



adventure
associates

Kathmandu Summit Club

NEPAL GARMA SCHOOL PROJECT & EVEREST TREK

EXPEDITION MANUAL



AUSTRALIAN
HIMALAYAN
FOUNDATION


Kathmandu

Trek in the Everest Region of Nepal and raise much-needed funds for the Australian Himalayan Foundation's Rebuild Nepal Program

ABOUT THE TRIP

Offered exclusively to Summit Club members, our trek takes place in the famous Everest region of Nepal. The main focus of this trip is to visit the Australian Himalayan Foundation projects and to participate in the rebuild of the Garma School after the devastating earthquakes of 2015. Not only does this trip offer magnificent trekking in unrivalled mountain scenery, it is also a rare opportunity to experience at a grass roots level, the hard work and commitment of the Australian Himalayan Foundation in Nepal. Beginning in the vibrant and colourful city of Kathmandu, we take time to visit some of the world heritage listed sites and AHF projects before taking a mountain flight into the foothills to participate in the Garma School project. Following our time at Garma we ascend into the Everest Region on an unforgettable trek that takes us into the Sherpa heart of Nepal. Finally, we take a magnificent flight out of the mountains and back to Kathmandu.

YOUR AMBASSADOR - GEORGE HILLARY

George has always had a strong connection with Nepal, through his father, Peter Hillary, and grandfather, Sir Edmund Hillary. He has been fortunate enough to travel through the area on several occasions, during which he has been able to foster a more personal connection with the local communities, and the projects and goals of the AHF. He is looking forward to continuing his family's legacy through his work as a Youth Ambassador for the AHF, which allows him to introduce people to the Nepal Himalaya through our trekking programs.



KATHMANDU

The Kathmandu Summit Club Community is a group of people who love the outdoors. They believe the world is an invitation and they are passionate about exploring their own boundaries. Wherever in the world that takes them. Kathmandu have teamed up with The Australian Himalayan Foundation to help raise awareness and funds, and to educate and introduce people to the philosophy of giving back to the communities in which we travel through.



HIGHLIGHTS

Trek the Everest region of Nepal on a fully supported trek escorted by AHF Ambassador George Hillary

- Raise much needed funds for the Australian Himalayan Foundation and take part in the re-build of Garma School
- Experience the vibrant city of Kathmandu with sightseeing tours of Bhoudanath Stupa and Pashupatinath Temple
- Led by an experienced Nepali Trek leader fluent in English and trained in Wilderness First Aid
- Stunning Himalayan mountain views

SINGLE SUPPLEMENTS

The cost of this tour is based on twin share arrangements; if you are travelling alone we will match you up with another traveller of the same gender. If you wish to guarantee your own room and tent you can pay the single supplement applicable to this trip.

FUNDRAISING

To join this trip there is a minimum charity donation or fundraising requirement of \$1000. AHF will contact you to organise your online fundraising platform. This trek is registered through GoFundraise, payments can be made at www.gofundraise.com.au

THE AUSTRALIAN HIMALAYAN FOUNDATION

In remote communities like the Everest region of Nepal, children and their families are cut off from basic health and education services. Children as young as 11 carry heavy loads for days at a time and have no chance of receiving the benefits of a basic education. In response to this need, AHF's Teacher Training and Quality Education program, operating in one of the poorest

regions of rural Nepal, helps ensure that all children have access to primary education. In the wake of the 2015 devastating earthquakes, the AHF is now working hard to rebuild 87 classrooms in 26 schools across the Everest region. AHF is also supporting and training community nurses in order to provide much needed maternal health services in many remote villages.



TRIP SUMMARY

17 day trip
13 day trek
3 nights hotel
6 nights camping
7 nights lodge

TRIP DATE & COSTS

1–17 October 2018
Cost \$3050 per person
twin share
Single supplement \$550
Minimum fundraising or
charity donation \$1000
Group size min 6
Group size max 16

INCLUDED

- Kathmandu gear voucher valued at \$250
- Escorted by Australian Himalayan Foundation Ambassador George Hillary
- 16 breakfasts, 13 lunches and 14 dinners
- Arrival and departure transfers if arriving on day 1 and departing day 17
- All internal transport by private vehicle
- Internal flights Kathmandu to Phaplu and Lukla to Kathmandu
- Hotel accommodation at the Tibet International Hotel in Kathmandu with breakfast included as mentioned in the itinerary
- Welcome dinner in Kathmandu
- Half day sightseeing tour on Kathmandu with site entrance fees
- Experienced English speaking Nepalese trek leader trained in remote wilderness first aid and mountain medicine
- Park entrance fees and trekking permits
- Trekking crew including trek cook, kitchen staff, Sirdar and porters to carry 15kg of your personal luggage
- AHF trek duffle bag, yours to keep
- Sleeping bag, down jacket and sleeping mat for use on trek
- Expedition medical kit

NOT INCLUDED

- International flights
- Any meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Personal travel insurance
- Bottled water, soft drinks and alcoholic beverages
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, hot showers in lodges, battery charging fees, phone calls
- Tips
- Visa for Nepal

Buddha eyes at Bhoudanath stupa



ITINERARY IN BRIEF

DAY 1	Join Kathmandu
DAY 2	Sightseeing Kathmandu
DAY 3	Fly Kathmandu to Phaplu (2360m), in the Solu Khumbu region of Nepal
DAY 4	Project at the Garma School
DAY 5	Commence trekking to Phera (2150m)
DAY 6	Trek to Nunthala (2200m)
DAY 7	Trek to Kharikhola (2600m)
DAY 8	Trek to Chaurikharka (2750m)
DAY 9	Trek to Monjo (2800m)
DAY 10	Trek to Namche (3440m)
DAY 11	In Namche
DAY 12	Trek to Tengboche Monastery (3800m)
DAY 13	Trek to Khumjung (3700m) (visit Hillary School and Khunde Hospital)
DAY 14	Trek to Monjo (2800m)
DAY 15	Trek to Lukla
DAY 16	Fly Kathmandu
DAY 17	Trip concludes in Kathmandu



Nepalese porters carrying heavy load
at Sangda Pass

Holy Sadhu men in Pashupatinath Temple



ITINERARY IN DETAIL

B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

Day 01 Join Kathmandu (1350m)

Namaste! Welcome to Nepal!

Upon arrival into Kathmandu airport you will be met by a representative of Adventure Associates and transferred to the Hotel Tibet International. Today is a joining day and so you are free to relax this afternoon. In the evening a trip briefing will be held with your Trek Leader and AHF Ambassador, before heading out for a welcome dinner. Overnight hotel. (D)

Day 02 In Kathmandu, half day sightseeing

Kathmandu is a fascinating city and home to many UNESCO World Heritage sights such as Boudhanath Stupa, Pashupatinath Temple and Durbar Square. Following breakfast we will take a sightseeing tour of

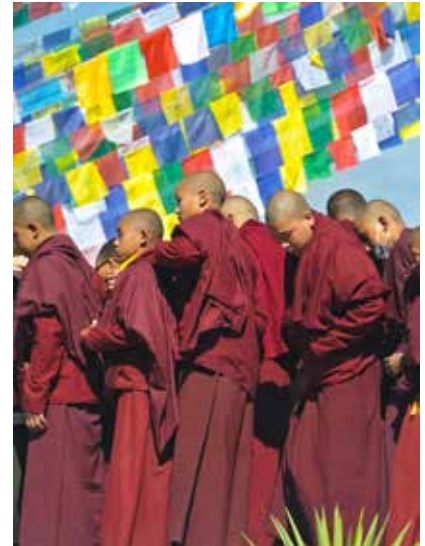
Pashupatinath, the major Hindu Temple, and Boudanath Stupa, the major Buddhist Stupa in Kathmandu. Afternoon is at your leisure, and we suggest heading into Thamel, the major tourist quarter of Kathmandu. Thamel is a hive of activity; there are many restaurants, cafes, book shops, gear stores and markets. This is the ideal time to pick up any items for your trek, which you may have forgotten to bring with you. Overnight hotel. (B)

Day 03 Fly Kathmandu to Paphlu (2360m), trek to Garma School (45mins)

Today we leave behind the colourful chaos of Kathmandu and board our mountain flight to Paphlu. The spectacular flight lasts around 25 minutes and takes us into the foothills of the Solu region where we will begin our journey into the mountains. This region is green and fertile and is made up of small villages. We catch our first glimpse of the country side and the



Off to school – Solu region



Monks attend a religious ceremony at Boudhanath Stupa in Kathmandu

An old Buddhist nun in prayer



many cultural groups of these regions.

After we arrive we will set off on our trek to Garma School where we will set up our camp and begin to establish a camp routine. Our camp comprises sleeping tents, toilet tent, a kitchen tent where our food will be prepared, and a mess tent where we take our group meals each evening. Overnight camp. (B,L,D)

Day 04 Garma School Visit & project

You will be woken with a cup of bed tea and a washbasin in your tent. After breakfast we meet the teachers and students of Garma School. The AHF will have identified the project you will be undertaking at the school. This is likely to include painting or helping set up a new classroom, this will be confirmed closer to your departure date.

Overnight camp. (B,L,D)

Day 05 Trek to Phera (2150m), trek approx. 5 hrs

Today is the first day of our trek into

the mountains. Following breakfast we say goodbye to the teachers and students of Garma and set off towards Phaplu, along the same route in which we arrived. After some time we swing to the north towards Chiwang Monastery where we stop for lunch. Chiwang Monastery is the oldest monastery in the region and we will take time to visit the monastery and the monks who live and study here.

In the afternoon it is a short walk to Phera where we set up camp for the night.

Overnight camp. (B,L,D)

Day 06 Trek to Nunthala (2200m), trek approx. 6hrs

Today's trek begins with a gentle ascent to the Taksindu La (3870m). We pass through many Sherpa villages, the largest being Ringmu and Taksindu, where we will stop for our lunch break. After lunch we descend steeply to the village of Nunthala where we will camp for the night. Overnight camp. (B,L,D)



The joy of learning



Construction underway at Garma School

Curious school children, Kathmandu



Day 07 Trek to Kharikhola, Bupsa (2600m), trek approx. 5hrs

The trail to Bupsa is undulating and mostly uphill before a steep descent takes us to a long suspension bridge which crosses the Dudh Koshi River. We pass through Jubhing and Kharikhola, both large villages with mixed ethnic groups of Sherpa, Rai and Magar. We then cross a small bridge spanning the Khari Khola river and finally we walk uphill to the village of Bupsa and our camp for the night. Overnight camp. (B,L,D)

Day 08 Trek to Chaurikharka (2750m), trek approx. 7.5hrs

Once again we cross a small bridge over the Khari Khola river and then ascend a forested trail which traverses the ridge line. We are now close to the Khumbu region. We cross another river, the Piya Khola, and then head uphill to the Chutak La (pass at 2940m), followed by a steep down hill

to the Surke Khola river. We traverse low, bypassing Lukla to Cheplung, where we join the main Everest Base Camp Trail. We are well and truly in the Sherpa heartlands now, and the trail will become busy with trekkers making their way up high into the most famous mountain region of the world.

Overnight camp. (B,L,D)

Day 09 Trek to Monjo (2800m), trek approx. 5hrs

We follow the Dudh Koshi river up valley crossing a number of spectacular suspension bridges to finally arrive in Monjo where we spend the night in a lodge. Tomorrow we will enter the Sagarmartha National Park, officially the Everest Region, and begin the big uphill to Namche. Tonight we stay in a lodge, where you may take a well earned hot shower, and charge any electrical equipment or camera batteries you may need. Overnight lodge. (B,L,D)



New construction after the earthquake at Garma



Happy children Everest region

A porter carry's a load in a traditional basket, Everest region



Day 10 Trek to Namche (3450m), trek approx. 4-5hrs

The Sherpa culture of the valley is evident in the colourful Mani walls and prayer flags as we ascend the trail. We cross numerous spectacular suspension bridges today as we cross and re-cross the Dudh Koshi, the main river that travels down through the Khumbu from the high mountains. We enter the Sagarmartha National Park near Monjo, and stop to view the 3D model of the Everest region. Sagarmartha literally means "Forehead in the Bluer Sky" and is the Nepali name for Mount Everest. The Tibetan people refer to Mount Everest as Chomolungma, which means "Goddess Mother of Mountains". Finally a long steep ascent brings us to Namche, the gateway to the Everest Region, and if the weather is clear, we will have had our first glimpse of Mount Everest from the trail leading to Namche.

A suspension bridge spans the Dudh Kosi River

On arrival in Namche we settle into our lodge. At 3450 metres in altitude, we must take it easy and relax, allowing our bodies to acclimatise to the new altitude. Namche, commonly known these days as Namche Bazaar, is a traditional trading village. For centuries the people of Tibet would cross into Nepal over the Nangpa La, to trade salt and other commodities. It is now a major village with many lodges, cafe's, bakeries and gear stores. It is an interesting place to walk around and observe the hustle and bustle of trekkers, local villagers and shop owners. Overnight lodge. (B,L,D)

Day 11 In Namche

We are now well and truly in the mountains of the Himalaya, and Namche is a beautiful Sherpa town set in a hillside and surrounded by snowy peaks. Due to the altitude we must take an extra day to acclimatise here.



Mt Everest from below Namche



Namche Bazaar



For those who are feeling energetic we will take an early morning walk to the National Park Headquarters to see the sunrise over Everest. We will also visit the Namche Monastery and take some time to rest and enjoy the hustle and bustle of Namche.
Overnight lodge. (B,L,D)

Day 12 Trek to Tengboche Monastery (3800m), trek approx. 6-7hrs

As we traverse high above the Dudh Koshi river, the forest thins out and the views open up. As we round the bend after Namche we are rewarded with awesome views of peaks such as Thamserku, Kantega and Ama Dablam, one of the most photographed peaks in the world. This is Himalayan trekking at it's best, be sure to have your camera at the ready!

Eventually we descend to the village of Phunke Tenga for lunch, and afterwards we cross a bridge and make a final two-hour ascent up to

Tengboche.

The Monastery sits spectacularly in a saddle on the ridge, and the surrounding views of snowy peaks are magnificent. Tengboche Monastery is the religious centre of the Solu Khumbu and the largest monastery in Nepal. In January 1989 a fire devastated the monastery, it has now been re-built and is a working monastery housing at least 30 young monks who pursue their religious education here.

Overnight lodge. (B,L,D)

Day 13 Trek to Khumjung (3700m) (visit Hillary School and Khunde Hospital), trek approx. 5hrs

Today is a short trekking day, in the morning we hope to see the monks in the prayers before we depart and back track to Khyangjuma. It's then a short 30 min walk to Khumjung for lunch. Khumjung is a picturesque village. In the afternoon we visit Khumjung School, built in 1961 as the



The villages of Khunde and Khumjung

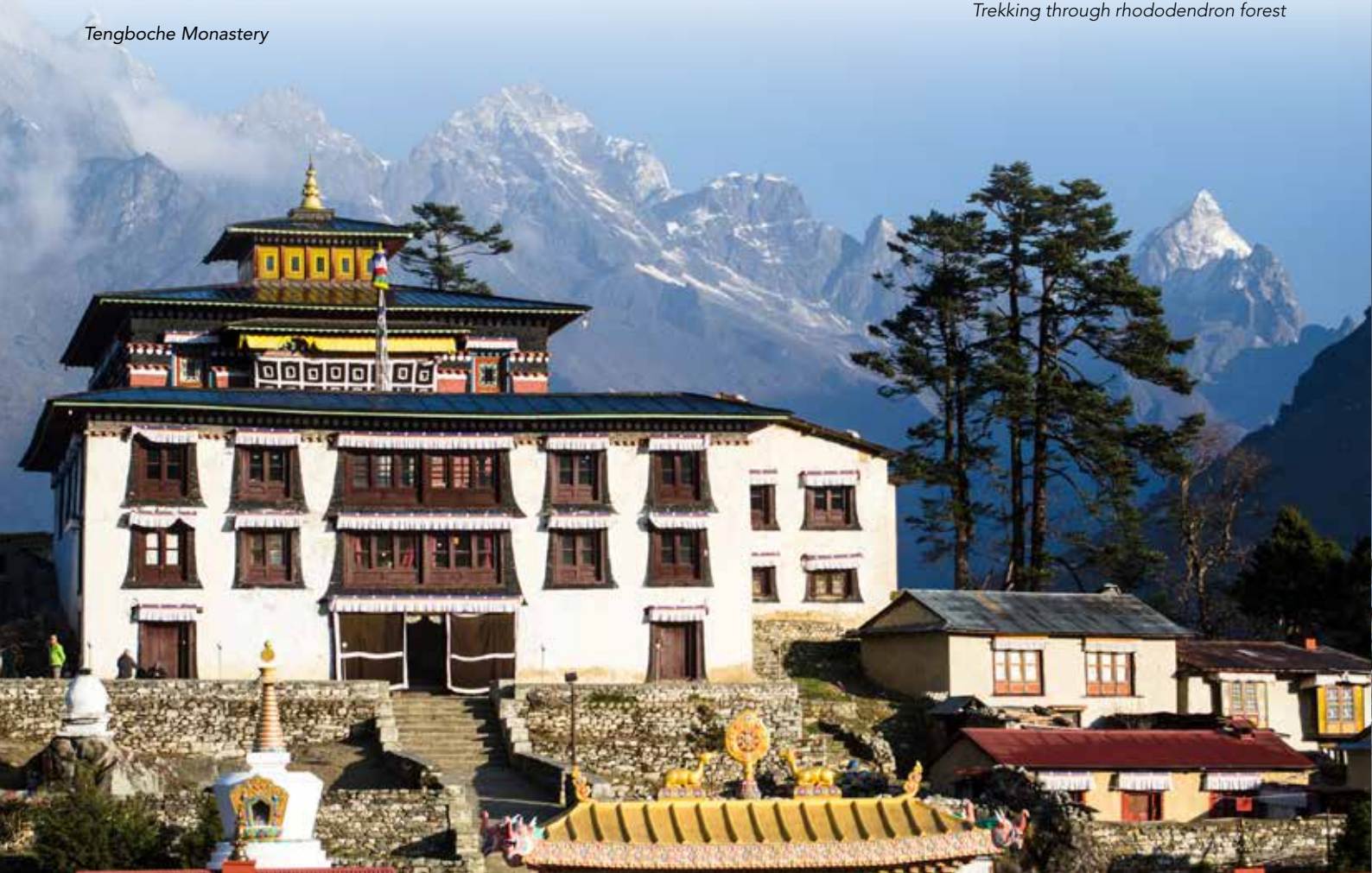


Eager to learn at the Khumjung School



Trekking through rhododendron forest

Tengboche Monastery



first major project of the Himalayan Trust, founded by Sir Edmund Hillary. The school caters for pre-school, primary and secondary students with over 350 students attending. We also take time to visit the Khunde Hospital, another of the Himalayan Trust projects which provides much needed medical care to the Sherpa community.
Overnight lodge. (B,L,D)

Day 14 Trek to Monjo (2800m), trek approx. 5hrs

After breakfast we trek through picturesque forested trails to Namche, where we pick up the main trail back to Monjo.
Overnight lodge (B,L,D)

Day 15 Trek to Lukla, approx. 3-4hrs

Our final day in the mountains sees us re-tracing our steps back to Lukla, although we have travelled this trail before it offers a different perspective

of the mountain views and villages we pass through.
Overnight lodge. (B,L,D)

Day 16 Fly Lukla to Kathmandu

We rise early this morning to be ready for our exciting 45-minute STOL aircraft mountain flight back to Kathmandu. It is one of the most exciting flights in the world as we float through the high mountains and descend once again into the organised chaos of Kathmandu. On arrival we transfer to the hotel. The rest of the day is at leisure.

In the evening enjoy a final group dinner. (B)

Day 17 Depart Kathmandu

After a leisurely breakfast transfer to the airport for your international flight. (B)



Traditional dress – Solu region



Boudhanath Stupa near Kathmandu



Taking off from Lukla airport

Lukla airport flanked by snow covered mountains, is one of the most exciting take off and landings in the world



ABOUT THE TREK

This is a camping and lodge based trek, but one that is very different to any camping trek undertaken in the west. You will sleep in a tent, and you will have a trek leader, a Sirdar, trekking crew, a kitchen crew, and porters to carry your personal baggage. The crew will set up camp, cook and serve all meals. You will be woken in the morning with bed tea in your tent, there will be time for a quick wash and to pack your duffel ready for the porters to take to our next nights camp. You will then be served breakfast in the mess tent and soon after depart for your days trekking.

This is the traditional way of mountain travel in Nepal and it offers an unbeatable opportunity to get to know a Nepali crew while visiting remote country in reasonable comfort.

We use two-man tents. Each tent is supplied with a foam mattress for each person. During the day all you carry is a daypack with a water bottle, camera, jacket, sunscreen and any other personal items you might need.

The rest of your gear goes into your trek duffle bag to be carried by our porters.

As we ascend higher into the mountains we will use eco-lodges, where you will be accommodated in private rooms with a comfortable bed. Each lodge is hand selected by us for their responsible environmental practices and high standards of hygiene and service. In

the lodges hot showers are available as well as facilities to charge your electrical equipment, this is at a small extra cost.

TREK DIFFICULTY & FITNESS

Preparation is important to ensuring you enjoy your trek and meet the challenge of each day. Some days we will trek for only 4 hours or so, and others will be longer days of up to 8 hours. You should start preparing at least 6 months before your trip commences. This trip is a moderately graded trek, and so you can expect up to 8 hours of walking per day. There is no "easy" walking in the Himalaya, and so you must expect steep ascents and descents, and possible adverse weather conditions. Aim to train 2 -3 times per week, it's about legs and lungs, and so running and cycling are good, as well as gym sessions which should include an hour of cardio work and some leg work. Extended bushwalking or hiking on the weekends is great preparation. Anywhere where you can find lots of ups and downs will stand you in good stead for the challenge ahead. It is not about speed, but rather slow and steady. Your trek leader and staff will ensure you keep a slow steady pace, which helps with acclimatisation to the high altitudes. Once you have booked your tour you will receive our comprehensive pre-departure information covering all aspects of preparation and equipment needed for your trek.

Namche Bazaar



WEATHER

This trek takes place in autumn, during this time the weather is likely to be quite pleasant. Daytime temperatures can reach 15 to 25 degrees, however mornings and evenings will be cooler. At lower altitudes it will feel quite warm and humid, especially when you are trekking, night time temperatures may drop to around 5°C.

We spend several nights at around 3,200 metres, where it can be quite cold (as low as -5° C at this time of year), these nights are spent in comfortable and warm lodges. October usually offers clear skies as the monsoon has moved away by mid to late September. Remember that you are in the Himalaya and so it can be unpredictable at times, make sure you come prepared for mountain weather conditions.

ALTITUDE

If you are ascending above 3500m, acclimatisation to altitude is an important factor and can greatly impact your enjoyment. Our trekking schedules have been carefully designed to minimise the effects of altitude. We ascend slowly and ensure an adequate number of rest days to enable safe acclimatisation. It is still possible for mountain sickness to occur, therefore a close watch is kept on each group member by the your trek

leader, who is trained in recognising and treating early symptoms of acute mountain sickness.

These symptoms include bad headache, nausea, lethargy and, in extreme cases, ataxia or loss of co-ordination and severe breathlessness on rest. A mild headache and breathlessness are not uncommon at altitude but in combination with any of the above more serious symptoms, immediate descent is imperative. If you or your friends display any of these symptoms please make sure that you inform the Group Leader immediately. It is essential at altitude that you keep your fluid intake up and it is important that you drink at least 4 liters of liquid per day to keep well hydrated. Your Group Leader will advise you more thoroughly regarding altitude problems during your group briefing in Kathmandu and throughout your trip.

FOOD & HYGIENE

The trekking crew is very conscious of hygiene and food is carefully prepared.

Whilst camping much of the food will be carried in with us so that we do not impact on local resources.

The food will be a mix of Nepali and western style and you will be amazed at the quality and variety that the kitchen staff can produce. Safe drinking water is provided for you throughout the trek. Please let us know in advance if you have any dietary requirements.

Yaks are used to porter loads to Everest Base Camp



ROUTINE

The average day begins at dawn (around 6.00 am) with a hot cup of bed tea and basin of washing water. The crew will break camp and pack while you have a cooked breakfast. The kitchen crew walks on ahead to set up and cook lunch, which we normally eat around noon.

After lunch we travel for a couple of hours. Normally we reach our campsite around mid-afternoon, which leaves time for relaxing, or exploring, there are always things to explore and curious locals to meet.

We eat around 5.30-6pm – either in a dining tent, or lodge dining room if lodging. Night falls early (around 6.30 pm) and it can start getting cold as soon as the sun drops behind the mountains. Unfortunately there is a major shortage of wood in some areas of Nepal. This makes life very difficult for locals who need wood for heating and cooking, and over-harvesting has led to serious environmental problems. We don't use wood for cooking or campfires at night. We do have kerosene lamps if you want to stay up, but the best place to be is in a sleeping bag!

OUR LEADERS IN THE FIELD

Our trek leaders are experienced and highly trained in wilderness first aid and high altitude medicine. They are local to the region and highly skilled expedition leaders who are knowledgeable and passionate, and will ensure

that all aspects of your trek run smoothly. Many of our leaders have progressed from trekking crew members through to fully qualified international mountain guides, and many have also studied abroad. If you are undertaking a mountaineering expedition you can be assured that your climbing leader is highly skilled in the mountains with a wealth of experience and knowledge.

NEPAL

Nepal is home to the most famous mountain range in the world – The Himalaya. Thousands of people travel to the Himalaya each season to trek to the base of Mount Everest, the world's highest mountain, and to experience the unique Buddhist culture of the Sherpa people.

Originally from Tibet, the Sherpa people live and work in the Everest region, and are famous for their strength and endurance amongst the highest peaks in the world, and also their resilience in eking out a very basic existence in one of the most inhospitable regions of the world.

Nepal is also extremely poor and disadvantaged in many of its rural areas. Schools and medical help are not available in many villages, and in some cases the locals must walk for days just to reach medical clinics for basic care, or to go to school. Still, a trip in Nepal leaves long lasting impressions of a people who are generous and caring and above all smiling and happy.





Mount Everest and Nuptse from Kala Patthar

It is said that every person should travel to the Himalaya once in their life, however many people return again and again, and it's not just for the stunning mountain scenery, it's the beautiful people of Nepal that brings people back time after time. A trip in Nepal is far more than just a holiday, it is a life changing experience!

MOUNTAIN FLIGHTS

The maximum baggage allowance on flights to and from Lukla and Phaplu is 15kgs, this includes the weight of hand luggage. On this trip we will allow you up to 20kgs, however remember that the weight of your luggage to be carried by the porters should not exceed 15kgs. Our partner in Nepal will hold your e-tkts for flights in and out of the Everest region.

CONSERVATION

Nepal's environment is extremely fragile. Its rapidly increasing population is putting immeasurable pressure on the country's environment and resources and it is our responsibility as visitors to minimize the impact of our presence. De-forestation is Nepal's greatest environmental challenge and it is for this reason that we use cooking gas for all cooking in camps and at the lodges. We do not have campfires and we strongly discourage travellers from buying wood-fueled hot showers in lodges along the trail.

The lodges we use have solar power or gas water heating.

ADVENTURE TRAVEL

In the remote areas that we operate things don't always go to plan. By its very nature adventure travel presents it's own challenges, sometimes flights don't run on time, or traffic makes us run late. The weather may not always co-operate or any other number of issues may arise to keep us on our feet. Sometimes we may need to adjust our itinerary and schedules due to events beyond our control. If something like this occurs your trek leader will always keep you informed. Keep an open mind and a flexible attitude, and any challenges that may arise will be taken in your stride.

HOW TO BOOK

Adventure Associates will be handling all arrangements for this trip. Passion, integrity and going 'beyond the ordinary' are the values that have made Adventure Associates such a long-standing success. Adventure Associates can also provide assistance with booking your international flights and any pre or post tour arrangements you require. To confirm a place on this exciting project we require a \$500 deposit and completed booking form.

Any questions concerning this trip please contact Julie at Adventure Associates. Julie will be looking after all aspects of your trip arrangements.

julie@adventureassociates.com

Alternatively you can access a Booking Form on our website and read the Terms and Conditions.

<http://www.adventureassociates.com/about-us/>

GENERAL TRAVEL INFORMATION

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Our expedition travels to a remote corner of the globe where medical evacuation may be difficult and very expensive. **We strongly advise you to purchase travel insurance that covers you for emergency evacuation, full medical cover, trip cancellation and lost luggage.** Where a trekker requires hospitalisation or medical treatment including evacuation, all costs associated with this are the full responsibility of that trekker.

If you are arranging your own travel insurance please check that your policy (particularly if it is issued by your credit card provider) covers you for the destination that you are visiting and covers any pre-existing medical conditions. **Adventure Associates can provide you a quote with our recommended travel insurance partners.**

MEDICAL CHECK

Given the remote areas we are trekking to, we ask you to visit your doctor for a medical clearance. We also advise to have a dental check and a visit to the TM+VC travel doctor for all your required inoculations <https://www.traveldoctor.com.au>

VISA

Most nationalities require a visa to enter Nepal. Information on how to apply for your visa can be found on the

Nepalese Consulate website <http://www.nepalconsulate.org.au>

****Please ensure your passport is valid for six months beyond the end of your trip.**

MONEY MATTERS

The Nepalese Rupee is relatively stable, currently trading around Rs 100 to US\$1. It is easy to change US\$, Euros, pounds and AU\$ at the many foreign exchange booths around Kathmandu, The US\$ is universally loved, but these days the AU\$ is just as easy to change in Nepal.

Mastercard, Visa and American Express are widely accepted. You can make rupee cash withdrawals from ATM's in Kathmandu and Namche, some machines have a US\$500 limit per day. Travel money cards – a modern day version of travellers' cheques – are recommended and do not attract high withdrawal and currency exchange fees. Bear in mind that electrical power and the Internet can be unreliable so carry some back-up funds in either cash (US\$ or AU\$). We recommend that you make sure you have enough cash before leaving Kathmandu to get you through your trek.

There are exchange counters at the international airport and it is worthwhile changing at least \$100 immediately after you arrive. This means you don't have to worry about changing money again for at least a day or so.

You can change any left-over rupees for US\$ at the airport exchange counter, providing you can show official exchange receipts into rupees.



SPENDING MONEY

Nepal can be a very cheap place to travel, but if you insist on western levels of comfort and add books, souvenirs and alcohol to your program you can quickly spend a lot of money. Your trip is all-inclusive, with just a few meals in Kathmandu not included and so you should not need to budget for too much unless you want to do a lot of shopping. On trek you may like to buy a few souvenirs (although most things can also be bought in Kathmandu, or you may like to buy chocolates, juices or soft drinks. For meals in Kathmandu A\$25 per person per day should be plenty, on trek A\$10 per day for any extras should also be enough.

INTERNET & PHONES

Unfortunately Kathmandu does experience power outages. Our hotel has a back up generator, however these blackouts can affect the availability of the Internet.

Hotel phones are available in Kathmandu, although international calls are expensive. The international dialing code in Nepal is 0.

Check with your carrier about international roaming options for your mobile. 3G services are available in Kathmandu and many parts of the Everest region. If you are using a smart phone for Internet, check the cost of roaming with your service provider. The data charges can be excessive.

ELECTRICAL CURRENT

Nepal uses Europe and UK adaptor plug types, and electrical voltage is 220-240 volts.



TIPS/GRATUITIES

It is customary for trekkers to tip the trekking crew at the end of a trip. Traditionally there is a complicated hierarchical distribution, with the largest sum going to the sirdar, then progressively smaller amounts to the cook, Sherpa, kitchen hands and porters. Your Trek Leader will assist you with the tipping process, and can work out the split with the help of the sirdar. We pay our staff well, however tipping is customary and a sign of your appreciation and recognition for the hard work of your crew.

For a trip of this sort and length we ask that you budget AUD\$100 (7600 Nepalese rupees) per person. You will leave your crew when you get



back to Lukla so the tips are distributed at the end of the trek. The distribution is much easier if you bring rupee notes rather than dollar cash.

WATER

It is safer to drink bottled or mineral water while in Kathmandu and on the trek you will have boiled water. Be wary of ice blocks, peeled fruit and salads unless served in better class hotels and restaurants. Iodine water purification tablets or a steripen can also help.



WASHING

The trekking crew will provide bowls of warm washing water in the morning, and before meals. There are shower facilities in lodges on trek.

Weather permitting; it may be possible to get some clothes washed during the day.

GIFTS TO THE LOCALS

Please do not give money, presents, or sweets to children. If you wish to make a contribution we suggest bringing along: educational material (pens, markers, note-books, colour pencils, rubbers and chalks), soccer balls and children's clothes. In consultation with your local guide, we will organise where it's best to distribute these items.

TIME CONVERSION

Nepal: GMT +5:45 Kathmandu is 5 hours 15 minutes behind Sydney and Melbourne, and 2 hours 15 minutes behind Perth, and 4 hours 15 minutes behind Brisbane, and 7 hours 15 minutes behind Auckland, New Zealand..

TRAVELLER'S TIP:

Start your adventure with an open mind and resolve to take any itinerary changes in your stride – relax and enjoy your opportunity to visit the Himalaya and its people. Areas we visit are extremely interesting, however, some parts remain remote and tourism infrastructure is often largely undeveloped. Please understand that delays and variations to the itinerary, transport, hotels and food standards, may occur.

PACKING LIST & CLOTHING SUGGESTIONS

You will be supplied with a down jacket, sleeping bag and trek duffel for use on your trek. You will receive these items in Kathmandu during your trek briefing with your Trek Leader. In your trek duffel you will need to pack all that you require to take with you into the mountains, including your sleeping bag and down jacket. The weight of your duffel should not exceed 15kgs. Any clothing you do not need on trek may be left in your luggage and secured in the hotel.



Weather conditions in the mountains can be unpredictable. Our trek takes place during trekking season, which can typically be a dry time of year. However, we must be prepared for any weather conditions in the Himalaya, and this is why it is very important to make sure you are using good quality gear that you can depend upon. Gore-Tex is widely known as the most breathable waterproof fabric, however there are some very good alternatives available at good gear stores. A rain jacket and over-pants will act as your outer layer and will protect you from rain and wind, and help keep you warm during adverse weather.



EQUIPMENT LIST

To follow is an equipment list of items you will need to bring with you, please make sure you arrive in Kathmandu with everything you need, there are many gear stores in Kathmandu in case you forget any items, however we do recommend that you do your best to come fully prepared so that you do not need to spend your limited time in Kathmandu searching for gear.

Please go through your list carefully.

FOOTWEAR

- Walking boots – good ankle support with a firm sole.
- Running shoes (for camp and back-up).
- Thongs or sandals (for showers)
- 4-5 x pairs of thick trekking socks
- 1-2 pairs of liner socks (optional but effective in warding off blisters caused by friction)



CLOTHING

- Waterproof jacket (preferably Gore-Tex or similar breathable fabric)
- Waterproof over-pants
- Down jacket – *supplied, good for use at night
- A medium to heavy weight fleece or synthetic jacket
- Warm pants for around camp and at night i.e.: fleece pants



- 2 x pairs hiking pants (possibly zip-off legs so pants convert to shorts)
- 1 x hiking shorts or skirt (optional)
- 4 x t-shirts (to wear and to layer)
- 2 x thermal tops (base layer)
- 1-2 x thermal pants (base layer)
- Gloves: A light pair of windproof/ waterproof gloves and a thin thermal pair
- Sun hat with a broad brim and chin strap. At high altitude the UV can be very strong.
- Bandana or Buff
- Woollen hat or beanie
- Street clothes for time in Kathmandu



OTHER EQUIPMENT

- Day pack (for miscellaneous personal items, camera, drink bottle, jacket etc.) with waist strap and waterproof cover
- Duffel/ kit bag *supplied (weather proof, to take on trek and be loaded for porters)
- 2 x small padlocks (to close duffel/kit bags)
- Self inflating sleeping mat (optional for added comfort)
- Sleeping bag inner sheet
- Hiking pillow (not essential but very comfy)

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

- Water bottle – 2 x 1ltr. Very important. We supply boiled water each night for your drinking water, check that your water bottle will take boiling water
- Iodine water purification tablets or Steripen (optional)
- Head torch (spare batteries & bulbs).
- Small pocket knife (not essential, and always be sure to pack this in your checked baggage)
- Personal toiletries
- Quick-dry towel
- Cigarette lighter to burn used toilet paper
- Pee bottle (for men on cold nights)
- Sarong (for women toilet privacy when there is not a convenient spot)
- Sunglasses (very important)
- Laundry soap
- Camera & camera equipment (include spare batteries/memory cards.
- Binoculars
- Reading material, notebook and pen
- Trekking pole(s). Optional – good for balance and avoiding knee problems on long descents.
- Stuff sacks & plastic bags to keep things dry in your bag
- Travel umbrella or waterproof poncho



For more tips on how to prepare for a Himalayan Trek, our friends at Kathmandu have a wealth of experience and knowledge. For detailed information on how to dress in mountain environments please go to <https://www.kathmandu.com.au/be-inspired/gear-and-packing-lists/how-to-prepare-for-a-himalayan-trek>

PERSONAL FIRST-AID KIT

The following suggested supplies and medications are intended to handle the problems that happen most often on a trek. Please talk to your doctor to modify the kit for your individual preferences and allergies. We will carry a group first aid kit, but you should have your own supply of these frequently used items. You can purchase most medicines in Kathmandu without a prescription.

- Sunscreen factor 30 or above
- Lip Balm with sunscreen protection
- Throat lozenges such as Strepsils
- Assorted Band-Aids or similar plasters
- Moleskin (or other skin protection material to prevent blisters)
- 10 cm elastic bandage (handy to hold on a variety of dressings, and to help stabilise minor sprains)
- One course of broad-spectrum antibiotics such as Cephalexin, Noroxin or Ciprofloxacin. Should you have an allergy to a particular antibiotic please make sure



- you bring a course that is safe for you to take.
- Loperamide (Imodium) for diarrhoea
- Promethazine (Phenergan) 25 mg or other anti-nausea medication
- Decongestant (Actifed, or Drixoral)
- Anti-inflammatory drugs (such as ibuprofen)
- Paracetamol (acetaminophen)
- Cold & Flu tablets
- Alcohol hand sanitiser – to disinfect your hands before eating & toileting
- Any personal medications



PHOTOGRAPHIC TIPS AND SUGGESTIONS

We expect that everyone will bring some kind of camera be it a mobile phone or a professional SLR camera with all the bells and whistles. Remember to take extra memory cards and some spare camera batteries with you, as it can be expensive or inconvenient to purchase these whilst travelling in Nepal.

Be careful with photographs or video recordings. Ask your local guide first if it is appropriate to take photographs or to make video recordings in Nepali communities and especially in religious sites such as monasteries etc. Avoid close up shots, and never remunerate people with money for a photograph.

Below are a few simple tips and suggestions that may help you get sorted before you go. Whatever camera you bring it is possible to get good images.

- Get to know your camera, make sure it is working correctly and that you understand all its main functions.
- Read and bring the instructions manual. Download an electronic version onto your laptop.
- Remember to pack the battery charger.
- Have some way of keeping your camera equipment dry and safe from dust. Lightweight nylon dry bags work well and are available in many sizes.
- Tripod and Monopod: A quality tripod is invaluable for the serious photographer. However they can be big, heavy and cumbersome to carry during our walks. A monopod is lighter and can be used as a walking stick for support.
- If you bring an SLR camera a good zoom lens for wildlife photography will be handy. 200mm – 300mm is a good focal length. (Remember that on an SLR camera with a 1.5 crop-factor sensor a 200mm lens is equivalent to a 300mm lens on full frame sensor).
- We recommend that you carry all photography equipment, cords, chargers and storage devices in your carry-on luggage in case your main luggage is left behind somewhere.



SUGGESTED READING LIST

Kathmandu has small bookshops on every corner and a strong tradition of selling and re-selling books on the street. However, if you're looking for places with a wide selection available in English, your best options are Pilgrims Book House and Mandala Book Point.

GUIDEBOOKS

Lonely Planet – Trekking in the Nepal Himalaya:

A comprehensive guide to general information as well as trekking routes.

First time trekking in Nepal: The Longest Way Home

Nepal – Culture Smart: The Essential Guide to Customs & Culture. Author: Tessa Feller

TRAVEL WRITING/MEMOIRS

The Snow Leopard: An unforgettable spiritual journey through the Himalayas. Author: Peter Matthiessen

Tiger for Breakfast: A highly recommended read for those who love Nepal and its history. Author: Michel Piessel

HISTORY

Maoists at the Hearth: Everyday life in Nepal's civil war. Author: Judith Pettigrew

A History of Nepal: Portrays a country of extraordinary contrasts, whose history has been buffeted constantly by its neighbors, China and India. Author: John Whelpton

WILDLIFE, FLORA & FAUNA

Photographic guide to the Birds of India and Nepal: A slim pocket guide to the most conspicuous birds of India and Nepal. Author: Bikram Grewal

The Soul of the Rhino: Mishra writes of his long career in conservation and particularly his work with the Asian endangered rhino at Royal Chitwan, an absorbing memoir. Author: Hemanta R. Mishra

Honey Hunters of Nepal: Photographs show life among the Gurung people and the techniques they use in gathering honey from cliffside hives. Author: Eric Valli

NOVELS

Escape from Kathmandu: The four interconnected stories in this laugh-out-loud novel include the misadventures of

two young Americans with a Yeti, international espionage, mountain climbing of the highest sort and a quest for Shangri-La. Author: Kim Stanley Robinson

Arresting God in Kathmandu. Author: Samrat Upadhyay

Buddha's Orphans: A story of an orphan boy, Raja, and the girl he is fated to love, Nilu. Author: Samrat Upadhyay

MOUNTAINEERING

Annapurna: The first conquest of an 8000m peak, one of mountaineering's classic tales of epic adventure. Author: Maurice Herzog

Annapurna, A woman's place: Arlene Blum here tells their dramatic story as the first women-to scale the treacherous slopes of Annapurna I, the world's tenth highest peak In August 1978. Author: Arlene Blum

All 14 Eight-thousanders: A peak-by-peak account of the greatest achievement of mountaineering, the first person to climb all 14 eight thousand metre peaks without supplementary oxygen. Author: Reinhold Messner

White Limbo: The first Australian climb of Mount Everest, a must read! Author: Lincoln Hall

Into Thin Air: A personal account of the Mount Everest disaster in 1996, and a minute-by-minute account of what went wrong is a bestseller. Author: John Krakauer

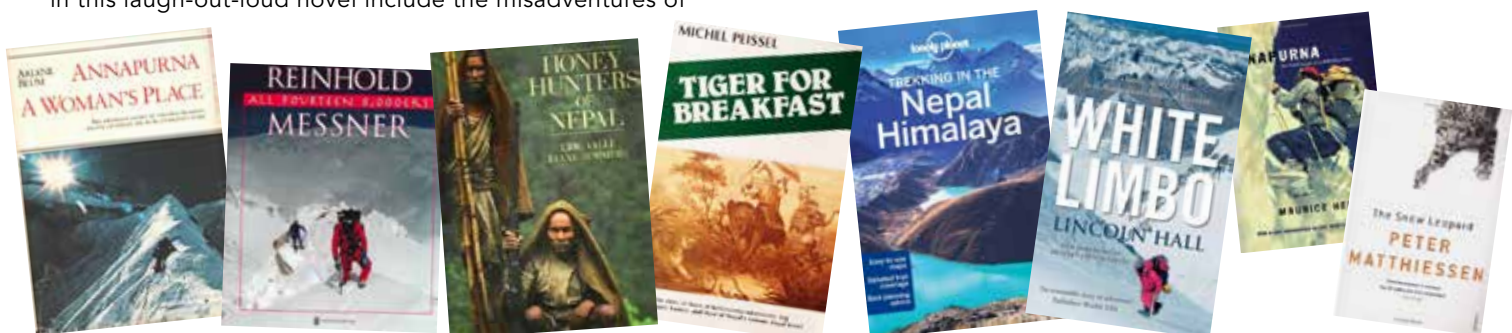
The Ascent of Rum Doodle: A hilarious send up of the great British mountaineers, originally published in 1956. Author: W E Bowman

A selection of these books can be bought online from the following online bookstores:

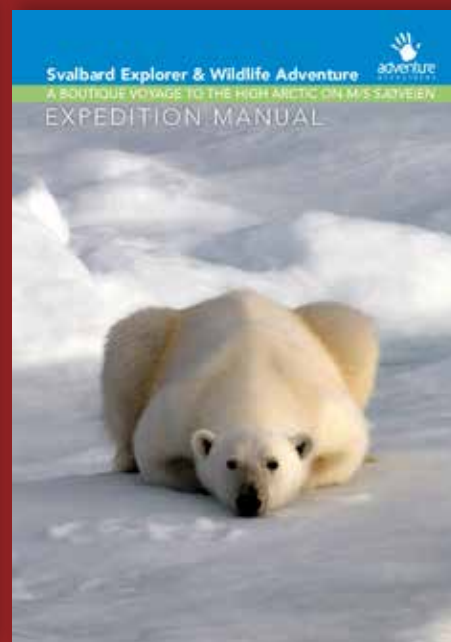
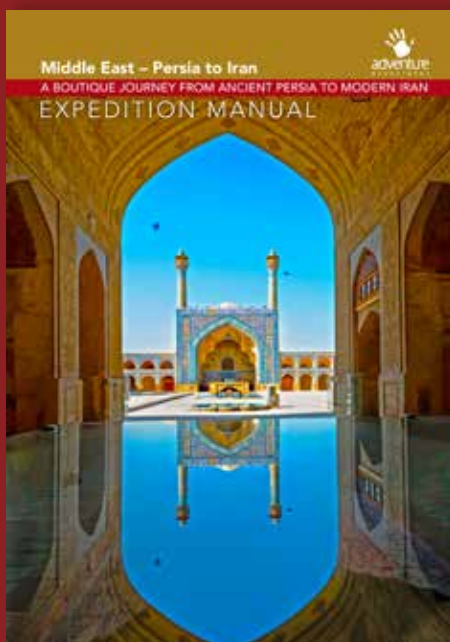
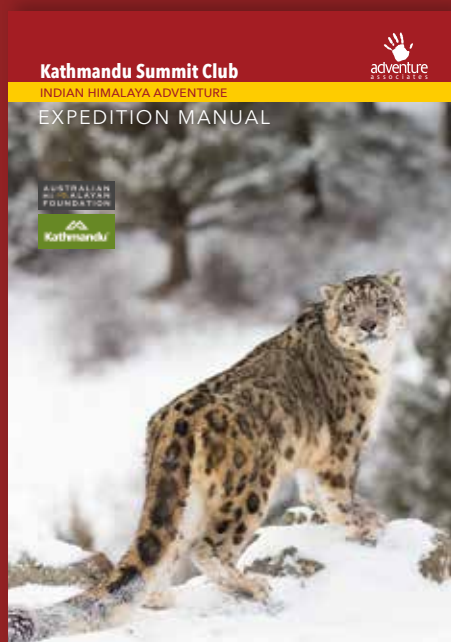
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