



Nepal Three Passes Trek 2012

Trip Notes

Kongma La 18,159ft/5535m
Cho La 17,782ft/5420m
Renjo La 17,929ft/5465m

Trip #1: Pre-monsoon trip: April 28 – May 23, 2012
Trip #2: Post-monsoon: September 16 - October 11, 2012
Trip #3: Post-monsoon: November 10 - December 5, 2012

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The trek through Nepal's 'Three Passes' takes in some of the most exciting and picturesque scenery in the Himalaya. The landscape is varied and spectacular; the lodgings and tracks range from the time-worn paths of the Khumbu, to the isolated and less frequented Renjo Pass region.

Sometimes strenuous trekking is continuously rewarded with dramatic Himalayan scenes, including four of the world's eight highest peaks; Cho Oyu (8,201m), Makalu (8,463m), Lhotse (8,516 m) and Everest (8,850m).

Time spent admiring breathtaking mountain vistas are complemented by visits to Sherpa villages, homes and monasteries offering you an insight into the quiet but, culturally vibrant Sherpa way of life.

This trek is unique in that we have the privilege of visiting Everest Base Camp during the Adventure Consultants 2011 Everest Expedition (for the pre-monsoon trip), giving an appreciation of the inner workings of expedition life.

Outline of the trek

The trek members meet in Kathmandu, capital of the Kingdom of Nepal. We are greeted at the airport by our Kathmandu representatives, who whisk you through the thriving city to your hotel.



Once everybody has arrived we have a team meeting where introductions and the trip outline are completed. You will be briefed on the trip preparations and we can sort out any queries you have.

Your guide will advise you on good shopping and the better restaurants to visit while you are in the city. There are plenty of shops and entertainment to suit all tastes. From excellent

bookshops, to mountain bike hire, to CD shopping and bars; Kathmandu's retail fraternity is waiting to meet you!

We use a full day in Kathmandu sorting out any equipment problems you may have, but don't worry if you have forgotten anything, there are plenty of good outdoor shops in the city.

Next morning we fly into the village of Lukla at 9000 feet (2808m), the beginning of our trek.

The trek takes 22 days after our departure from Lukla until we return to that point. The walking is mostly over gentle terrain, but there are some decent hill climbs required to get over our '3 Passes'. The trekking days are moderately strenuous, and involve walking between 4 and 6 hours duration with plenty of scenic places to stop along the way. We place a lot of emphasis on maintaining health to enhance our trekking experience.



The trek has been especially planned to avoid the pitfalls of altitude illnesses and our experience in this field allows us to plan the best possible itinerary to avoid most of the associated issues. We have included rest days at the relevant elevations to allow our bodies to adjust to the thin air and we carry sufficient medication to deal with most altitude related problems. Experience has shown us that good hydration, rest days at significant elevations and good base fitness help avoid any significant problems during this trek.

From Lukla the trail contours the valley walls of the lower Khumbu valley with fine views through the stands of Himalayan Pines, up to the high mountains above. We spend a night in the cosy Sherpa village of Phakding that is perched above the mighty Dudh Koshi River. The Dudh Koshi is the drainage for all the glaciers and mountains in the region, including Mt Everest; therefore it carries a large volume of water. The following day we trek to the base of the Namche hill and after a solid climb up the zigzagging path we arrive in the cultural hub of the region; Namche Bazar.

Namche Bazar is the center of trade for the Sherpa people as it has been for hundreds of years. There are many sights to delight in Namche Bazar and there is always a level of hubbub with all the traders offering bargains from their stalls, shops selling every imaginable piece of copied climbing equipment, as well as the legitimate. There are internet cafes, bakeries, bars and much more. It is one has transcended back to the days of old and there is an honest magic and charm about the busy streets. When one can catch ones breath and lift the eyes up from the bustling throngs, one can enjoy a reality check by viewing the dramatic views across the valley to Mt Kwonde, a wonderful backdrop to the unique Sherpa architecture of the houses and lodges here. We may even visit Sir Edmund Hillary's first hospital in Nepal, which is situated above Namche in the village of Kunde. On the way back

to the lodge one can enjoy a freshly brewed coffee and a hot croissant at the bakery in Khumjung.

The Sherpa people are of Tibetan origin, having traveled over the high Tibetan passes including the Nangpa La, to settle in the Nepalese highlands. They developed trade between the two countries bringing gems, wool and salt from Tibet in exchange for the plentiful Nepalese products. The Sherpas brought their Buddhist religion with them, which they evolved to develop their own sect of the faith. They are very generous and spiritual people with a colourful lifestyle, and our trek allows us to spend time with them in their homeland.

The next stage of our trek takes us further up towards the head of the Khumbu valley. A feature of this day is a visit to the Tyangboche monastery and lunch at the bakery there, famous (amongst us anyway!), for its lemon meringue pie! A short descent brings us into Deboche and our lodging for the night nestled into the ancient forests with the quintessential summit of Ama Dablam as its backdrop.

We cross the mighty Imja Khola River on a bridge high above a cascading gorge where we are likely to have to stand aside as Yak drivers herd their laden beasts along the valley trails and over the bridge. These quiet yet deft footed animals are an essential component of the transportation system in the Khumbu valley and their passage is always foretold by echoes from melodious yak bells they wear around their necks.

The trail ascends into the ancient village of Pangboche where we take lunch and visit the monastery in upper Pangboche, reportedly the very first monastery in the region built by Lamas after they moved into the region from Tibet some 900 years ago. Above Pangboche we say goodbye to the trees as we continue through to Dingboche and open mountainous country. Small stone walled fields protect potato crops that provide the staple diet for the regions people while Yaks wander and graze at will on meager forage. Small lodges and huts provide reference to the arid landscape giving scale to the backdrop of massive peaks behind. A rest day is had in this village to aid acclimatisation and gentle walks can be done to stretch the legs.

After the welcome rest we now continue up the Imja valley to the town of Chhukung. A slow hike up 5500m Chhukung Ri ('Ri' means hillock, although some of their 'hillocks' are over 7000m!) enhances our acclimatisation whilst it also provides incredible views of the Himalayan giants in the valley. The wall of Lhotse rises some 3000m above while across the valley the views of the steep ice faces on Ama Dablam's north side are equally as compelling.

Next morning we leave early to embark on the first of the high passes, Kongma La. Grassy slopes lead into green meadows before giving way to stoney trails culminating in the pass that we cross into the upper Khumbu valley. It's worth spending time here soaking up the views that are apt to leave one spellbound. An inclined descent brings us to the lower Khumbu glacier and on to the welcome lodge in Lobuche.

Mt Everest is hidden from us at Lobuche by the precipitous ridges and slopes of Mt Nuptse even though we are very close, but Pumori, Nuptse, Lobuche and Taweche provide a classic Himalayan backdrop.

We follow the true right flank of the Khumbu on the same trails as used by the intrepid climbers that come to Everest every year, arriving into the last village in the Khumbu called Gorak Shep. Above Gorak Shep is the small peak of Kala Patar which has outstanding views

of Everest from its summit. At sunrise or sunset the views of Everest can be even more magical and we hope to enjoy a photographic session with you there!

Our last hike in this region takes us to Everest Base Camp for lunch. It is here that the Everest climbers rest and recuperate when not actually up on the mountain. There is always plenty of activity as the Sherpas and climbers prepare for their next phase of climbing on the mountain. After our lunch with the expedition members, we descend back to Lobuche and the relative low altitude.

A short day takes us to Dzongla where we prep for our crossing of the Cho La pass. For the Cho La pass crossing day we'll start early. Taking our ascent rate steadily, we follow the main trail up rolling grassy slopes and then moraine to the glaciated Cho La pass where we are rewarded with expansive views such as the near vertical north aspects of Cholatse and Taweche, Ama Dablam, Makalu off in the distance and Lobuche East rearing up to our north.



After we cross the pass we descend steeply as we enter the Gokyo valley and a whole new vista of peaks open up. We descend to Dragnag for the night on the flank of the Gokyo glacier.

Next we have a short day from Dragnag across the Gokyo Glacier to the village of Gokyo. Here you will see a succession of azure blue glacial lakes set beneath towering, rugged peaks sometimes dusted in snow. A day is set aside to make a side trip up Gokyo Ri. The one and a half hour hike up Gokyo Ri takes us above the village and Gokyo lakes and is well worth the effort for an unsurpassed panoramic Himalayan view. In clear weather there are good views across to the 8000m peaks of Mt Everest, Lhotse, Makalu and close by; Mt Cho Oyu. If possible, we may time our visit for the sunset.

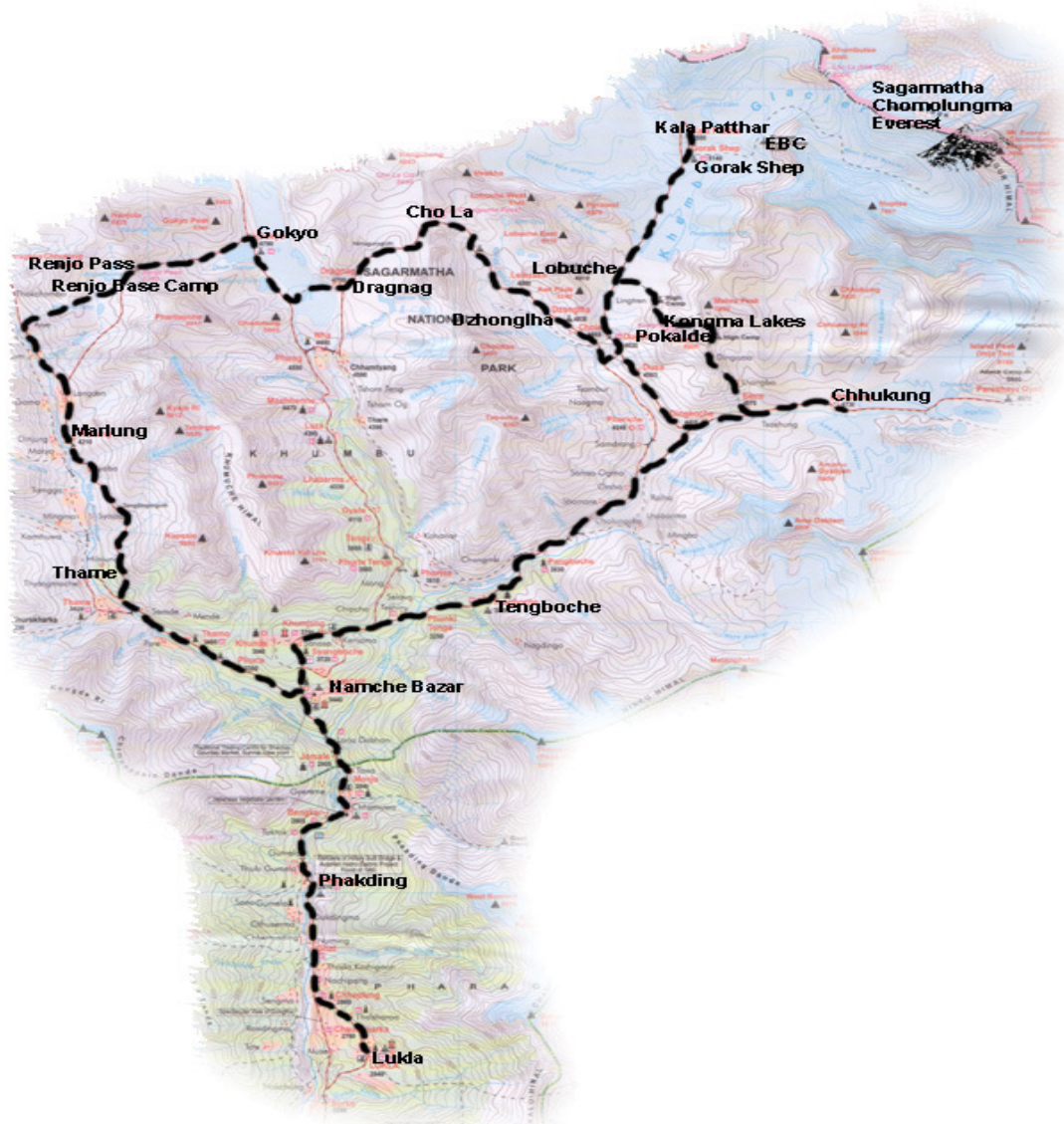
Our final pass, the crossing the Renjo La will be one of the more enjoyable days of the trip now that your body is conditioned to the altitude. From the pass there are excellent views of Everest and other 8,000-metre peaks to the east. As you descend into the valley on the far side of the pass you will be going back in time. The small village of Lungden was once frequently visited by traveller's crossing over the Nangpa La from Tibet to peddle their goods at the Namche Bazar market held every Saturday, however today, with little traffic crossing the pass the villagers focus primarily on agriculture.

We descend through Marlung and on to Taranga. Sherpas consider Taranga to be the homeland of the Yeti and Taranga potatoes are reputed to be the best in the world. Soon we pass through Chanakpa and on to Thame. We lodge the night in Thame which is situated in a large valley with good views of the snowy peaks of Teng Kangpoche and Kwangde to the south. About 150m above the town there is the Thame Gompa; a picturesque monastery set amongst the many homes of Lamas and lay people. This is the site for the spring celebration of the Mani Rimdo festival, held about the middle of May each year.

We are now descending along the Bhote Koshi river, a tributary to the Dudh Koshi River we initially travelled up two weeks ago. We arrive into the thriving and vibrant Namche Bazar for some 'creature comforts' and a night in the relative luxury of the Khumbu lodge. In the

morning we descend again to Phakding to overnight to continue the descent of the Khumbu Valley with its many tea houses and trekkers, enjoying some re-discovered luxuries like the fresh bakeries, internet cafés, laundries and hot showers. We finish back in Lukla for the flight back to Kathmandu and dinner out to celebrate our fine trip!

Area Map



Itinerary

Trip #1: Pre-monsoon trip: April 28 – May 23, 2012

Trip #2: Post-monsoon: September 16 - October 11, 2012

Trip #3: Post-monsoon: November 10 - December 5, 2012

Day 1 Arrive Kathmandu

2 Gear check, sightseeing in Kathmandu if time permits

3 Fly to Lukla, trek to Phakding (2610m), 8-9km

- 4 Trek to Namche Bazar (3407m), 10km
- 5 Rest day and sightseeing Namche Bazar
- 6 Namche Bazar to Deboche (3820m), 8-9km
- 7 Deboche to Dingboche (4410m), 9km
- 8 Dingboche rest day.
- 9 To Chhukung (4600m), 5km
- 10 Climb Chhukung Ri, (5550m)
- 11 Trek over Kongma La (5535m) to Lobuche (4925m)
- 12 Lobuche to Gorak Shep (5165m), 5-6km
- 13 Trek to Kala Patar (5540m) for world's best view of Everest!
- 14 Trek to Everest Base Camp for lunch. Descend to Lobuche.
- 15 Lobuche to Dzhonglha (4830m) 8-9km
- 16 Cross Cho La (5380m) to Dragnag (4694m), 11-12km, 9hrs.
- 17 Dragnag to Gokyo (4775m), 5-6km. 2 hrs
- 18 Rest day or climb Gokyo Ri (5357) for views of sunset on Everest!
- 19 Gokyo to Lungden, cross Renjo La 5388m 5-6km
- 20 Lungden to Thame (3844m), 10km
- 21 Thame to Namche Bazar (3407m), 8-9km
- 22 Namche Bazar to Phakding, 10km
- 23 Phakding to Lukla (2808m), 8-9km
- 24 Spare day
- 25 Lukla to Kathmandu
- 26 Depart from Kathmandu, end of trek.

The Expedition Fee

The cost of the trek ex Kathmandu is US\$4,350. This is an inclusive cost and covers the following:

- Nepalese government royalty fees
- All trek organisational requirements
- All trekking permits
- Airport Transfers in Kathmandu
- Air transport and accommodation in lodges, ex Kathmandu
- All group equipment for trek and emergency medical supplies
- All trek staff, including western and Sherpa guides, porter support
- Transport of 15kg of personal equipment
- All meals after departing Kathmandu and before arriving back in Kathmandu

The trek fee **does not** include the following:

- Air travel to and from Nepal
- Hotel accommodation and meals in Kathmandu
- Purchases of bottled water while on the trek, gifts, alcohol (we supply boiled water for drinking)
- Other charges at lodges/tea houses such as showers, internet access or battery re-charging
- Entry visas for Nepal (we recommend the 30 day tourist visa for Nepal on arrival into Kathmandu)
- Personal clothing and equipment including sleeping bag for Lodge use

- Personal travel / trip cancellation insurance
 - Excess baggage charges for the flights to / from Lukla
 - Any rescue costs or costs of early departure from the expedition
 - Gratuities
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Deposit

A deposit of **US\$500** is payable to secure a place on the trek.

Balance

The balance of **US\$3,850** is payable by 90 days before your trip departure date.

Payments

All payments can be made by bank transfer to the following bank and account:

**Bank of New Zealand
Offshore Branch
Wellington
New Zealand**

for the account of

Adventure Consultants Limited Account # **1000-594771-0000**

We also accept the following form of payments.

- US Dollar **bank draft** made out to Adventure Consultants Limited
 - Credit card payment of your deposit and balance via Visa, Mastercard, Amex
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Cancellation and Refund Policy

Once you have paid your deposit your trip is confirmed, subject to payment of the balance of fees owing 90 days prior to your trip commencement date. An expedition trek member may then cancel his/her participation on the following basis:

- Cancellations outside of 90 days will result in the loss of the trip deposit.
- For cancellations made within 89-60 days of the trip commencement date we reserve the right to retain 50% of the full fee.
- For cancellations within 59 days of the departure date a cancellation fee of 100% of the full fee applies.

- We strongly recommend you take out trip cancellation insurance via your travel agent.
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Team Membership

For the Three Passes Nepal trek we will take a **maximum of 12** trekkers, hence spaces are limited.

Food

Food will be of the highest standard possible, given the remoteness of the situation. Please inform us if you have any special dietary requirements.

During the trek we will be dining in lodges for breakfast and dinner with packed lunches on the trail.

Equipment List

Expedition trek members will be sent a list detailing all necessary clothing and equipment to be individually provided.

Medical Examination

Expedition members will be provided with a medical questionnaire and asked to visit their family physician to receive a full medical examination if necessary. This information will be sighted only by the expedition guide and our consulting doctor and all information will be treated with full confidentiality. Advice on immunisations will be provided at this time.

Documentation and Photographs

Expedition trek members will need to provide 2 passport-photographs for trekking permits and a copy of their passport bio-data page.

The advantages of trekking with us

Adventure Consultants is renowned for the quality of its service and strategy applied to their expeditions. Our reputation is attributed to meticulous planning and experienced logistics coordination. We have a philosophy of investing in every expedition to offer our trekkers the best possible experience.

We employ strong and specialised western Expedition leaders and Nepalese Sherpa staff, who are some of the most pre-eminent in the industry. We pride ourselves on operating with small teams, the best back-up and support available. This includes nutritious and ample quantities of food, reliable emergency communications systems and the necessary medical back up.

Many of our expedition members come to us because they have seen us in action on a previous trip and decide to opt for our level of service and proven experience. Others return because they know we do our very best to make expeditions safe and successful.

How to join this expedition

If you would like to join the expedition please request an **Application Form** and forward along with deposit for the trip.

If you require more information please contact us at;

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Adventure Consultants – is affiliated to the New Zealand Mountain Guides Association (NZMGA), New Zealand Alpine Club (NZAC) and the American Alpine Club (AAC). Adventure Consultants perform to IFMGA standards and are world leaders in high altitude guiding.

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