

Everest Base Camp



- ◆ THE CLASSIC TREK THROUGH SHERPA VILLAGES TO EVEREST BASE CAMP
- ◆ INCREDIBLE LUKLA FLIGHT
- ◆ COLOURFUL BUDDHIST MONASTERIES & SHERPA PEOPLE
- ◆ TREK TO EVEREST BASE CAMP AT THE FOOT OF THE KHUMBU ICEFALL
- ◆ ASCEND KALA PATTAR FOR AWESOME VIEWS OF EVEREST

For dates & prices check our website

This itinerary can also be operated for individuals, couples and small groups on a private tailor-made basis. The cost will be advised depending on group size and dates of departure. Please contact the Classic Journeys office to discuss your travel plans.

Introduction

Beneath the southern slopes of Mt. Everest lies the rugged and remote home of the Sherpas. Incredibly shaped mountains, whose ice-capped summits rise sharply above sheer rock walls, tower above stone walled fields and villages, now famous with their close association with mountaineering history. This trek is full of incredible mountain views and concentrates on the main Khumbu valley with plenty of time for necessary acclimatisation, time to ascend Kala Pattar for tremendous views of Everest and time to walk over the amazing Khumbu glacier to Everest Base Camp. This will probably be the highlight of the trek, particularly on our spring treks when there are many expeditions from around the world at Base Camp, attempting to climb Everest.

We have been operating treks to the Everest area since 1985 and believe we have got our itinerary "just right". Our itinerary has been carefully planned to provide extra rest and acclimatisation days and as a reserve against bad weather. This is a trek full of historical and cultural interest and magnificent mountain views

Sagarmatha (Everest) National Park covers the area known as Khumbu and is situated in the northeastern region of Nepal. It is spectacular mountainous country of approximately 1200 square kilometres, all above 3000 metres in altitude. The area is bordered in the north by Tibet and is surrounded by high mountainous ridges, nowhere lower than 5700 metres. Access from the south is via the Dudh Kosi valley. These natural barriers kept Khumbu untouched by outside influences until the advent of modern tourism and transportation.

Most of the park is steep and rugged, the terrain broken by deep gorges and glacial valleys, but in its major valleys there are some relatively level areas, which are used for growing crops and grazing. The inhabitants of the Khumbu are Sherpa's, originally Tibetan migrants, arriving some four to five hundred years ago. By 1950 the first mountaineering expeditions arrived and in 1953 Everest was first climbed by Edmund Hillary & Sherpa Tenzing Norgay.

The approach to Everest Base Camp from Nepal is one of the classic treks of the world. The mountain scenery is amazing and the Buddhist Sherpa people are incredibly friendly. Along the trails colourful prayer flags and Buddhist monuments are seen against a backdrop of glorious Himalayan Mountains.

Our Classic Everest Base Camp Trek will introduce all that is special about a trek in the Khumbu, the exciting mountain flight to and from Lukla, the most spectacular scenery, captivating Sherpa culture and the fascinating walk over the Khumbu glacier to Everest Base Camp.

Our trek begins with an unforgettable flight from Kathmandu to Lukla. From here we ascend through alpine forests and fascinating Sherpa villages to the prosperous village of Namche Bazaar. A detour up the quiet and little visited Bhote Kosi valley to Thame village and the trail to Tibet provides essential acclimatisation as we explore trails less frequented by the western trekker. From Thame we visit Khunde and Khumjung where the Sir Edmund Hillary's Himalayan Trust has a small hospital. From here we move higher up the main valley through the villages of Phortse and Pangboche beneath the towering Ama Dablam to Dingboche, the highest permanently inhabited village in the Khumbu. Two nights here provides the opportunity for an optional excursion to the top of Nangkartshang Peak (5000m) or you may choose to explore the beautiful Imja Khola Valley where the surrounding peaks and glaciers are simply awesome. Moving higher we eventually reach Gorak Shep. From here we ascend Kala Pattar (5600m) for even more spectacular views of the surrounding mountains, including the black rocky ramparts of Everest's southwest face. We also have a day to visit Everest Base Camp at the foot of the immensely impressive Khumbu Icefall. This is a tough walk but well worth the effort for the incredible scenery.

Our return journey will take us to Thyangboche Monastery, the most important centre of Buddhism in the area, before ending our trek at Lukla and an exciting mountain flight to Kathmandu.

Please note: Many trekking companies advertising Everest Base Camp treks Do Not visit Everest Base Camp. Instead they plan a long day from Lobuche to Kala Pattar for views of Mt. Everest and then return to Lobuche. Classic Journeys have always planned Everest Base Camp treks to allow time to ascend Kala Pattar and also a day to complete the amazing walk over the Khumbu glacier to the actual Everest Base Camp site. Most of our clients would agree that this is the highlight of their trek and something that should be included in an Everest Base Camp trek.



Itinerary

Day 1 – Depart UK

Depart UK on flight to Kathmandu.

Day 2 - Kathmandu (1527 metres)

Arrive Kathmandu. Flying into Kathmandu along the northern border of Nepal on a clear day is in itself an unforgettable experience, with the entire Nepalese Himalaya sprawling out below you. After customs, you will pass out of the restricted area and into the passenger pick-up area outside the building. You will see a Classic Journeys signboard and our staff will be waiting to welcome you to Nepal. After transferring to your Hotel, you will be given a chance to catch your breath and then be given a briefing. Your air ticket will be collected to reconfirm your onward travel. Overnight hotel.

Day 3 - Kathmandu

A day in Kathmandu. Morning guided sightseeing to the Buddhist and Hindu sights in Kathmandu, probably to Kathmandu's Durbar Square, Swayambunath - the Buddhist monkey temple and Pashupatinath – a sacred Hindu temple complex on the banks of the Bagmati River. Three major towns are located in the valley, Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur, each having a great artistic and architectural tradition. Kathmandu is the capital and the largest city in the country. Patan, the second largest is separated from Kathmandu by a river. Bhaktapur, the third largest, is towards the eastern end of the valley and its relative isolation is reflected in its slower pace and more distinctly mediaeval atmosphere. In the Valley the landscape is dramatically sculpted by the contours of the paddy fields. The towns and villages are alive with the colours of farm produce, ranging from pyramids of golden grain to the vivid reds of chilli peppers laid out on mats to dry in the sun. In the streets and towns there is a constant bustle of activity, especially in the bazaars and markets where the farmers sell their vegetables and fruit. The afternoon is free for you to explore the city further and pack bags ready for the start of the trek the following morning. You can leave a bag at the hotel with items you will not need on the trek. Overnight hotel. (B)

Day 4 - Phakding (2656 metres)

After breakfast we are transferred to the airport for the spectacular mountain flight from Kathmandu to Lukla, by 18 seater Twin Otter STOL planes (35 mins flight). The flight takes you over a series of ridges with the magnificent Himalayan peaks to the north, forming the border with Tibet. Entering the Dudh Kosi valley you may see the airstrip at Lukla (2880m) below before the exciting landing. Here our trekking crew will be waiting for us. After sorting out our gear, having a cup of tea (or even lunch depending on the time) and meeting our Sherpas and trekking crew, we begin the trek by descending to Chaunrikhaka and heading up the Dudh Kosi valley to Phakding. (3 hours walking). Overnight lodge. (BLD)

Day 5 - Namche Bazaar (3450 metres)

We continue north following the Dudh Kosi river and on to Monjo and Jorsale where we enter the Mt. Sagarmatha (Everest) National Park. Just before the park entrance is the home of our friends Ang Darki Sherpani and Ang Nima Sherpa and we will stop for lunch here. It is a short walk to the confluence of two rivers, the Imja Drangpa (Imja Khola) and the Nangpo Tsangpo (Bhote Kosi) followed by a steep climb (around 2 hrs.) to Namche Bazaar, the main village in the Khumbu. Half way up the hill, if the weather is clear we get our first views of Everest and Lhotse. Namche is a prosperous Sherpa village and an important trading centre with a weekly Saturday market; fresh foodstuffs are brought up from lower villages to be bought by the Sherpas. (5 hours walking). Overnight lodge. (BLD)

Day 6 - Namche Bazaar

The first of our acclimatisation and exploration days. Visit the Sherpa Cultural Centre and the National Park headquarters. The views from here of Ama Dablam, Kwangde, Thamserku and Kangtaiga are fantastic. Later in the day we will walk to the airstrip at Shyangboche directly above Namche and on to the Everest View hotel. This hotel was built with Japanese money to provide very expensive accommodation for people flying into Shyangboche. This has never really worked as Shyangboche at 3900 metres is too high to just fly into from Kathmandu and many people doing this suffered serious altitude problems. However the hotel does provide a wonderful view of Everest and sipping tea on the veranda overlooking the valley with Everest above is a pleasant way to acclimatise. Overnight lodge. (BLD)

Day 7 - Thame (3800 metres)

Thame is a very pleasant village with a beautiful Gompa (monastery) about 3 hours walk from Namche. Once out of Namche the trail is almost level and follows the Bhote Kosi valley. This was once a popular trading route into Tibet. Himalayan Thar (wild goat) and Impeyan pheasants are often spotted in the forest in this valley. At Phurte we will visit the forest nursery funded by the Himalayan Trust. Along the way we pass many prayer flags and Mani stones, all indicative of the Tibetan/Buddhist culture of this area. Further up the valley, beyond Thame, is the Nangpa La, the high pass leading to Tibet, beneath the peaks above the Rolwaling valley with fabulous sounding names such as Pigpherogo Shar and Tengri Ragi Tau. (3 to 4 hours walking). Overnight Lodge. (BLD)

Day 8 - Kunde (3840 metres)

After breakfast we can visit Thame Gompa (monastery), which was established by Lama Sange Dorje, the fifth reincarnate Lama of Rongbuk in Tibet. Lama Sange Dorje played an important part in the spiritual history of the Khumbu. Some of the books here could be more than 300 years old. Head back down the Bhote Kosi valley towards Namche Bazaar, taking the trail to Kunde before descending to Namche. Kunde is a much quieter village than Namche and our Lodge here provides excellent views of Ama Dablam. Kunde is well known for its excellent hospital, which was set up in 1966 and funded by the Himalayan Trust. It is well worth a visit (and a donation). The village of Kunde virtually joins the village of Khumjung but the two villages are quite separate communities. (3 to 4 hours walking). Overnight Lodge. (BLD)

Day 9 – Phortse (3800 metres)

Soon after leaving Kunde and Khumjung the trail climbs up a steep stone staircase and then gradually continues across the hillside to Mong, a large Chorten (Buddhist monument) on top of a ridge at 3978 metres. This ridge descends from Khumbila (Khumbu Yul La), a 5734-metre peak, and the abode of the patron God of the Khumbu region. There are great views across the valley to the village of Phortse and the spectacular river gorge below. The trail descends towards the Dudh Kosi where we stop for lunch near the bridge at Phortse Tenga. From here the trail climbs gradually through rhododendron forest to the village of Phortse. On the way look out for colourful pheasants and the shy musk deer, which are very often seen in this forest. The village of Phortse is famous for its buckwheat but potatoes are also grown in large numbers. (5 hours walking). Overnight Lodge. (BLD)

Days 10 & 11 - Dingboche (4336 metres)

From Devoche the trail climbs steadily up the Imja Khola valley providing excellent views of Ama Dablam, the Nuptse-Lhotse wall and Everest. From Pangboche we walk through alpine meadows passing several yak herders' huts (Goths). The first we come to is Shomare owned by the villagers of Pangboche and used for growing potatoes. Our route passes beneath the towering Ama Dablam and after crossing the Lobuche Khola on a wooden bridge we follow the Imja Khola to Dingboche, the highest permanently inhabited village in the Khumbu. (5 hours walking)

A second night at Dingboche will be of particular benefit for aiding acclimatisation. There are several possibilities for day excursions. You could walk up the valley towards Chhukung, a small summer settlement near the head of the valley. Another possibility is to ascend Nangkartshang Peak, which towers above Dingboche village and offers some of the best views in this region. Prayer flags and a sudden drop mark the top. The views are magnificent with Numbur, Chhukung, Makalu, Ama Dablam and many more peaks and passes all visible. Overnight Lodge. (BLD)

Day 12 - Lobuche (4939 metres)

We climb the ridge and cross the flat plain above the Pheriche valley. The trail leads to the bridge crossing a small stream immediately before Duglha. After passing the village of Duglha we climb higher onto the terminal moraine of the Khumbu glacier, passing a row of stone monuments built in memory of Sherpas and some foreign climbers who have died on mountaineering expeditions in the area. From here the trail climbs gently and follows the west side of the valley to Lobuche. Lobuche is set on the slopes of an ablation valley and the moraine towards Nuptse offers excellent views, the sunset on Nuptse from here can be quite spectacular. (4 hours walking). Overnight lodge. (BLD)

Day 13 – Kala Pattar (5600 metres), Gorak Shep (5191 metres)

An early start as this is usually the clearest time of the day. The trail continues along the west side of the valley then becomes steeper as we cross several side moraines before reaching Gorak Shep. It is quite rough walking before the trail suddenly descends to Gorak Shep. Throughout the day we have tremendous views of Nuptse and then Pumori, Lingtren and Khumbutse come into view forming the border with Tibet. After a rest and some refreshments at Gorak Shep we will climb Kala Pattar (5600m) for the classic view of Everest's southwest face. All around are the giants of the mountain world, Pumori (7145m), Changtse (7553m), Nuptse (7855m) and Lhotse (8516m).

The ascent takes around 2 hours and the views are incredible. The Khumbu Icefall can easily be seen and even the tents at Everest Base Camp can be picked out. (2 to 3 hours walking from Lobuche to Gorak Shep). Overnight lodge. (BLD)

Day 14 – Everest Base Camp (5400 metres), Lobuche (4939 metres)

Today we take a day walk to Everest Base Camp, 3 hours away from Gorak Shep. This is a hard day but well worth the effort and for most people, getting to the actual base camp is the highlight of the trek. The route follows the lateral moraine of the Khumbu glacier, picking its way through a jumble of rock. Along the way there are good views of Everest. Past towering ice-pinnacles (seracs) to arrive at the site of base camp at the foot of the impressive Khumbu Icefall, which tumbles down from the Western Cwm. The walk is hard but well worth the effort and hopefully an expedition will be in progress to add that extra interest. In the spring there is much activity as climbing teams are preparing for summit attempts. The scene is absolutely fantastic and contrary to some reports, the area is clean and generally rubbish free. After returning to Gorak Shep and welcome hot drinks, we descend to Lobuche. For those who don't wish to walk to base camp there is the opportunity of ascending Kala Pattar (for a second time!) and taking a more leisurely walk to Lobuche. (8 to 10 hours walking). Overnight lodge. (BLD)

Day 15 - Devoche (3770 metres)

Downhill most of the way, descending to Dughla and Pheriche. The Himalayan Rescue Association have a trekkers aid post here and it is quite interesting to have a look around and maybe have a chat with the doctors running the post. From Pheriche we cross the Lobuche Khola on a wooden suspension bridge and follow the Imja Khola to the village of Pangboche and on to Devoche where we stay the night. We are only half an hour from Thyangboche but the water supply is much cleaner and more reliable here than at Thyangboche. The views up the valley to the Nuptse-Lhotse wall with Everest behind are fantastic. (6 hours walking). Overnight lodge. (BLD)

Day 16 - Namche Bazaar (3450 metres) - Monjo (2815 metres)

From Devoche it is just 30 minutes of climbing through birch and rhododendron forest to the ridge where Thyangboche monastery is located. We spend time visiting the monastery before descending through forest to the bridge over the Dudh Kosi at Phunki where there are water driven prayer wheels. We then climb and contour around the hillside to Sanasa and on to Namche Bazaar. This is a lovely days walk, the descent is easy and relaxed with the hard work behind us and our return journey provides different views of the mountains and villages that we passed on our ascent. We continue descending from Namche to the Dudh Kosi valley and on to Monjo. (6 to 7 hours walking). Overnight lodge. (BLD)

Day 17 - Lukla (2832 metres)

Continue descending, although it is not all downhill. At Choplung we leave the valley trail to ascend gently and contour around the hillside to Lukla. The trail climbs steadily above the fields and school of Chaunrikhaka village. Lukla is a long, narrow village, the central street leading to the airstrip, which is now a tarmac strip on the Lukla hillside high, above the Dudh Kosi valley. The bottom of the airstrip is 60 metres lower than the top. (4 to 6 hours walking). Overnight lodge. (BLD)

Day 18 – Fly to Kathmandu

Today (weather permitting) we pack up early and fly to Kathmandu (35 minute flight). Transfer to our hotel and welcome hot showers. Overnight hotel. (B)

Day 19 – Kathmandu

A day in Kathmandu for sightseeing and relaxing. This day is a spare day just in case it is needed should there be any delays with the Lukla – Kathmandu flight. Overnight hotel. (B)

Day 20 – Depart Kathmandu.

Transfer to the airport for your departure flight. (B)

B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner

The day-to-day schedule should be taken only as a general guide. A variety of factors, including adverse weather conditions, difficulty with transportation and politics can lead to enforced changes. Because of this it is not possible to guarantee that any of our holidays will run exactly according to the planned itinerary. The trip leader will make any changes, which are necessary.

NEPAL EXTENSIONS

There are many interesting destinations, which offer an enjoyable variation to your holiday. The programmes can be tailored to suit individual requirements and we will be happy to suggest destinations and itineraries to compliment your own ideas. It is also possible to extend this holiday and have extra time Kathmandu. Here are a few suggestions.

Chitwan National Park: We offer options for a safari in Chitwan National Park, one of the finest wildlife reserves in Asia. For accommodation we can book any of the properties offering a wide choice of prices and options.

Bardia National Park in West Nepal or **Koshi Tappu National Park** in East Nepal

White water Rafting: on the Trisuli or Bhote Kosi rivers.

Everest Mountain Flight: The 1 hour flight departs Kathmandu early morning and provides spectacular views of Mt. Everest and the surrounding mountains.

Bhutan: A five-day cultural visit to include Paro, Thimpu and Punakha.

Tibet: A four or five day visit to Lhasa, the capital of Tibet

Please contact the Classic Journeys office if you plan to extend your stay in Nepal.

Please Note: If you plan to extend you stay in Nepal it is essential we are informed as soon as possible so that alternative international flight dates can be booked. There is always a high demand for flights to and from Kathmandu.

TREKKING IN NEPAL WITH CLASSIC JOURNEYS

- With over 25 years experience we believe the quality of our Nepal treks is second to none.
- We operate fully supported, environmentally sustainable group treks.
- Our itineraries are carefully planned to provide extra rest and acclimatisation days and as a reserve against bad weather.
- Our Nepalese leaders are professionally trained and are among the most experienced in Nepal. Who better to look after you than your professional local leader, who speaks the language and knows the culture, intimately?
- Our friendly trekking crews are dedicated to ensuring your holiday is the best it can be. They will accompany you along the trail and supervise preparation of your meals.
- Porters or pack animals carry your main baggage for you.
- Sleeping bags, cotton or fleece liners, padded duvet jackets, mattresses, kit bags and basic first aid kits are provided on all of our Nepal treks.
- We provide insurance, equipment and gear for our crew and porters and aim to keep our impact on the environment to a minimum.

The International Porter Protection Group (IPPG) works to improve the conditions of the mountain porters in the tourism industry worldwide. Classic Journeys supports the International Porter Protection Group (IPPG) and are the first UK trekking company to make a commitment of donating on an annual basis. All porters on a Classic Journeys Nepal trek are provided with insurance and adequate clothing (waterproofs, warm clothing, boots, goggles). For more information about the IPPG check out their website www.ipg.net

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

If you would like Classic Journeys to book your international flights, please tick the flight inclusive package box on the booking form. Please advise if you have a preferred airline you would like to travel with or if you have a preferred airport you would like to travel from. Classic Journeys will then book your international flights and advise you of the actual cost.

To discuss your international flight options, please give the Classic Journeys office a call and we will advise on up to date flight prices and timings for your chosen trip.

Baggage Allowance: For hold luggage this is normally around 20kg and you should aim to keep to this weight. For internal flights the weight limit may be 15kg. Classic Journeys is not responsible for any excess baggage charges incurred.

Land Only Clients: Land only clients who are making their own flight arrangements should meet up with the group at the hotel in Kathmandu. We can arrange airport transfers if needed and will provide hotel contact details.

If you have booked on a land only basis and are making your own flight arrangements, you must check with the Classic Journeys office that your chosen holiday has reached the minimum numbers required and is **guaranteed to operate** before paying for your air tickets. We cannot be held liable, in cases where we cancel your trip, for losses incurred relating to any flight booking you have made.

PRICING

If you choose the Land Only plus international flights package Classic Journeys will book your international flight and advise you of the cost. The price of the tour will be the Land Price plus the cost of international flights on your chosen airline. Depending on the airline flights are booked with, you will pay for these flights with your final balance, 8 weeks before the trip departure. With some airlines, flights have to be paid for on making the flight booking and we will require full payment for the air tickets in order to purchase the tickets. In this situation we advise paying for your air tickets as soon as possible to secure the lowest fare.

Airfares and taxes are subject to change and if the fare has increased before the final balance has been paid, the additional cost will be passed on and detailed on the invoice.

INCLUDED IN THE COST

- Hotel accommodation on a twin share basis (unless single has been requested) for the nights listed in the itinerary
- All meals as specified
- Airport – Hotel – Airport Transfers
- All internal transport as the itinerary
- Sightseeing tours where specified
- All trekking arrangements including trekking permits, National Park entrance fees, accommodation in local lodges (twin sharing unless single has been requested), bed sheets, pillowcases, sleeping bag and duvet jacket (if requested), English speaking trek guide (Sirdar) & porters
- Nepalese tour leader who will meet you in Kathmandu (with a group size of 4+). With groups of less than 4 members, you will be accompanied on trek by an English speaking Nepalese guide (Sirdar).
- Cordura kit bag
- Basic first aid kit carried by your guide

NOT INCLUDED IN THE COST

- International flights from the UK
- Airport Taxes
- Visa fees
- Medical examination (if required) & vaccination costs
- Personal expenditure, bar bills, laundry, telephone calls, etc.
- Porters, guides & other tips
- Meals not specified
- Personal clothing & equipment
- Travel insurance
- Optional trips
- Charges incurred as a result of delays beyond Classic Journeys control
- Anything not specified in the Cost Includes section

GROUP SIZE

Minimum 2, Maximum 12

This holiday will operate once the minimum group size has been reached.

GUIDE / TOUR LEADERS

On arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel by our transport staff. For any included sightseeing you will be accompanied by a professional sightseeing guide. For the trek, an English speaking guide (Sirdar) will accompany you along with the required number of porters. Depending on the group size there may also be one or more assistant guides. With four or more clients an additional local tour leader will accompany you.

Your leader will be with you throughout the trek to guide you along the route, help organise and interpret in the villages and assist the group in any other way possible. Our leaders are fluent in English and Nepalese as well as often another language, and have walked in the area many times. They will try and give you a real insight into the local way of life and, for those interested, will happily give some basic Nepalese lessons while walking or over evening drinks.

Although not specialists, they are interested in the area's mountains, flora and fauna. Please ask your guide/leader if you have any queries during your holiday e.g. rest breaks, type and quantity of food or any other specific requests, as they will do their best to adjust the trip accordingly and cater for your needs and tastes.

TREK GRADE

Please remember that occasionally bad weather, altitude and unfamiliar cultures can make extra demands. A sense of humour and determination are important attributes on any adventure holiday and on a trekking holiday it is important to enjoy walking. In order to help you in selecting a trek we have given each trek a grade, although this is only a simple guide. Please read the appropriate trip dossier and if you need help in deciding which trek is suitable, please call the office and we will be pleased to advise you further.

Easy treks involve up to 6 hours of walking a day, on good trails with plenty of time for sightseeing. Altitudes generally do not exceed 3500 metres. Anyone who enjoys regular exercise and is in good physical condition should easily cope with these treks.

Moderate treks involve walking for 6 to 8 hours a day in more remote country, reaching altitudes of approximately 4500 metres. A reasonable level of fitness is required as there will be much ascent and descent with the occasional difficult day. A hill walking background is advisable.

Demanding treks are harder, suitable for regular hill walkers as they are generally more demanding and may involve 7 or 8 hour days, with altitudes up to 5500 metres. You should be physically fit and appropriate preparation is essential. Some days may involve crossing a pass with up to 10 hours walking.

A TYPICAL DAY

The day normally starts with an early morning mug of tea (or coffee), enjoyed while still in our sleeping bags at around 6.00 am. We will have breakfast in the lodge dining room, please pack before breakfast, as the porters will normally set off while we eat. We start walking after breakfast, between 7.30 and 8.30 am. Everyone is free to walk at the pace, which is comfortable for them, stopping along the way to explore villages and take photographs. We will stop around 11.00 am at a local teahouse or lodge for lunch. Our overnight lodge is usually reached at around 3 to 4 pm. Afternoon tea and biscuits or snacks are served on our arrival and at around 6.30 to 7.00 pm we will meet in the dining room for the evening meal.

HEALTH & FITNESS REQUIREMENTS

The fitter you are before embarking on a trekking holiday the more enjoyment you are going to get out of it. You should be in good condition for the activity you are going to do - lots of walking. Once you decide you are going on a trek, it is wise to begin a fitness programme. The best way for you to prepare is to take a lot of walks, particularly up and down hills. Jogging, aerobics, cycling and fast swimming will also help but should be in addition to walking outdoors.

We carry a basic first aid kit but recommend that each person also carry a personal first aid kit including any prescription medication they require; a suggested contents list will be provided on booking in the country information dossier. We also provide details of the recommended vaccinations needed however you will need to talk to your doctor, practice nurse or a travel clinic for the latest advice on health recommendations.

ACCOMMODATION

In Kathmandu we typically stay at the Shanker Hotel, a 100-year-old palace, situated in the heart of Kathmandu, facing the North side of the Royal Palace and just 10 minutes walk from busy Thamel, a quiet retreat with swimming pool and gardens. The grandfather of Her Majesty of Nepal once owned this heritage hotel, and the present owners have kept its historical character and the visible grandeur of the exterior and merged the old with modern comforts and authentic decorative objects, to create our comfortable base in Kathmandu. Alternatively we may stay at the Hotel de l' Annapurna, hotel Shangri La or Yak & Yeti hotels. These hotels are centrally located, situated close to the Royal Palace amidst landscaped gardens complete with swimming pool.

Our trek uses local lodges for accommodation. Most are family run, basic, clean and provide a deep insight into the lives of the local people. We have carefully selected the lodges in each village; they provide simple wooden beds, mattress, pillow and sheet. You will need to bring your own sleeping bag or request to borrow one of ours. Lodge accommodation is allocated on a twin-sharing basis, although very occasionally on trek, dormitory accommodation may be all that is available. Please note that sometimes the mentioned accommodation is fully booked in which case we will use similar standard accommodation.

SINGLE SUPPLEMENTS

If you are a single person booking this holiday you do not have to pay single supplements, if you are happy to share. Neither will you be asked to pay a single supplement if you end up with single occupancy because of odd numbers. If you are travelling by yourself you will be paired with another single client of the same gender. Single supplements are payable if you specifically request to have a room/tent to yourself. If you have requested single accommodation we will do our best to secure this although this may not always be possible.

FOOD

Breakfast in Kathmandu and Pokhara (if your itinerary visits Pokhara) and all meals on trek included. Most hotels and restaurants usually provide both vegetarian and non-vegetarian, continental, Nepalese and traditional cuisine. Please ask the staff if you have any specific request, especially regarding flavours and spices, as they will do their best to adjust menus accordingly and cater for your tastes. The lodges on the trail offer varied food and the menus are as diverse as the lodges themselves. There are continental menus as well as local cuisine such as dhal bhat (lentils and rice) and other nourishing meals. As much as possible, locally bought fresh vegetables are used although in some remote areas they are not available. Fresh fruit should always be peeled and avoid salads or raw vegetables. The menus in the lodges tend to look extensive but for trekking it is best to choose the high carbohydrate foods based on rice, chapattis, potatoes and vegetables, avoid fried food on ascents to assist with altitude.

WEATHER

Nepal has two seasons the dry season from October to May and the rainy, monsoon season from June to September. Daytime temperatures at lower altitudes (Kathmandu) will range between highs of 20°C (December to February) up to 30°C (May to October). The best time to visit most regions of Nepal is from October to early April when the weather is good for trekking and relatively dry. The season can be extended into May for higher altitude areas such as the Everest region. Early spring (mid Feb, March and April) will be ideal to see the rhododendrons in flower, with temperatures between 20°C to 30°C. Late autumn (October and November) offers crisp skies and often the clearest mountain views; temperatures are similar (20°C to 30°C). Winter starts from December to February, when the mornings and evenings can be quite cold but warming up in the afternoon to become warm and sunny, the temperature ranges from 6°C to 20°C. The summer months of June to August can be too hot for general travel with monsoon rains. Pokhara remains favourable all the year round neither too warm nor too cold.

EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING

You will need to provide personal equipment and clothing. Buying specialist equipment and clothing can be costly. That is why on our Nepal trekking holidays, if requested, we have synthetic 4/5 season sleeping bags and liners that you can borrow free of charge! We can also lend you a synthetic duvet jacket, again free of charge! A considerable saving for those people who don't have their own equipment. You do not need any specialist equipment or clothing for most treks. Basically you need similar clothing to what you would take on a winter walk in the British hills. A detailed equipment list is provided on booking. We also provide a spacious Cordura kit bag, which will be given to you before your trek and is yours to keep. We provide a comprehensive equipment list in the country information dossier, which we send you on confirmation of booking.

PASSPORT & VISA REQUIREMENTS

You will require a passport valid for at least 6 months from the date of entry into Nepal; British Nationals also require a Nepalese entry visa, which should be obtained prior to departure. We will send you a visa application form and details of how to apply for this when you book. You can apply for your visa from the embassy in London. Alternatively you can obtain your visa on arrival at Kathmandu, although this may mean joining a queue. Other nationalities should check with the Nepalese embassy to see if a visa is required.

INSURANCE

It is a condition of booking with Classic Journeys that you have adequate travel insurance cover. It is very important that you obtain insurance cover against the usual risks associated with adventure travel, from the date of booking until the date you return home. Please ensure that your insurer is aware of your Classic Journeys itinerary and agrees to cover the activities being undertaken. Please ensure that your insurance provides adequate protection against the two major concerns: medical / repatriation expenses while abroad and cancellation / curtailment charges in the event that you, a travelling companion or a close relative fall ill either before or during the trip. For trekking holidays your travel insurance must contain evidence of satisfactory cover for repatriation and helicopter rescue.

Classic Journeys do not provide any advice on travel insurance. Classic Journeys is an Introducer Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Ltd. who are Authorised and Regulated by the Financial Services Authority. Campbell Irvine is a specialist travel insurance broker. The comprehensive policy they issue provides 24-hour medical emergency assistance and covers altitude and all adventurous activities undertaken on our holidays. For single-trip policies, the insurance provides cover for both UK and worldwide residents at very competitive rates. In addition an annual policy is available to United Kingdom residents.

To obtain insurance cover visit the insurance section of the Classic Journeys website and follow the links to the Campbell Irvine Ltd. website. Alternatively contact the Classic Journeys office and we will send you details and an application form.

We require confirmation of your insurance, the policy number and 24-hour emergency telephone number who ever you take insurance with.

SUGGESTED READING FOR NEPAL

Nepal: An Insight Guide: APA Publications.

Rough Guide to Nepal: Reed, Rough Guide Publications.

Nepal Phrasebook: Margit Meinhold & Prakash A. Raj, Lonely Planet Publications.

Annapurna: Maurice Herzog. Describes the first conquest of an 8000 metre peak.

The Gurkhas: Byron Farwell, Penguin.

Window on to Annapurna: Joy Stephens.

Annapurna A Woman's Place: Arlene Blum

Kathmandu to Everest: Uchida. An excellent photographic essay of the entire route.

The Ascent of Everest: John Hunt, London 1953.

Everest: Walt Unsworth. The story of climbs on Everest from 1921, Oxford Illustrated Press.

The Story of Mt. Everest National Park: Cobb Horwood Publications, New Zealand. An excellent book, applicable to all areas.

Birds of Nepal: Grimmett, Inskipp & Inskipp. (Field guide available)

BOOKS & MAPS AVAILABLE FROM:

Stanfords, 12 Long Acre, London, WC2E 9LP. Tel: 020 7836 1321

Cordee, 3A De Montfort Street, Leicester. Tel: 0116 2543579

Cicerone at Booksources, 50 Cambuslang Road, Cambuslang, Glasgow, G32 8NB

Maps are readily available in Kathmandu.

Web Links: <http://www.amazon.co.uk>

If you have any questions or would like to know more about any aspect of this trek, please do not hesitate to contact the Classic Journeys office.

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Classic Journeys **ADVENTURE TRAVEL**

Our Experience is Your Guarantee

Classic Journeys have a proven record of operating top quality, adventure holidays with over 25 years experience. Our ground agents and friends are the best in the business. They have an unsurpassed knowledge and ability for organising treks, expeditions, wildlife and adventure travel and all have excellent contacts, extremely important when dealing with local bureaucracy.

An important aspect of our success is our team of reliable and professional leaders, both western and local who ensure everything runs smoothly and efficiently. All our leaders are experienced, enthusiastic and have travelled widely. Working with our experienced and friendly staff, you can be sure of a high quality, personal service that many of our clients have come to expect.

Your Complete Financial Protection

Classic Journeys is a fully licensed and bonded tour operator with an Air Travel Organisers Licence (ATOL) issued by the Civil Aviation Authority (ATOL 3022). The purpose of the ATOL scheme is to provide financial protection for your holiday arrangements. An ATOL is a legal requirement for anyone selling air holidays to the public. In order to obtain this licence we have to continually satisfy the very rigorous standards and provide a bond, you can book your holiday with Classic Journeys in complete confidence that your payment is fully protected.

How To Book

Before making your booking please make sure that you have read the relevant tour itinerary. This can be downloaded from the tour page on our website, or you can request a copy to be posted to you from the Classic Journeys office. You should also read our General Information and Booking Conditions on our website. It is important that you choose a trip that is well suited to your experience and abilities. If you have any doubt or need to chat through any of our tours, please call the Classic Journeys office. Our advice is based on first hand experience and we are always happy to talk about our journeys.

Provisional Booking: It is sensible to check if places are still available on any Classic Journeys tour you are interested in before sending your booking form to us. We will be happy to hold open space for you for up to 7 days (up to 14 days if you live outside Europe) in order to give you sufficient time to send in your booking form and deposit.

Definite Bookings: To make a definite booking you must either complete and sign our standard booking form which can be printed off from our website at www.classicjourneys.co.uk and post or fax it to us, or complete the on-line booking form and transmit it to us electronically. You also need to pay us the required deposit as detailed on the booking form. If you are submitting an on-line booking form and decide you wish to pay the deposit by credit or debit card, you can, if you are concerned about security, telephone your card details to us.

Please note: We cannot confirm a booking until we receive your completed and signed booking form. Any delay in submitting your booking form may put at risk your place on your chosen trip, or flights.

If you would like further information, help with planning your holiday or details of extending your holiday, please don't hesitate to contact the Classic Journeys office.