

Hiking and Yoga in Nepal—The Everest Adventure Trek

November 1-16, 2008

The ultimate Himalayan odyssey with Lotus Expeditions and Wild Women Workshops— Trek to the Tengboche Monastery at 12,887 feet, the spiritual center of the Everest Region. Our all-women expedition to Nepal is a moderately-challenging trek and spiritual and cultural journey with plentiful opportunities to practice yoga in a serene and magical setting beneath the Himalaya.

This trek is designed for those with a shorter timeframe or for first-time trekkers in the Himalaya. Trek through traditional Sherpa villages, barter with nomadic traders, and visit ancient monasteries where Tibetan Buddhism is still practiced. Experience the stunning views of Everest, Lhotse, Nuptse, and Ama Dablam.

Our journey begins and ends in the lush lowlands of the Kathmandu Valley. As we prepare for our trek, we will visit the Pashupatinath Temple, where devout Hindus bring their dead for cremation on the banks of the Bagmati River—a tributary of the holy Ganges River—and witness Buddhist pilgrims as they circumambulate the Bhoudinath Stupa.

From the lowlands, we travel by small aircraft to Lukla (9,350 feet) in the foothills of the Himalaya. Our trek begins here. Glacier-fed rivers and waterfalls, deep valleys, Sherpa villages, mystic monasteries, colorful prayer flags, and stunning peaks dominate the landscape for the next eight days. We will accompany the Women's Everest Base Camp trekkers as far as Pangboche, where our group will split off with our local guide and follow a traditional trade route seldom traveled by contemporary tourists.

In addition to its extraordinary beauty, the friendliness of its people distinguishes Nepal from other destinations. More than 30 unique ethnic groups and languages coexist here, but Sherpas are the dominant population group in the Khumbu region. Sherpa ancestors, immigrants from eastern Tibet, made their own trek across the Himalaya more than 500 years ago to settle in this rugged environment.

As you take in the tremendous vistas along the trail, you will be further elevated by the sound of laughter and song from the Sherpas and porters who accompany you.

Trip Summary

- Four nights hotel/four nights camping/four nights lodges and teahouses
- Visit important Hindu temples and Buddhist stupas
- View several of the world's highest peaks, including Mount Everest and Ama Dablam
- Visit the Tengboche Monastery at 12,887 feet/3,867 meters

- Optional trek to Ama Dablam Base Camp for incredible views and photo opportunities

Itinerary

Key: B, L, D—breakfast, lunch, and/or dinner included; O/N—overnight in hotel, lodge or camping

Day One, Travel From Your Home Country to Kathmandu, Nepal

Day Two, En Route

Day Three, Arrive in Kathmandu

A Lotus Expeditions representative will meet you at the airport, outside the customs and baggage area, and transfer you to the Hotel Yak and Yeti. A former Rana palace built in the 19th century, the Yak and Yeti gained notoriety first as a restaurant, started by a flamboyant Russian ballet dancer and restaurateur named Boris Lissanevitch in the 1960s. Following the success of the restaurant, the hotel was added around the former palace in the 1970s, combining much of its old world charm with modern elegance.

The afternoon is free to rest or explore the city. There will be a trip orientation in the late afternoon, followed by an optional evening out on the town. *O/N, Hotel Yak and Yeti*

Day Four, Sightseeing Around the Kathmandu Valley

Today we will visit important Hindu and Buddhist sites around the Kathmandu Valley including the Pashupatinath temple complex and the Swayambunath stupa or “Monkey Temple.” In the afternoon, you may take advantage of last-minute shopping opportunities in Kathmandu or making final preparations for your trek.

Our evening entertainment may include traditional Nepalese dancing and Newari cuisine at the Bhanchha Ghar Restaurant. *B, D; O/N, Hotel Yak and Yeti*

Day Five, Fly to Lukla, Begin Trek to Phakding

Weather permitting, we will board an early flight to Lukla (9,350 feet/2,860meters) in the foothills of the Himalaya. In Lukla, we will meet our local staff, guides, porters, and pack animals. As our bags are prepared for transport, we will have a trek orientation meeting before we begin our walk to Phakding. Our trail follows the turquoise waters of the Dudh Kosi river as we descend through lush green forests to reach the riverside village of Phakding (8,700 feet/2,652 meters). *Hiking time 3–4 hours; B, L, D; O/N, camping*

Day Six, Trek to Namche Bazaar

Today is our first big day in the mountains. Our trail continues through the Dudh Kosi river valley as we work our way up in altitude. We enter Sagarmatha National Park and share the trail with yaks and porters carrying supplies to higher villages and expeditions throughout the Khumbu Valley. Our trail wanders

through Sherpa villages where we can glimpse traditional life in these mountains. After a trailside lunch, we begin the steep climb to Namche Bazaar (11,300 feet/3,446meters). *Hiking time 5–6 hours; B, L, D; O/N, camping*

Day Seven, Rest Day in Namche Bazaar

After yesterday's big climb, today is a well-deserved rest day. You may be feeling some effects of the high altitude; thus, today is set aside for rest and exploring Namche Bazaar. Namche is the largest village in the Khumbu Valley and an important center for trading and tourism. It is possible to buy everything from expedition supplies to apple pie here. There is Internet and phone service and a post office. All this, though we are a seven-day walk from the nearest road!

For those with adequate energy, several optional day hikes are possible. A short hike takes you to the Sagarmatha National Park Museum and Visitors Center where stunning views of Everest, Nuptse, Lhotse, and Ama Dablam await. Or further afield, visit the Sir Edmund Hilary School in the village of Khumjung, 2–4 hours round trip. *B, L, D; O/N, camping*

Day Eight, Trek to Tengboche Monastery

From Namche Bazaar, our trail wraps around the mountainside before we descend once more to the Dudh Kosi river valley. The mountain views are spectacular. After a trailside lunch by the river, the trail climbs steadily to our final destination of the day—the Tengboche monastery (12,887 feet/3,867meters). The spiritual heart of the Khumbu, it is no wonder the patron saint of Sherpas, Lama Sangwa Dorje, touched down on this magical spot surrounded by stunning peaks.

If we are lucky, we may witness the monks performing a *puja* or prayer ritual. As guests, we are allowed to sit around the perimeter just inside the monastery and observe as the monks chant Buddhist prayers and play religious instruments. *Hiking time, 5–6 hours; B, L, D; O/N, camping*

Day Nine, Trek to Pangboche

At almost 13,000 feet/4,000 meters, it is likely that this morning will be a bit frosty, but the hot tea delivered to your tent will ease your entry into another glorious day in the Himalaya. After a hot breakfast, we descend to the village of Devuche where we have an opportunity to visit a Buddhist nunnery. If you walk quietly on the trail, you may catch a glimpse of endangered musk deer.

From Devuche, our trail crosses the river on a new suspension bridge over a deep gorge. We climb steadily to the village of Pangboche (12,800 feet/3,901meters), home to the oldest monastery in the Khumbu. Local legend holds that when Lama Sangwa Dorje flew through the Khumbu spreading Buddhism, he touched down in two places—Tengboche and Pangboche—and both were to become the sites of important monasteries.

The afternoon is free to visit the Pangboche Monastery or take an optional day hike to Ama Dablam Basecamp at 14,538 feet/4,406 meters. (3-5 hours)

roundtrip). *Hiking Time to Pangboche 2-3 hours; B,L,D; O/N, Lodge in Pangboche*

Day Ten, High Traverse to Phortse

Today we leave the main tourist track and return by a seldom-traveled high traverse. Our trail winds around an airy mountainside to the traditional Sherpa village of Phortse (12,500 feet/3,788meters). We may see Himalayan tahr, a genus of wild goat, grazing and sunning on the rocky cliffs or Himalayan griffon soaring majestically in the updrafts as they turn a keen eye on potential prey.

Phortse is an agricultural village nestled into the mountainside. From this vantage point, we gain new views of rugged mountains in the distant Hinku Valley and Cho Oyu (the sixth highest peak in the world at 26,906 feet/8,201 meters) comes into view at the top of the Gokyo Valley. The afternoon is free to relax, read, or visit the new school and monastery. *Hiking time, 3–4 hours; B, L, D; O/N, Lodge in Phortse*

Day Eleven—Return Trek to Namche Bazaar

From Phortse, we drop steeply to the valley floor at 11,950 feet/3,643 meters and cross the glacier-fed waters of the Kohanar Khola river, whose headwaters originate in the massive glaciers pouring off Cho Oyu. The ecosystem changes dramatically as we descend in elevation from windswept glacier-carved valleys to green rhododendron and birch forests. Musk deer and Danphe pheasants prefer these lower altitudes and are common along this section of trail.

In Nepal, they say that “what goes down, must go up!” The trail climbs steeply for 1–2 hours to the Mong La Pass (13,200 feet/4,000 meters) where hot drinks and lunch await. The views from the pass are stunning as new peaks come into view and the path to Namche unfurls below.

A few more hours bring us to Namche Bazaar (11,300 feet/3,446meters) and the Zamling Guesthouse with beds and hot showers! *Hiking time 5–7 hours; B, L, D; O/N, Zamling Guesthouse*

Day Twelve, Return Trek to Lukla

We retrace our steps as we descend, following the Dudh Kosi river as it makes its journey southward. You may begin to feel lighter and more energized as your surroundings transform to shades of green with splashes of colorful flowers. The air becomes thicker and humid—a more hospitable environment than we experienced in the high country. Passing through villages, you will see children playing along the trail and catch glimpses of ordinary life in the mountains of Nepal.

Our journey ends in Lukla (9,350 feet/2,860 meters). A final feast and celebration with our local staff are on the agenda for the evening. *Hiking time 6–8 hours; B, L, D; O/N, Lodge in Lukla*

Day Thirteen, Flight to Kathmandu

We take an early flight to Kathmandu (weather permitting) and return to the Hotel Yak and Yeti. The afternoon is free to explore the city, shop, or visit the Tibetan community at the Bhoudinath Stupa. *B; O/N, Hotel Yak and Yeti*

Day Fourteen, Kathmandu

Today is a free day in Kathmandu. You may sign up for an early Mount Everest scenic mountain flight, visit the former medieval city-states of Bhaktapur and Patan, wander around historic Durbar Square, or take advantage of excellent shopping in the Thamel district, where Buddhist thangka paintings and hand woven carpets abound. We will enjoy our final evening in Nepal with a celebration dinner! *B, D; O/N, Hotel Yak and Yeti*

Day Fifteen, Depart Kathmandu En Route to Your Home Country

Day Sixteen, Arrive Home

Trip Dates and Prices

November 1- 16, 2008

\$3095 (5-7 Members)

\$2795 (8-10 Members)

\$2495 (11-12 Members)

Single Supplement \$300

Forced Single Supplement \$150

4% Discount for Cash Payments

What is Included

- Four Star accommodation at the Hotel Yak and Yeti in Kathmandu based on double occupancy
- All ground transportation
- Welcome dinner and Nepali cultural show
- One and a half days sightseeing around the Kathmandu Valley including Pashupatinath Temple, Swayambunath Stupa, and Bhoudinath Stupa
- Optional visit to the Tibetan Refugee Carpet Center
- All entrance fees and trekking permits
- Professional, international trip leaders, Heather Sullivan and Raleigh Coburn
- Professional, English-speaking local guides
- Evening and daytime lectures and classes may include:
 - Yoga and stretching
 - Writing, reflection and meditation
 - High altitude illness and prevention
 - Geology of the Himalaya
 - Introduction to Buddhism

- Natural history of the Everest Region
- Sherpa history and culture
- And introduction to glaciology
- Roundtrip domestic airfare Kathmandu-Lukla
- Four nights comfortable lodges on trek
- Four nights luxury camping on trek
- All meals where noted on the itinerary
- Experienced, professional cooks prepare delicious meals on trek
- All camping equipment (excluding sleeping bags)
- Group first aid kit, Gamov bag and emergency oxygen
- Baggage transport provided by pack animals and porters (limited to 15kg)
- Fair wages and insurance for porters
- Celebration dinner in Kathmandu at journey's end

What is Not Included

- Domestic or international airfare to Kathmandu
- 60-Day Nepal visa on arrival (\$30)
- Required travel insurance
- Airport or departure taxes and any excess baggage fees
- Rescue or medical expenses
- Personal clothing, equipment, first aid and drug kits
- Single room supplement fees for hotels and single tents
- Hotels, meals, transport or other fees incurred if leaving trip before schedule departure
- Meals not listed on your itinerary
- Personal Sherpa or additional porter
- Local and international staff gratuities (suggested \$300)
- Personal items such as laundry, telephone, email, alcohol, bottled drinks, etc.
- Personal cash for emergencies, gifts, etc. (suggested \$500)