

EVEREST BASE CAMP

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How fit do I need to be?

Trekking Everest Base Camp is all about **endurance** rather than speed. You will be waking up early in the mornings and trekking for long distances each day so ensuring that you have a good level of fitness before you depart is key. Sticking to our training plan will really pay off. The best form of preparation is to walk for good lengths of time on undulating terrain, and where possible to follow this up with a similar length trek the next day. It is important that you train with the walking boots that you will be using on the trek itself and with your day pack on your back.

What will the trekking be like?

Terrain is varied as the route lies through valleys, forest, barren stony slopes and high mountain passes; paths are generally very clear, though expect rough conditions underfoot. There are some steep drops and high suspension bridges. The trek is extremely challenging, not least because of the **altitude** at which we trek – this should **not be underestimated**. It's much more useful when training to think about the hours you need to walk for, and the terrain, not the distance. There's a reason this challenge carries our hardest grading level.

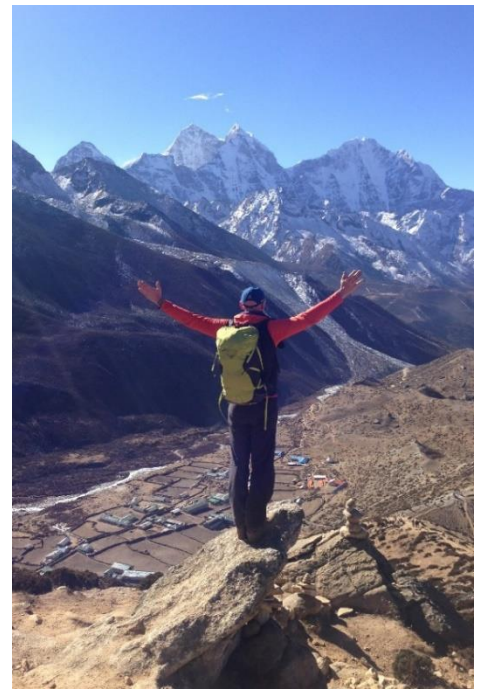
Keep in mind that this is an **extremely tough trek** and everyone will find elements of the challenge difficult at some point, whether it is the physical trekking, camping, changing weather, effects of altitude or something else. It is great if you can work as a team and help each other out during any difficulties. While there are many challenges, **the enjoyment and rewards that come from trekking to Everest Base Camp are immense!**

How will the altitude affect me?

Trekking at altitude makes even the simplest tasks feel like hard work, and along with feeling cold and fatigued, there will be tough times for everyone. Our route allows for excellent acclimatisation to the altitude, with two acclimatisation days to allow you to trek higher than you sleep at important points on the ascent.

Symptoms of being at altitude include **tiredness, shortness of breath, headaches and nausea**. Altitude affects people differently and being super-fit is no guarantee of being less likely to feel the effects. Where a participant is suffering from the effects of altitude, it may be necessary to walk them back down the mountain. There is no way of predicting how you will feel at altitude, even if you have been at altitude before.

Our recommendations are to have **trained properly, to not drink alcohol** in the days leading up to the trip and to **listen to your leaders/guides** if they try to slow down the trekking pace. The slower you trek the more it helps fending off feeling poorly. A local guide will walk at the front of the group to set the pace. It is not a race - go at a steady pace, enjoy the scenery and the amazing experience! There is a lot of information about Altitude Mountain Sickness (AMS) in our document 'The Effects of Altitude,' including information about the medication Diamox, so please have a good read.



Who accompanies us on the trek from Discover Adventure?

Your trip will be led by an experienced Discover Adventure leader. Sometimes they accompany you from the UK, but they may meet you in-country. Our leaders are selected for their experience in harsh wilderness environments, knowledge of travel in remote areas, friendliness and approachability, sense of humour and ability to safely and effectively deal with any situation that arises. They are also trained in expedition first-aid. You are in very safe hands with a Discover Adventure leader.

Will there be a doctor trekking with us as well?

An expedition doctor or medic usually accompanies the group, depending on group size. Our medics are there to provide first aid and promote day-to-day welfare on the trip; they carry a robust medical kit, but cannot possibly be equipped with everything needed to counter any given situation. They also provide crucial support to our leaders and, as they are usually found at the back of our groups, are also experts at encouraging you when things get tough.



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Who else will accompany the group on this challenge?

Our local support crew is made up of local guides, drivers, cooks and porters. Local guides know the area well, and are a great source of knowledge about local customs and lifestyles. The Discover Adventure crew work closely with the local crew to ensure your trip runs smoothly and safely.

What is the accommodation like?

You will be staying in a hotel at the start and end of your trek; expect a standard twin room with en-suite facilities. If you are travelling alone, you will be paired up with someone of the same sex and similar age. You can always let us know nearer the time if you wish to share with a particular person, if you have not already done so.

On the trek, we stay in tea houses (similar to hostels) which are often very basic with shared facilities, but they provide an excellent base each night, and a great insight to Nepalese hospitality. You will need to take a sleeping bag, but mattresses are provided. The tea houses vary, but please be prepared for rustic conditions, especially if you are only used to nice hotels! Being out of your comfort zone adds to the challenge and makes your achievement all the sweeter.

Bear in mind that the region we trek through saw earthquake damage in 2015, and recovery is still ongoing. It is incredible what the tea houses are able to provide but you may see evidence of the devastation. Remember that simply by trekking here you are directly helping the local economy.

Can I request single accommodation?

There may be a limited number of single rooms available in the hotel accommodation at the start and the end of your trip, subject to request and at an additional cost (on a first-come, first-served basis). It is not possible to have your own room on the trek itself, due to the communal nature of the tea houses. Sharing a room is a really good ice-breaker if you don't know anyone else on the trip, so don't worry too much about it!

Will there be Wi-Fi, phone reception and charging points?

The Wi-Fi in Kathmandu may not be as fast as you're used to at home. On the trek itself there is internet access as far as Dingboche but it's not always reliable. There are good email and internet facilities in Kathmandu and Namche, and phones for international calls. The phone reception will be limited and charging points on the trail are usually restricted to communal areas (getting fewer the higher you go); expect to pay for using communal solar power to recharge your devices. You may wish to bring your own solar charging device. Treat this challenge like a '**Digital Detox**' and tell your relatives that no news is good news!

For voltage and plug information in hotel accommodation, see <https://www.iec.ch/world-plugs>

Do I need travel insurance?

As part of your booking conditions, it is compulsory that you ensure you have adequate travel insurance cover to cover you for trekking at altitude. See [the insurance page on our website](#) for further information.

What will the weather be like?

Prepare for **all weathers**; you will experience a range of temperatures whilst trekking at altitude. It's usually warm and dry at lower elevations, and very cold as we gain height. Never underestimate the power of the sun's rays, even when it feels cold, there is cloud cover, or the wind is blowing. Please bring SPF30 as a minimum, along with lip salve with a high SPF too. The higher you trek, the more intense the sun's rays become, and risk of burning is increased. A sun hat and quality sunglasses are a must.

What do I need to bring?

Refer to your **Kit List** to ensure that you have all the essentials. Make sure your walking boots are waterproof and well-worn in. Trekking tops of a wicking nature will be more comfortable to walk in than cotton. If you intend to trek with poles, ensure that you train with them too. We do recommend that you use a platypus-style drinking system rather than bottles as it is easier to have regular small drinks.

If required, there is an opportunity to buy or hire items such as sleeping bags, gloves, down jackets, etc, when you arrive in Kathmandu. Please contact us to find out more.



What are the transport arrangements for the group and our kit?

Private buses transport the group in and around Kathmandu and to Mulkot (where relevant). A small plane flies you into/out of Lukla, where the trek starts and ends. You cannot access your main packs during the day so need to carry a day-pack with your fleece, waterproof, sun-cream, hat, camera, water etc. Discover Adventure Kitbags are specially designed for the rigours of our challenges and are very affordable, please ask for details. Porters carry all luggage once on the trek. There are strict rules restricting the weight of the load a porter is permitted to carry – see below.

What is the luggage allowance?

Your main luggage limit on the international flight is usually 20kg (44lbs) with a 5kg (11lbs) allowance for hand luggage, **however**, your luggage limit for the flight from **Kathmandu to Lukla** is 10kg (22lbs) with a 5kg (11lbs) hand luggage allowance. Your main toiletries, travel clothing and anything else that you do not require on the trek can be left in a separate bag at the hotel in Kathmandu, so bring something smaller to hold your extras in.

You will need to travel as lightly as possible as there is a **weight limit on the trek itself** and your main bag must not weigh more than **15kg (33lbs)**. Stick to the split kit list and you'll manage that with no problems. Don't forget that suitcases are not suitable, so soft rucksacks/kitbags only (with no wheels on). Discover Adventure Kitbags are specially designed for the rigours of our challenges and are very affordable, please ask for details. Take only small bottles of toiletries, sun cream, and half a pack of wet wipes, for example. Doing a practice pack/weighing your bags before you leave home is very beneficial to make sure you will be able to stick to the limit.

What will I be eating?

The food is fresh and plentiful so **make sure you eat well** (it's typical to lose your appetite at altitude, so you may have to make yourself eat at times). Above Namche, we are trekking in a valley the local people hold sacred; no animal can be killed there for food. As such, we only have fresh meat earlier in the trek. Expect porridge/muesli and toast/eggs for breakfast, while lunches are based around rice, noodles or potatoes. Some teahouses have limited cooking facilities, so to cater for the group in a reasonable time-frame, your cook will choose relatively simple dishes for dinner – usually rice, pasta or potatoes with vegetables; you are usually offered a choice. The food is tasty, full of energy and there is plenty of it, but it is carb-heavy for energy, and please do not expect the variety you would have at home.

I have a specific dietary need; will there be enough for me to eat?

Being vegetarian, gluten free, dairy free or having other dietary requirements is usually not a problem provided you **let us know well in advance** (airlines need to know at least 8 weeks prior to the departure). Please do not expect the variety you would have at home – in remote regions certain foods are hard to access. If you feel you aren't getting enough energy because of your dietary requirements please talk to the leaders on the trip – they can't help unless they know there's a problem. If you know there are plenty of foods you cannot eat you may wish to bring extra snacks from home so you can top up your energy supply. Please feel free to ask us for advice.

We request special meals with airlines providing you notify us at least 8 weeks in advance. Although airlines acknowledge these requests, they cannot always guarantee them as they are reliant on airport caterers.

Do I need to bring snacks?

Bring enough snacks to keep you going each day - around **3 - 4 tasty treats a day**. We recommend a combination of slow and fast release snacks such as cereal bars, flapjacks, salted nuts, chocolate bars such as Mars or Snickers, and a packet of sweets.

Bringing a combination of treats will keep you interested in snacking as consistent energy levels are very important. This trip is all about the calories as you may be expending around double your usual calorie intake!



What is the celebration meal?

At the end of your challenge, there will be a special meal to celebrate your achievements. Please check your trip itinerary to confirm whether you will need to set aside funds to pay for this on the night.



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How much do I need to drink?

You will find that you need to drink significantly more whilst trekking at altitude, and need to do so in order to keep the effects of altitude at bay. You will be provided with plenty of water at breakfast, lunch and in the evening so keep topping up your water systems. It is not safe to drink the water in Nepal, so you will need to bring water purification tablets with you or buy some prior to starting the trek in Kathmandu. We recommend a minimum of 100 tablets to last for the entire trek, to ensure you are drinking enough water. Water purification tablets are easy to use and very safe. You will need to follow the instructions provided with whichever type of tablet you purchase, to ensure that you leave the tablets to sit in the water for the correct length of time. It is also a good idea to take plenty of rehydration sachets with you too for use on arrival each evening, and for the start of each day. Please do not be tempted to drink tap water, or even clean your teeth in it – a dodgy stomach can ruin your trip.

Is it true that there's a ban on plastic bottles on the mountain?

Yes. In January 2020, the Nepalese Government banned single-use (soft) plastic bottles on the mountain, in an effort to protect the environment. Please ensure you have a water-bottle of rigid plastic to accompany your hydration bladder.

What about toilets?

Toilet facilities won't be like home. You will have basic facilities in the tea houses (more so the higher you go) and limited facilities while on the trek, so there may be occasions when you will need to go whilst on the trails. You will need to take nappy sacks and paper in order to make sure you leave no trace. These can then be discarded at the next stop.

What can I do to prevent illness?

On the trek itself, food is cooked and prepared to very high standards and you can eat with confidence – though illness can spread through the group very quickly when you are living closely together, so it's important to bring **antiseptic hand sanitiser** for use after the toilet and before eating to minimise the spread of germs. Also, avoid sharing water bottles and sharing each other's food or sweets as this spreads germs very easily, even if you are being careful. We'd advise avoiding ice cubes in drinks unless you are sure they are made with bottled/treated water. For the same reason avoid salads, raw vegetables and fruit that you cannot peel yourself, as well as unpasteurised dairy products.

There is extra risk of sunstroke and dehydration when trekking. You should use a high factor sun cream or sun block, wear a hat, sunglasses and ensure that you drink plenty of water or energy drinks to replenish your fluid levels. You will be more susceptible to sunburn at altitude.

Any safety tips for non-trekking time?

Nepal is one of the safest countries in Asia and petty theft is relatively uncommon, but there are opportunists waiting for careless tourists. One of the benefits of group travel is safety – you all look out for each other, and there's no reason to be alone. Sometimes, however, it's easy to lose concentration in a group. Stay focussed in crowded areas such as airports, bus stations and markets, or busy, touristy areas; these are more likely to attract pick-pockets and bag-slashers. Wear a concealed money belt with your flight ticket and some of your cash inside. Take responsibility for yourself and your belongings. Leave valuables behind; you don't need your best jewellery and gadgets on this trip.

What if I have any issues during the trip?

Our leaders are very experienced and work very hard to ensure your trip runs as smoothly and enjoyably as possible, and we're sure that you'll have a wonderful time. If you do have any concerns or problems during the trip **please talk to the crew and give them the opportunity to explain or rectify things while they are able**. They are all very approachable!

What are the contingencies in case of an emergency on this challenge?

The crew will have radios and emergency satellite phones, extensive medical kit and other safety apparatus where necessary. If you are feeling unwell on this trek, tell your leaders and listen to their advice, as your health and safety is our top priority. In some cases, you may need to come down from the mountain; the crew will support this quickly and efficiently in the best way possible.



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What currency should I take?

Prices are quoted in Nepalese rupees and US dollars in many circumstances; Sterling is widely accepted and easy to exchange. Although you may get a better rate when exchanging US dollars, it's usually not worth the extra cost of buying them if you do not already have some. We recommend changing money into rupees in Kathmandu before the start of your trek; dollars are less use when trekking. Use small denominations and when changing money ask for small notes in rupees - it can be very difficult to get change. Ripped and dirty notes are often not accepted so try to avoid being given them. Credit cards are accepted but usually only in the main tourist shops and hotels. There are ATMs in Thamel (the touristed area of Kathmandu).

How much money will I need to bring with me?

We usually recommend taking between £250-300 of spending money, but it depends on how many souvenirs you buy, and if you plan to buy/hire kit on arrival. Out of this spending money, you should **set aside funds** to cover any meals which are not included in the itinerary, and tips for local crew. Allow as well for snacks, soft drinks or extra hot drinks to go with your meals (some are included) on the trek - as with everything, prices for goods understandably increase the further they have been carried up the trail.

If you struggle to acclimatise to the altitude and need to descend to lower elevations for your own safety, you must ensure you have enough funds to cover any resultant costs – eg, extra hotel accommodation or meals. The same applies if you have to depart from group arrangements for any other reason, such as fitness, illness or any unforeseen circumstances. Some of these may be recoverable through your travel insurance, depending on your cover, but you will need to have the funds to pay them upfront.

What do you recommend for crew tips?

The local crew and porters work incredibly hard for the duration of the trip and it is great if we can show our appreciation in the form of a tip. The guide is around **\$80-\$100** per participant which is split out between the local crew but this is of course at your discretion. Please do not give out individual tips to any local crew who you feel have helped you personally. They work well as a team and those 'out of sight' will be working just as hard as those with you on the trek. Feel free to give away any used or unwanted kit as the porters are always grateful for extra gear.

Are there many shopping opportunities?

Yes! You will have plenty of time for Kathmandu's many markets and souvenir shops. Most sellers will expect you to haggle over price. Haggling is great fun, and a good way of interacting with local people. A good rule of thumb is to offer a third of the asking price and meet somewhere in the middle. However, while the intention is to knock the price down, beware of going too far to the other extreme and taking great pride in spending half an hour knocking what amounts to less than 50p off a hand-crafted woodcarving - Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world.



How do I ensure I'm sensitive to the local culture?

At Discover Adventure we expect our groups to be sensitive to other cultures – be especially respectful in public areas and near places of worship. Villagers along our trek routes are relatively used to trekkers but you will still cause offence if you do not dress appropriately (though they may be too polite to show it.) Even in the most remote locations, we have local crew with us and they also deserve your respect. While much of your trekking time you'll be dressed for cooler temperatures, on hotter days please dress appropriately. Women travellers should dress so shoulders and thighs are covered. Avoid tight or 'strappy' tops in favour of regular T-shirts. Shorts should be 'long' and trousers are preferable in rural areas, even for men, who should also always wear a top. By dressing thoughtfully, you not only experience minimum hassle but do not offend the local people; many of our trips rely on these small communities.

Try to research a little about the culture before you go: it is greatly beneficial to have some understanding of Hinduism and Buddhism in order to understand the Nepalese way of life. Or learn a few basic phrases; it all goes a long way to ensuring you connect with local people in a positive way. Thanks in advance for helping to maintain the good reputation of Discover Adventure groups.

What if this trip does not meet minimum numbers?

Every group needs a minimum number of bookings for it to be feasible to run. Cancelling a trip is rare, and we do our utmost to avoid it. You will be contacted in plenty of time if we are concerned about the group size, and we will discuss options with you.



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When will we know the flight details and meeting point?

Discover Adventure will usually confirm the main group flight details 6 weeks prior to the trip departure so you will know which airport you are travelling from and can arrange suitable transport. You will be sent your **Final Joining Instructions** in the month prior to the trip departure date, within which specific details of **where and when to meet your trip leader** and fellow trekking participants will be confirmed.

Will I need my flight ticket before the trip departure date?

Unless specified otherwise, you do not need to have your flight ticket prior to the trip departure date as this will be given to you by the trip leader or a Discover Adventure representative at the airport.

Can I make my own flight arrangements or alter my flight from the main group?

Flights are included on this trip and you will automatically be booked on to the main group flights, unless you let us know otherwise in good time (no later than three months prior to the trip departure). It is possible to make your own flight arrangements; a land-only discount will be applied. See the **Flight Arrangements Form** in your Passenger Portal.

It is also possible to extend your stay and deviate from the main group flight booking (fee applies); again, see the form. Note that you will remain on the same flight path, returning from the same airport. There is sometimes a supplement to pay if the flights are more expensive on your requested day; early requests have the best chance of avoiding this. We will always contact you if this is the case to check whether you are happy to proceed. If you are keen to upgrade your flight, this may be possible at a supplement and you can contact us for an approximate price but please note that this is often very expensive and we will require full payment upfront.

What are the passport and visa requirements?

A valid 10-year passport is essential; with at least six months remaining on arrival. British citizens should refer to the foreign travel advice [given here](#) for more information; there are links to follow to the Nepal Visa Application Service Centre. You will require a **Tourist Visa** to enter Nepal, which can be obtained **online in advance**. Cost at time of writing is \$50 for up to 30 days. If this is not possible for any reason, you can obtain a tourist visa on arrival at the airport. You will need your completed visa form available at entry point, and visa fee, but no photos; your photo is taken as part of the application process. You can pay in any major currency and the process is usually quick and simple. Despite this, it is still quicker to obtain online, and we recommend this, so the group can leave the airport as quickly as possible. All other nationalities are responsible for checking with their embassies or consulates for the latest information. Please do check if you require a visa if you are not a British national. Remember to check any regulations for countries you may transit during your flight too.

There may also be health declarations to make. Do check the [FCO Entry Requirements](#) information carefully, as regulations can and do change without warning.

How can I find out more about the requirement for vaccinations?

You will need to ensure that you have the vaccinations required for this trip prior to travel – allow plenty of time. You can find some guidance and information on the www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk website. Always consult your local GP or travel clinic for the latest health advice, as they are aware of any updates in World Health Travel requirements.

What about malaria and insect bites?

Malaria rarely occurs above 1000m/3280ft (Kathmandu is around 1300m/4265ft), so for this trip you will only need malarial prophylaxis if you are staying on and travelling at lower elevations, where there is a risk. Again, check www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk. Your GP or travel clinic will advise on the best malaria tablets for the region. Cover up at dawn and dusk, use a good repellent and avoid wearing strongly perfumed toiletries to avoid insect bites – there are still plenty of mosquitoes and other biting insects in Kathmandu even if they do not carry malaria.

Passenger Portal

We have a passenger portal which will enable you to see any outstanding information we need, the countdown to your challenge departure, see your outstanding balance, make payments and update your contact details. You can access this via the following link - [Passenger Portal Log in](#).



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