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Everest base camp trek from Phaplu - 18 Days

Trekking to Everest base camp trek from Phaplu is an off-the-beaten-track walk to Everest Base Camp. Everest base camp trek is full of trekkers during peak trekking season being one of the most demanded treks on earth. In order to avoid crowds for at least for few days, starting the Everest Base Camp trek from Phaplu or from Salleri is a good idea instead of starting from Lukla.

We can either fly to Phaplu or take an 8-9 hours drive to Phaplu (or Salleri) to start this trek. We enjoy warmer weather, green mountains and valleys, livelier villages, old stupas and monasteries, farmlands, better acclimatization, and of course a lot fewer (or no) trekkers (for a few days).

While Everest base camp trek from Phaplu will provide the trekkers with a much more fulfilling experience, this trek from Phaplu recommends for fervent hikers only as the first few days has each 8-9 hours of walking in the mountainous landscape. Being the first 3-4 days stretch on lower altitude, it's safer to walk long distances compared to that of higher altitude walks.

Everest Base Camp trek from Phaplu is about saturating yourself with the jaw-dropping sceneries of green hills, glacial rivers, and snow-capped mountains, avoiding luxuries, eating and sleeping in cozy teahouses run by Sherpa families, supporting the local economy, testing your limits in the thin-air and mountainous landscape and exploring the unexplored part of Khumbu.

After a slow ascent through picturesque Sherpa villages, visiting traditional monasteries, and enjoying the spectacular scenery, the trail from Phaplu culminates with the trail that comes from Lukla at Chheplung and we continue through the traditional Everest Base Camp Trail.

While we struggle to walk ahead through thin-air the spectacular view of beautiful snow-capped motivate us and we reach the Everest Base Camp and the most-celebrated viewpoint of Kala Patthar for spectacular views of the mighty Mount Everest, Cho Oyu, Lhotse, and Makalu, the three of the tallest peaks among 10 that are in Nepal along with many other beautiful mountains like Pumori, Ama Dablam, Lhotse, etc. We trek down the same trail and end our trek in Kathmandu.

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PRICE INCLUDES

Transport

- Private vehicle: Hotel and airport transfers
- Private Vehicle: Transfers for Kathmandu City Tour
- Private vehicle: Kathmandu to Phaplu transfer
- Flight: Lukla to Kathmandu flight

Accommodation

- 3 nights' accommodation (twin sharing) in Kathmandu in a 4-star category hotel- Ramada Encore or similar
- 14 nights' accommodation (twin sharing) during the trek

Food / Drinks

- Meals during the trek
- Breakfast while in Kathmandu
- Welcome and farewell dinner in Kathmandu
- Seasonal fruit on trek

Staff

- English speaking Trekking Guide/leader: One guide for each group. One assistant guide every 6 trekkers including their accommodation, transportation, food, salary, transportation, and insurance
- Porters (ratio of 1:2 clients, carrying up to 15kg of personal gear per client) including their accommodation, transportation, food, salary, transportation, insurance
- English speaking city tour guide for Kathmandu city tour

Permits and Taxes

- Sagarmatha National Park Permit
- Entrance fee/permit for monuments and temples (Boudhanath, Pashupatinath, Monkey Temple, Patan Durbar Square) for Kathmandu City tour (day 2)
- Local village Development charge
- TIMS permit (if applicable)
- All applicable taxes to be paid to the Nepalese government

Others

- Complimentary four seasons down sleeping bag and down jacket provided for the duration of the trek (suggested to bring if you have your own)
- Complimentary 80-liter Duffel bag (to keep personal belongings to be carried by porter), down sleeping bag, and down jacket hire for the duration of the trek.
- Complimentary Everest Base Camp Trekking map

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- Complimentary Icicles Adventure T-shirt
- First aid medicine box carried at all times by guide.
- Sightseeing tour (includes private vehicle transfers to and from hotel, English speaking guide to Boudhanath, Pashupatinath, Monkey Temple)

PRICE EXCLUDES

Transport

- International airfares to and from Kathmandu
- Any other additional transportation (if needed) outside of the program (such as for shopping, etc) Accommodation
- Extra night/s of accommodation in Kathmandu because of early arrival, late departure, early return from the mountain (due to any reason) than the scheduled itinerary.

Food / Drinks

- Soft drinks, tea/coffee, and alcoholic beverages are not included and must be purchased separately by the client.
- Drinking water on trek
- Desserts are not included, so if ordered should be paid separately by the client
- Lunches and Dinners in Kathmandu (and also in the case of early return from mountain than the scheduled itinerary- see meal inclusions for more details)

Others

- Nepalese tourist visa (available on arrival at Kathmandu Tribhuvan International Airport)
- Client's travel insurance
- Any optional/ additional activities outside of the program
- Personal expenses such as phone calls, laundry, battery recharge, hot shower, extra porters, etc)
- Personal equipment and clothing
- Tips/gratuities for the staff (tips are expected by staff)

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ITINERARY IN DETAIL

Day 1: Arrive Kathmandu

Icicles Adventure airport representative welcomes you at the airport for your Everest Base Camp Trek from Phaplu. As you land and finish your formalities, please take a look around the horizon because if the weather is clear, you can see some of the Himalayan peaks from Kathmandu International Airport itself.

Get transferred to your hotel. Along the way to your hotel, you will be briefed about the next day's program, i.e., city tour. Relax if you are tired and jet-lagged otherwise, you can take chance to look around the tourist market of Thamel. Overnight in a hotel.

Day 2: Kathmandu City Tour- tour of cultural, spritual and historical sites

UNESCO has listed the whole of Kathmandu in UNESCO World Heritage site and it has 7 cultural sites that made the whole city to be listed there. Among them, we will visit Patan Durbar Square, Swoyambhunath (Monkey Temple), Boudhanath, and Pashupatinath.

Accompanied by a knowledgeable city guide and private vehicle transfers, you will get some information about these sites during the day today. Afternoon, after your tour, we will have a pre-trek meeting at your hotel in which we will introduce you to your trekking guide, provide you with a duffel bag, sleeping bag, down jacket, map, etc.

The rest of the day, you can spend shopping for the gears which you lack but you must give time to pack and be ready for the long adventure that starts in the field tomorrow. Included: Hotel accommodation and Breakfast.

Day 3: Drive to Phaplu (2,413m/7,915ft, 270km, 8 to 9 hours drive in private Jeep)- Flight option is there too

It’s a long drive and we start early at 6 am in a private jeep. You will be stopped for lunch, tea breaks and pee breaks every 2-3 hours. You drive east from Kathmandu via Dhulikhel through BP Highway. Speed limitation is maintained because of winding mountain roads.

The drive is enjoyable. We will cherish the views of mountains, rivers, forests, stupas, and villages along our drive today. As we take Okhaldhunga Highway, you might ask the driver to stop at the place called 'Patale'. If the weather is clear, you will see amazing views of Himalayan peaks from Patale as it is on top of the hill.

We will reach Phaplu around 4-5 pm. We will be tired at the end of the day but still, we will wait to see the sunset view over Number Himal from Phaplu. Overnight in Phaplu.

Day 4: Trek from Phaplu to Nunthala. (2,330m/7,643ft, 18km, 8-9 hours)

On the first day of walking, we have special excitement. After breakfast, we start our trek. Trek through beautiful forests, mountains, small springs, mani walls, typical villages, paddy fields, etc.

Throughout the day we will see Mt. Numbur smiling at the horizon. We will also cross the first suspension bridge of our trek. Hiking through the middle hills we can see differences between Hindu and Buddhist cultures.

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Passing through beautiful Rigmo village we ascend Taksindu La (3070m) Pass and from the top of the pass, a wonderful landscape can be seen. We also visit Takshindu Gompa along the trail. Further, the trail descends to Nunthala, where we spend the night.

Day 5: Nunthala to Bupsa (2,070m/6,790ft, 14km, 6-7 hours)

A lot of ups and downs today. We first descend to Dudh Koshi River. Today we will cross the second suspension bridge enroute to our Everest Base Camp Trek. We reach the sprawling village of Kharikhola after about 4 hours hike. We have lunch at Kharikhola and continue our trek to Bupsa.

Today also we hike through forests, streams, beautiful typical Nepalese villages and villages busy in their house and farm chores. We will rejoice the verdant mountains prayer flags swaying in the breeze. We come across some stupas, mani walls, and we say hello to a lot of mules and yaks those carry supplies mostly for the teahouses along the Everest trekking routes.

Day 6: Bupsa to Cheplung(2,800 m/9,814ft, 18km, 8-9 hours)

The trail from Bupsa rises through a forested stretch passing Kharte. As we reach the top of Kari la (3145m) we can see back the view of Kharikhola, Bupsa, and Jubing villages sprawled over the hills.

We enjoy the spectacular views from the Kari La pass of Everest, Lhotse, Nupte, Makalu, Thamseruku, Mera Peak, and many other peaks of Mahalangur Himalayan range.

After Kari La pass the trail then becomes gently flat, winding along the curve of the valley side through a beautiful mossy forest. The trail is cut into the steep rocky side of the valley and is narrow, so we have to be careful as sometimes it is muddy and slippery. We stroll along the opposite side of the valley into the village of Puiya (2770m) around lunchtime. We enjoy our lunch with the view of lush forested valley that we trekked through this morning.

The trail after Puiya is better, and we can walk better along this side of the valley. The trail joins back onto the Dudh Koshi River valley with amazing views way down to the river below, the steep sides of the valley. We again take a steep but picturesque trail back up above Chutok La, where we will be treated with a spectacular view looking north up the Dudh Koshi valley and even Lukla. We reach Surke in about 3 hours from Paiya.

From Surke there are two trails one to Lukla and the other going to Namche. We pass Chaurikharkha and join the main Everest base camp trail at Cheplung where we have a good sleep after a long laborious walk today.

Day 7: Cheplung to Namche Bazzar (3,440m/11,286ft, 16 km/7-8 hours)

The trail from Lukla and the Everest base camp trail from Phaplu meets near Cheplung village and we will meet a lot of others trekkers, guides, porters, mules during our walk today if its a high trekking season.

After breakfast, we continue trekking along the banks of the Dudh Koshi River, crossing this roaring river on exciting suspension bridges laden with prayer flags. We walk through Phakding village. After entering Sagamartha National Park at Monjo, we descend a steep incline passing endless prayers to the gods carved into the vertiginous cliffs.

Finally, we reach the riverbed and traverse another metal bridge adorned with prayer flags. We follow the opposite bank upwards before crossing the high bridge over Dudh Koshi. Now starts a cruel climb up trail to Namche Bazaar.

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But then, we round the corner and traipse under the archway which signals our arrival into Namche. Finally, we have arrived at Namche Bazaar, a vibrant town on the Everest Base Camp trail.

Day 8: Acclimatization and Optional hike in Namche Bazaar

We primarily deserve a rest day today because we had long-walk days for three days continuously. But as per rule of acclimatization we must walk to higher altitude and sleep at lower altitude. This acclimatization day's purpose is to provide some time to our body to adjust with the raising altitude and the air that is getting thinner. Namche Bazaar at 3440m is ideal altitude for our first acclimatization day. We will hike to Everest View point above Namche, where we see majestic views of Mt. Everest, Mt. Lhotse and the beautiful Ama Dablam. The rest of the day hang around Namche Bazzar and relax. Namche is a quaint town nestled into a mountainside bowl, with colorful houses in tiers on the hillsides. Namche Bazzar can be called a mega town here as this is the largest village on the way to Everest Base Camp. There are gift shops, bars, restaurants, pharmacies, bakeries, coffee shops and numerous hiking stores. You can shop around for any things you might have forgotten to include in your pack.

Day 9: Trek from Namche Bazaar to Tengboche (3,860m/12,661ft, 5 to 6 hours, 9 km)

From Namche Bazaar we trek along the contour of the hill and then down to the valley base en route to Tengboche (3860m). We lunch in Phunki Thenga and cross the suspension bridge over Dudh Koshi River for last time before we come back again after achieving Everest Base Camp.

The climb up to Tengboche is arduous and height gain will be around 600m. Though its hard, we enjoy beause of the beautiful pine forest and the amazing views into the deep and lush valleys below and the snow covered mountains, the Everest (8850m), Ama Dablam (6814m), Lhotse (8501m) and Nuptse (7879m), Thamserku. Our route will take us through the spiritual centre of the Khumbu region.

At Tengboche there is a famous monastery, inside of which are flamboyant wall hangings, a giant sculpture of Buddha, and the musical instruments and robes of that the monks use for celebrations. We spend the night in the spiritual and mountain ambience of Tengboche.

Day 10: Trek from Tengboche to Dingboche (4,410m/14,469ft, 11km, 5 to 6 hours)

Our day begins with thrill as we see yak pasture lands, mostly downhill through refreshing trees to Debuche. We walk the narrow cliff top path cherishing the views of Ama Dablam and Everest peeping from behind Lhotse.

After crossing Imja Khola on a wooden bridge, the steep uphill walk takes us towards village of Pangboche are we are surrounded by grand Himalayas landscapes. We will have lunch or at least have a tea break at Pangboche because the place is worth stopping for a while to fuel our eyes and soul. Now we will really start feeling the elevation gain, the lush forest changes in shrubby growths. Feeling of headache, nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite could be common but as you acclimatize the symptoms will go away in most of us.

We eventually spot the quaint colorful village of Dingboche perched on a plain with the background of Everest and other peaks where we spend two nights during our Everest Base Camp Trek. As there is a lot possibility of getting altitude sickness at this altitude, we need to be careful about keeping ourselves hydrated by drinking plenty of warm water, drinking soups, and also about keeping ourselves warm. Overnight in Dingboche.

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Day 11: Acclimatization at Dingboche and optional hike to Nangkartshang Hill (5,100m/16,732ft, 5km, 4 to 5 hours)

Today is our second acclimatization day. We need to hike to higher altitude and sleep at lower altitude. So, we go for an acclimatization hike to either Nangkartshang peak (also known as Nagarjun Hill) or to Chhukung Ri. Most people prefer Nangkartshang peak.

In about 2 hours of walking we reach a magnificent viewpoint of Nangkartshang peak decorated with numerous miniature stupas and prayer flags. We enjoy spectacular vistas of Everest, Lobuche East, Kangtega, Taboche, Lobuche West, Ama Dablam and Thamserku and nice views of Pheriche valley on the other side. We can further hike to the top or return back. We come back to Dingboche and spend the rest of the day resting and acclimatizing.

Day 12: Trek from Dingboche to Lobuche (4,910m/16,109ft, 8km, 5 to 6 hours)

After breakfast, we take a short climb out of the Dingboche and reach an undulating plateau. Walking is hard at this altitude but we focus on taking deep breath and to stimulate ourselves by hard-to-believe views of snow-covered peaks as we walk carefully on the boulder-strewn land.

We traverse a wooden bridge over tumbling waters at Thukla. After lunch, the long ascent begins along the zig-zag path. We reach the Thukla pass where there is a memorial park adorned with prayer flags those flutter in the breeze.

The memorial is an emotive tribute to those who lost lives on Everest expedition. Although this place offers incredible views of majestic mountains we really cannot enjoy because the memorials of those who lost their lives in young age makes us emotional. We continue silently to Lobuche.

Day 13: Trek to Gorak Shep (5,140m/16,864ft) and visit Everest Base Camp (5364m/17594ft, 10km, 7 to 8 hours)

We see Mt. Nuptse welcoming to your way to Gorekshep. Its 3 hours trek to Gorekshep from Lobuche. Beautiful walk due to incessant view of Nuptse, Lhotse, and Everest ahead of us but we need to be careful as we walk through the glacial moraine over the boulders and loose rocks. We follow the rugged contour of Khumbu Glacier. To our left is Pumori and to our right is Nuptse (7861m) beneath the sky. Upon reaching Gorekshep, we check-in into our teahouse, have lunch before heading towards Everest base camp.

The views are awesome as we get closer. After two hours of a hike from Gorekshep, we reach Everest Base Camp, a natural amphitheater marked with prayer flags. The mountains line up around - Mt.Pumori, Mt. Lingtren, Mt. Khumbutse, Mt. Changtse, and Nuptse. But we don't see the Everest itself from Everest Base camp as it hides behind Nuptse.

Everest base camp is colorful if it is the Everest climbing season (April, May). After spending some time celebrating the grand success we get back to Gorekshep. If weather is clear, we wait to see the sunset over mountains from Gorekshep which is awesome.

Note: Although itinerary has Everest base camp hike today, we suggest to do hike to Kala Patthar today (only if the weather is clear), and doing Everest Base Camp the next day, ie. switching the plan because Kalapatthar is wonderful to be at sunset.

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Day 14: Hike to Kalapatthar (5,550m/18,209ft) then trek back to Pheriche (4,240m/13,980ft, 12km, 6 to 7 hours)

Today is the major day because we climb one of the famous viewpoint of Everest region, Kalapatthar. We make an early departure (approx. 2 hours before sunrise depending upon season) from Gorekshep in order to reach Kalapatthar at sunrise. We get a magical experience as we climb to the summit of Kalapatthar, a small peak across on the valley from Everest on the lower slopes of Pumori. Upon reaching our trek's highest point, we soak in 360 degree views of the Himalayan giants that surround us including Mount Everest. We cannot fully appreciate the panoramic view of the Everest Range that Kala Patthar offers; they are so scenic and captivating. Everest and its neighboring massive mountains - Everest, Nuptse, Lhotse, Pumori and Ama Dablam bathing in morning light is indescribable. With first rays of sunlight hitting these mountains turns them golden and slowly as the sun goes high, they turn glow white in their original color. After enjoying the views the fullest from Kalapatthar, we descend back down to Gorekshep. We gulp breakfast and hurry down back to Pheriche for some "thick" air and a good night's sleep.

Day 15: Trek from Pheriche to Namche Bazaar (3,440m/11,286ft, 19 km, 7 to 8 hours)

After hot breakfast at our teahouse, we start the trek back from Pheriche to Namche Bazaar. The trail drops easy downhill through the dry valley until Pangboche village. Then the trail drops to the riverside and after crossing a bridge continues up along the pine and juniper forest to Tengboche. The trail descends to the Dudhkoshi River and leads us to Kyanjuma. From here we traverse back around the ridge and drop down into Namche Bazaar. At Namche Bazaar, getting a hot shower makes us feel good after living few days without shower. We get really nice sleep again at this altitude as its warmer and breathing is better. Overnight at Namche Bazaar.

Day 16: Trek from Namche Bazaar to Lukla (2,840m/9,318ft, 18.5km, 6 to 7 hours)

Having been so much higher, getting into lower altitude make us feel pleasant. After a good night's sleep and a good breakfast in the morning we set off on our trail. We hike back down the Namche Hill.

We cross Hillary Bridge and walk the long stretch of up and down all the way back. We exit the Sagarmatha National Park, walk past Monjo and Phakding before starting the last uphill section into Lukla. We celebrate the successful trek in Lukla. We will offer tips to the staff how much we can depending upon their performance, our satisfaction and our budget to the staff team and eat, drink and celebrate our successful trek from Phaplu to Everest Base Camp and back.

Day 17: Fly Lukla to Kathmandu (1,400m/4,592ft, 35 minutes)

Weather permitting, we will fly back to Kathmandu and get transferred to the hotel. A good shower is what we would definitely do. During the day, we rest, shop around for souvenirs, drink. Probably in the evening, we will have a farewell dinner in a cultural restaurant in Kathmandu on behalf of Icicles Adventure Treks.

Lukla Flights

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The primary gateway to the Everest Base Camp Trek is via a flight to Lukla (2840m), which lands at one of the world's most extreme airports: Tenzing-Hillary Airport. Positioned on a narrow plateau above a steep cliff with a short and narrow runway, the flight itself is as thrilling as it is challenging. Weather conditions here are notoriously unpredictable, with visibility shifting rapidly, which adds a layer of excitement to the journey.

Ramechhap Airport

During the busy trekking seasons in spring (March, April) and autumn (October, November), Kathmandu Airport faces significant congestion, leading most flights to Lukla to operate from Manthali Airport in Ramechhap, approximately a 4-5 hour drive from Kathmandu. To avoid this drive, you can opt for a helicopter flight from Kathmandu, though this is an additional expense.

Weather

Flights to Lukla are dependent on clear weather and stable conditions. Delays or cancellations are common due to sudden shifts in weather, which may extend your trekking plans by a few days. We recommend adding buffer days to your itinerary to mitigate any disruptions to your return travel plans.

In the event of prolonged delays, a helicopter transfer to Lukla is an alternative, although this incurs additional costs and is not included in the standard trek package. While helicopters can operate in some conditions that planes cannot, extreme weather can ground them as well. In such cases, we will endeavor to arrange a helicopter charter, subject to availability and weather permitting. Please note, helicopter availability is limited and may lead to delays.

We ask for your flexibility and understanding in these situations. If weather conditions prevent flights for an extended period, an alternative is to drive to Tham Danda—a challenging 20-hour journey—and begin the trek from there. This route is prone to difficulties, especially in adverse weather, requiring extra days and considerable patience.

Should conditions make the Everest Base Camp Trek unfeasible, we can redirect to other treks such as Annapurna Base Camp or Langtang Gosainkunda. While these treks do not lead to Everest Base Camp, they offer stunning views and rewarding experiences.

Your cooperation and flexibility are crucial in navigating these complexities, ensuring a memorable and enjoyable trekking experience regardless of the route.

Day 18: Final Departure from Kathmandu

The last day on our Everest Base Camp trek from Phaplu. We are leaving the beautiful Himalayan nation, Nepal and taking a lot of memories with us. 3 hours before your flight time, a representative from Icicles Adventure Treks & Tours will drop you to the international airport. We wish you will tell you travel stories to your circles and you will be back again with your friends and families for another adventure trip in the Himalaya. (Nepal, Bhutan or Tibet).