrying a 9kg pack, then you're probably ready for the real thing.

Shorten the time interval/distance and increase the pace. Try to train 1-3 times a week, for a maximum of 30-45 minutes, as hard as you can go - almost to the point of exhaustion! Time yourself on your favourite trail and try to improve with every workout. In time, you will see improvements.

AEROBIC | 1 SESSION

Recommended options:

- Hill or road running
- Cycling
- Swimming
- Treadmill: increase incline for uphill walking (wear daypack and boots)
- Exercise bike: select hill program
- Stairmaster (wear daypack and boots)

FLEXIBILITY | 7 SESSIONS

Increased flexibility will lessen 'morning after stiffness'. After a few days on the EBC trek, your body will really start to feel the effects of your hiking e.g. your shoulders will feel sore from carrying a backpack. To reduce the impact to your body (and mind), include these stretches on a daily basis in your pre-trek training: hamstrings, quads, calves and shoulders.

STRENGTH | 2 SESSIONS

Suggested workout to strengthen your back, butt, shoulders, core and legs:

- Incline leg press (3 x 15)
- Walking lunges with weights (3 x 15)
- Rear lunges (3 x 15)
- Standing calve raises (3 x 15)
- Push ups (3 x 10)
- Crunches (3 x 20)
- Reverse grip pull down (3 x 5)
- Hovers or planks (2 x 45 seconds)

DISCLAIMER

Any weak joints will be painfully identified by the trek (i.e. ankles, knees, hips, back). The descent in particular will put strain on all of these areas. Make sure you get a specific strength program to eliminate problems in these areas. Consult your physician before beginning any exercise program.

LIFE AFTER EVEREST

Remember, the greatest danger isn't that we aim too high and miss the mark, it's that we aim to low and reach it. So, the question after you complete your EBC trek is: what's your next Everest? It is my hope you will be inspired to continue a healthy and adventurous lifestyle, and your journey to EBC is just the beginning. My philosophy is to always have the next challenge brewing, if not locked in (book that plane flight as soon as you can). If you need some advice on how to plan your next adventure, I'm just a quick call or email away. If you'd like to join the Best Life Adventures crew on another mission, we'll be hosting a number of extreme dreams challenges in 2019 and beyond (e.g. cycling or motorbike riding the world's highest road in Northern India). Hit up our website (bestlifeadventures.com) to discover your next best life adventure.

