

Indicative Itinerary

Trip

Everest Base Camp, October 2009

(Note 1: Items in *italics* below are subject to confirmation)

Friday 9 October

Auckland to Kathmandu: *Depart Auckland for Singapore Airlines SQ282, departs 00:55am; arrive Singapore 6.45am; depart Singapore Silk Air MI412, 09.05am, arrive Kathmandu 12.00pm midday.* We are taken to the Park Village Hotel, our base during our time in Kathmandu (see brochure enclosed with your Trip Package).

Day 2

Kathmandu: Day tour to discover the wonders of this 1,000 year-old city, including a visit to historic sites at Pashipatinath and Boudhanath; also the local market at Thamel.

Day 3

We depart Kathmandu on an early morning mountain flight to the Hillary built airstrip at Lukla, altitude 2,840m. We visit Lukla Monastery, home of one of our Sherpa Sirdars, Tashe Lama. It is a short walk down valley to the banks of the Dhudkosi River; we visit the focus of our Reforestation Project, our plant nursery in the village of Ghaat. A one hour walk takes us on to Phakdingma; we stay with Tshering Nima at the Namaste Lodge.

Day 4

Phakdingma to Namche: A stunning 7 hour trek along the valley and up the famous Namche Hill to the Sherpa capital at 3,440m. We stay at Panorama Lodge overlooking Namche with our great hosts Sherup Jangbu and Lhakpa Doma.

Day 5

Namche: A rest day in and around Namche. We include a walk to the National Park Headquarters, where we are treated to our first view of Mt Everest and other great mountains of the high Himalaya. We also have time to spend in the Namche markets.

Day 6

Namche to Deboche: A gentle sidle with Mt Everest in view takes us to the significant monument to Tenzing Norgay, a 30 minute walk from our Namche Lodge. We lunch at Phunky Tenga before the three hour uphill walk through the rhododendron forest to the famous monastery at Thyangboche. We finish the day with a gentle stroll to our

Deboche Lodge, situated in a picturesque dell with views of the Himalayan Matterhorn, the beautiful Mt Ama Dablam.

Day 7

Deboche to Dingboche: Today we venture into the upper reaches of the Khumbu Valley, and ascend above the tree line at approximately 4,000m. Whilst we are gaining altitude our pace on the trail is appropriately slow, giving us time to take in the stunning Himalayan vista that is opening before our eyes. We pass through the village of Pangboche, and detour off the main trail to our peaceful lodge in Dingboche. Mingma Yanji is our Lodge Host and has previously been a Sherpa Sirdar for Everest Treks; she was also a climbing Sherpa who achieved Camp 3 on Mt Everest in 1998.

Day 8

Dingboche: A rest day in and around Dingboche. A peaceful day of acclimatisation, reading and relaxing in the warmth of the midday sun, replaced in the afternoon by the comfort of the Lodge lounge and its wood-burning stove.

Day 9

Dingboche to Lobuche: We set off early and make our way across the highest yak grazing pastures in the Valley to our lunch stop at Dugla, at the foot of the Khumbu Glacier. The scenery is simply stunning; we are surrounded by some of the most impressive summits in the world, including Cholutse, Taboche Peak and the twin Lobuche Peaks. We walk on to Lobuche itself, and sleep at 4,910m.

Day 10

Lobuche to Gorak Shep: We set off early to give ourselves the option of an ascent of Kala Pathar before lunch. Our initial target as we follow the route of the Khumbu Glacier is to reach Gorak Shep, the last village before Everest Base Camp. Gorak Shep is unique in its claim to being the highest populated settlement on earth. After a quick carbo load we set off to walk to the summit of Kala Pathar, the literal high point of our trek. Sitting at 5,550m, it is impossible not to be moved by the beauty of what surrounds us, and the emotion of achieving this significant physical feat. Mt Everest is directly in view and is simply awe-inspiring; it seems like we can touch it. We overnight in Gorak Shep.

Day 11

Gorak Shep to Everest Base Camp and return: We continue to sidle the Khumbu Glacier for 3 hours until a descent onto the Glacier itself and directly to the site of Mt Everest Base Camp. The satisfaction of achieving this goal is indescribable; the Khumbu Icefall is clearly in view, as is the climbers' route to the high camps beyond. We return to Gorak Shep and spend a second night at Ang Tsering's Lodge.

- Day 12 Gorak Shep to Dingboche: We retrace our steps as we head down valley, past Lobuche and Dugla, to Mingma's hospitality at Dingboche. Trekking on the descent seems so much easier compared to the thin air that we have experienced for the last 3 days, even if we are still above 4,000m!
- Day 13 Dingboche: A rest day to savour our achievements of the last week. This day also serves as our contingency day in the event of a delay caused by inclement weather.
- Day 14 Dingboche to Deboche: A very easy descent back into the forest. An opportunity to visit the Monastery at Upper Pangboche, the oldest Tibetan Monastery in the Khumbu, and the highest in the world outside of Tibet. We have given this Monastery considerable support over the years, and our trekkers are warmly welcomed by Head Lama Gashe. In the afternoon we also have time to visit the Thyangboche Monastery and its Visitor Centre before returning to Deboche.
- Day 15 Deboche to Namche: We descend quickly through Phunky Tenga and on to the twin villages of Khunde and Kumjung, where Sir Edmond Hillary spent the majority of his time whilst in Nepal. We will visit the Secondary School he established, on to the Khunde Hospital he built, and finally visit the home of Ang Dooli, whose late husband, Ang Rita, was Sir Ed's Head Sherpa. We continue our descent back to Namche and the Panorama Lodge, to our hosts Lhakpa and Sherup Doma.
- Day 16 Namche to Lukla: A reasonably long day as we head back to our start point in the Everest Valley. We relax in the extremely comfortable Himalaya Lodge, and after a hot shower we allow ourselves a cold beer or wine, a steak or chicken sizzler, and the satisfaction that comes from the achievement of a major challenge.
- Day 17 Lukla to Kathmandu: We are on one of the first flights out of Lukla and have our last close up views of the Himalayas. We land in Kathmandu and go straight to the Park Village Hotel. Rest and relaxation normally dominates the afternoon.
- Day 18 We take our choice from a shopping day in Thamel, a revisit of Boudhanath, or a relax by the pool. Final reflections on a great trip.

Day 19 Kathmandu to Singapore: *Depart Kathmandu, Silk Air MI411, departs 1.00pm, arrives Singapore 8.15pm. Overnight in Singapore.*

Day 20 *Day at leisure in Singapore; Depart Singapore, Singapore Airlines SQ 285, 9.00pm.*

Friday 30 October *Arrive Auckland, 11.50am*

Notes

- 1) **If you require travel to/from Auckland, please note that internal travel arrangements are your own responsibility.** You must arrive in Auckland in plenty of time to ensure you meet our international flight; you should allow a minimum of 4 hours before scheduled departure time, whether you are travelling by plane or car to Auckland; this way you should avoid being caught by unexpected delays.
- 2) **We recommend you do not book any internal connecting flights to Auckland until 6 weeks before departure date,** to ensure any schedule changes by our international carrier do not clash with any prebooked internal flights. Be wary of internal flight conditions that may make them difficult to change in the event you need to.
- 3) **If you need a travel agent to book your internal flights we recommend you talk to Phillip Harris at Mondo Travel, Motueka,** who handles our international bookings. Phillip is contactable at 03 528 1550, or email him on phil.harris@mondotravel.co.nz.
- 4) We will supply you with a high quality kit-bag prior to your departure; you will use this for your gear that you take on the trek. Your trek kit-bag, when fully packed, must weigh no more than 15kg; this is a restriction on the internal flight to Lukla, as well as being a realistic limitation on what we expect our porters to carry for us. So please be sparing in what you bring and economise on weight wherever possible. You may take additional clothing etc (and suitcase) and leave this at our hotel in Kathmandu. Overall weight limit on our international flights is 20kg.