

# EVEREST BASE CAMP CHALLENGE

**18 Day trip from Dublin**  
**13 day strenuous trek**  
**Fully serviced lodge based trek**

The Everest Base Camp Trek is one of the world's classic challenges. Ever since Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay achieved the summit in 1953 thousands of trekkers across the globe have thought to themselves 'well, perhaps I can at least make it to the base camp!' We invite you to support the charity by taking up the challenge to trek to Everest Base Camp. The Everest Base Camp trek takes you into one of the most spectacular regions of Nepal, the Khumbu, where the Sherpa culture thrives amongst the highest peaks in the world. The Everest massif as seen from Thyangboche and Kala Pattar is a sight you will never forget, and the hospitality of these tough mountain people will remain with you for a long time.

This is the traditional trek to view Everest, following the historic trail; it will appeal to those who wish to retrace the steps of history to the base of Everest in the aid of the charity. Our crew will ensure high catering and hygiene standards whilst providing the comfort of staying in specially selected Sherpa lodges. We have been operating treks since 1975 and are the world's most experienced Himalayan trekking operators. Our high standards of service, looked over by our very experienced first aid trained local Nepali guides, will ensure that all you need to worry about is taking on the challenge of the trek!



## ~ CHALLENGE COST INCLUSIONS ~

### INCLUDED

- ✓ Challenge Pre-departure Information Guide, with all you need to know for your trekking challenge.
- ✓ International airfares from Dublin to Kathmandu to Dublin
- ✓ Hotel accommodation in Kathmandu at the Radisson hotel on a twin share basis with breakfast.
- ✓ All internal transport by private bus, jeep, car or scheduled air services.
- ✓ All group airport transfers.
- ✓ Gear package including kit bag (yours to keep), sleeping bag and liner, and down or fibre filled jacket during challenge.
- ✓ All meals while trekking.
- ✓ Accommodation on a share basis in selected lodges
- ✓ Porters to carry all personal and group equipment.
- ✓ Porter welfare supplement (porter's insurance, meals, accommodation and adequate clothing for your porter)
- ✓ English speaking Nepali group leader, sirdar, guides and kitchen staff.
- ✓ Sagarmatha park entrance fees and TIMS trekking permit.
- ✓ Emergency medical kit.

### NOT INCLUDED

- × Lunch and dinner in Kathmandu.
- × Aerated and alcoholic drinks on trek.
- × Items of a personal nature such as phone calls, laundry, etc.
- × Tips.
- × Nepal Airport and departure taxes.
- × Nepal single entry Visa
- × Travel Insurance
- × Western Doctor
- × Carbon offset (£51 for full or £26 for half)

**Dates of travel: November 2009**

### Cost Per Person: £1790

This cost is currently based on an estimated flight cost of £860 with Jet Airways and BMI (Dublin – London – Dublin) and includes an estimated cost of £265 of taxes. This price is not an official quote and has been reached by using 2008 fares with a 5% increase. November 2009 fares will be released only after November 2008.

We will offer 1 free place for a representative

Prices are based on a minimum of 20 paying participants.

Prices are subject to change if there are significant currency fluctuations.

### Western Doctor

#### Cost: £1715

If you wish we can supply the services of a western doctor for this trip. They will bring a medical kit which is more comprehensive than a first-aid kit. While our leaders are well trained for a large group we recommend the services of a western doctor to provide extra assurance for your group.

## **~ THE CHALLENGE ITINERARY ~**

**DAY 1** Depart Dublin (TBC).

**DAY 2** Arrive in Kathmandu at (TBC). (1330m).

You will be met by your challenge group leader and transferred to the hotel where the pre-challenge trek briefing will be given. Arrangements are made today for the distribution of your kit bag, sleeping bag and down jacket, which are included in the challenge cost. On completion of the challenge the kit bag is yours to keep.

The afternoon will be yours to relax and get ready for the challenge ahead of or explore the local markets close by. You have time to discover a little of Kathmandu on foot, or by bicycle or trishaw. The area has an amazing range of fascinating highlights, whatever your interest. Excellent bookshops, extensive markets, novelty shops and handicraft shops contrast with fantastic centres of cultural and spiritual significance. Kathmandu has more World Heritage sites than any other city in the world. Sightseeing with a guide can be arranged by our staff in Kathmandu.

**DAY 3** Fly to Lukla (2800m). Trek to Phakding (2600 m). Walk approx 3 hour.

An early start is required this morning to ensure we get on the first flights of the day to the STOL airstrip at Lukla, the start point of the challenge. The flight is roughly 45 minutes. This was the airstrip built by Sir Edmund Hillary and his friends to service the Everest Region when he began his work of building schools and hospitals for the Sherpa people. It is a memorable flight, with marvellous views of the Eastern Himalaya from the left side of the plane if the weather is clear. The excitement of the challenge begins.

At Lukla we are immediately impressed by the scale of the huge hills that surround the village but this is only a foretaste of what is to come. Your crew assembles and we head downhill towards the Dudh Kosi, a raging river that flows from the highest peaks. The broad and well-marked trail meanders around fields of potatoes and buck-wheat and passes through small villages, as we pass rows of tree dahlia to make our way to our first overnight stop in the village of Phakding.

To aid acclimatization it is important to take the first few days relatively easy, to walk high and sleep low, and to pace yourself to ensure you complete the challenge.

**DAY 4** To Monjo (2850m). Walk approx 4-5 hours.

Today the trekking challenge will cross and re-cross the thundering glacial river, named 'Dudh' (milk) 'Kosi' (river) because of its colour. Sections of today's challenge are through pine forest and cleared areas reveal terraced fields and a variety of crops. We pass through a variety of small hamlets as we slowly gain altitude. Spectacular mountain peaks unfold above us and seem to hover above the tree-line as they rise above the deep river valley.

Shortly after leaving camp we cross the Kusum Khola, a tributary stream to the Dudh Kosi, and the peak of Kusum Kangru (6369 m) can be seen to the East, at the head of the valley. Further along the trail, across the valley to the North-West, Nupla (5885 m) and Kongde Ri (6093 m) rise above the forested ridges. At a turn of the trail, Thamserku (6808 m) rises majestically, seemingly from the river floor. These views will keep you inspired to complete the challenge.

The group will see your first Mani walls today. These stone structures are a compilation of many stone tablets, each with the inscription "Om Mani Padme Hum" which translates to "Hail to the jewel in the lotus", and is mantra (chant) venerated by Buddhists and Brahmans alike.

Buddhists will walk to the left of these Mani Walls and chortens, but you may notice that people of the lowlands who have no knowledge of Buddhism do not follow this practice. Nepal, until recently, was a Hind Kingdom and Buddhism is primarily only found in this region.

The allure of the high mountains are hard to resist, but we must be patient, as it is very important to acclimatise slowly to ensure we can complete the challenge which will primarily take place at higher altitude. Today's walk is not a long one, and you will be eager to press on. Slow down, and enjoy every step of the way.

#### **DAY 5 To Namche Bazaar (3440m). Walk approx 4 hours.**

This morning the challenge enters the gates of the Sagarmartha National Park. The establishment of this national park is a significant attempt to stem the use of fire-wood in the area and the few local people who have a permit to cut wood must gain approval from the authorities on the basis of it being primarily for their personal use. When we are in lodges, only kerosene will be used for cooking and heating washing water, and lodge owners will be well paid for allowing us to utilise their facilities. This puts money into the local economy and by carrying a majority of our supplies; we do not tax local resources further. It's good to know your challenge is being responsibly operated.

We follow the river course to the confluence of the Dudh Kosi and the Bhote Kosi, and cross a spectacular high bridge before commencing our ascent to the village of Namche Bazaar, the Sherpa "capital" of Nepal. It is a tough climb as the trail passes through forest of pine to a vantage point that provides our first views of Mt Everest. The trail continues to climb and meander to Namche, and the sight of this prosperous village spread within a horse-shoe shaped valley opposite the beautiful peak of Kongde Ri is worth every step. After lunch you may wish to peruse the Tibetan trader's stalls or the Sherpa shops in search of a bargain. Our accommodation will be in a centrally located lodge owned by one of our many Sherpa friends.

#### **DAY 6 Rest Day in Namche.**

This rest day in Namche Bazaar is very important for safe acclimatisation. For those willing and able to take on an acclimatisation walk your leader will organise for you to walk to the top of the nearby hill or possibly even to the nearby villages of Khumjung and Khunde, home of the school and hospital

built by Sir Edmund Hillary's Himalayan Trust. Remember, walk high, sleep low.

If you prefer to rest your legs and stay at the current altitude there are a number of things to do nearby. The Sagarmartha National Park Headquarters on the hill above the village offers a very interesting display of photographs, memorabilia and information on the park, and is a wonderful vantage point for the spectacular view up the Imja Khola Valley towards Everest. The change from the narrow lowland valleys to the broad glacial ones is immediately obvious. The steep-sided glacial valley before us gradually winds towards the base of Everest, broken only by the moraines left by retreating glaciers. Towering to over 4000 metres above the valley floor, spectacular peaks seem to engulf you. Around us are Tawetse (6542 m), Thamserku (6808 m), Kantega (6685 m), Ama Dablam (6856 m), Nuptse (7896 m) and Lhotse (8511 m). The greatest of all, Mt Everest (8848 m), rises at the head of the valley. An early morning rise to view these peaks will provide wonderful views and photo opportunities. The Sherpa Cultural Centre within our lodge has an interesting collection of mountaineering items and photographs outlining the importance of Sherpa's in mountaineering expeditions.



**DAY 7 To Thyangboche (3870m). Walk approx 6-7 hours.**

The walk to Thyangboche is one of the most pleasant in Nepal. The trail meanders easily around the ridges and Everest can be clearly seen on the horizon ahead before we descend through splendid rhododendron forest for lunch. After lunch we cross the Dudh Kosi and begin the ascent to the top of a long ridge which flows from the summit of Kantega. Our trail takes us through pine and rhododendron forest and as this is a devout Buddhist region, the wildlife is unharmed and not too shy. As a result there is a possibility that we may see Hog Deer and other animals in the forest and around our campsite.

As we approach the top we pass through a traditional gateway and pass around a chorten before cresting the ridge onto a wide grassy meadow at the monastery village of Thyangboche.

The monastery was recently re-built with the assistance of Sir Edmund Hillary after it was destroyed by fire. Your leader will arrange for you to be shown around the monastery and will explain the relevance of the many ceremonies that take place and discuss the life of the monks in residence. The views of the Everest massif, as well as all the other major peaks of the area are astounding and if we are lucky, we will see the glowing colour of the sunset and perhaps even the moonlight on the mountains around us. Our lodge will be situated near the gumpa giving us flexibility in how we wish to spend our spare time in the afternoon. There are a limited number of lodges in this area and it may be necessary to be in multi-share accommodation i.e. rooms with more than two beds.



#### **DAY 8 To Dingboche (4360m).**

From Thyangboche the challenge heads down to cross the Imja Khola before a relatively easy climb along a wide, open trail to the small village of Pangboche (3901m). We may take a slight detour to visit the Pangboche Gumpa - the oldest monastery in the Khumbu, said to be over 300 years old. The views today of Ama Dablam, one of the Himalaya's most stunning peaks, are spectacular. Continuing on, we cross the river again and trek up to Dingboche, situated just beneath the impressive Ama Dablam. We're almost there!

#### **DAY 9 Rest day in Dingboche.**

An important acclimatisation day with the option of hiking high up to the ridge overlooking the village to around 4700m, or perhaps up to Chhukung Village. You spend the day exploring or relaxing and taking in the mountain scenery. Excellent views of Nuptse, Lhotse, Chhukung Peak and Imja Tse (6189 m) are had from both in the valley or from the ridge above the camp. Massive

glaciers drape beneath cliffs that soar up to 3,500 metres in this dramatic valley.

Our company has a very high success rate of participants completing their challenge simply because we allow enough time to acclimatize naturally. We've drawn on three decades of experience in this region to ensure you achieve your goals.

**DAY 10 To Lobuche (4930m). Walk approx 6 hours**

Today the challenge will gain more altitude and it is important that you move at a slow, steady pace. Keep sipping your water. The slopes are quite barren now as you have moved above the treeline. Views of different peaks, such as Cholatse and Lobuche unfold before us in this contrasting and spectacular landscape. We move up the Dhugla Ridge and onto moraine towards Khumbu Glacier. Rock cairns can be seen, many of which are dedicated to the memory of climbers attempting the high mountains of the area, including Everest. The temperatures drop here as you will be more exposed. Enjoy spectacular views all day today of Pumori and Nuptse. The hill above the town affords fine sunset views of Nuptse. One day away from Base Camp!

**DAY 11 To Gorak Shep (5288 m). Walk approx 2-3 hours.  
Onward to Everest Base Camp at 5360m (2-3 hrs each way)  
Total walking from 8-9.5 hours**

This is what you have been training for. Today you should reach your goal!

The challenge will trek alongside the Khumbu Glacier as the path winds over the rocky moraine towards the settlement of Gorak Shep. You will be high among the glaciers of the world's highest peaks. At the junction of two large glaciers and nestled in an amphitheatre of peaks, this area is spectacular. Pumori (7145 m), Lingtren (6697 m), Nuptse (7745 m) and of course Everest (8848 m) will surround you.

But the challenge isn't over yet and the trek will continue from here to Everest Base Camp at approximately 5360m. The route weaves its way across the Khumbu Glacier and then finally to a site where the 1953 Base Camp was located. Congratulations - you've made it to Base Camp.

Base camp is not a specific site but a part of the Khumbu Glacier near the entrance to the Khumbu icefall. Each expedition makes their own decision as to where to set up their 'base camp'. Whilst base camp is a very interesting trip, and the objective of our challenge, do not expect to see spectacular views from here. Being so close to Everest you cannot actually see the summit! For many the climb up Kala Pattar on the next day will be the highlight of this trekking challenge. The air is clear and the sun is strong at this altitude, but as the sun sets it becomes very cold. Sunsets here can be stunning.

**DAY 12 To Kala Pattar (5545 m) and to Lobuche (4930 m).  
Walk approx 7-8 hours.**

You've completed your challenge of getting to Base Camp however today could still be tough as you will reach the high point of this challenge. By staying near Gorak Shep we can get an early start for our ascent of Kala

Pattar so we can be there for the clearest views. The extra days for acclimatisation will now prove invaluable today on the ascent of Kala Pattar, our highest point on this trek. Although it has undoubtedly been a cold night we have time to comfortably ascend to the viewing point and enjoy it to the fullest. It is feasible for the very fit to ascend Kala Pattar in 2 hours. Kala Pattar is not a Nepali name but a Hindi name and translates to "black rock". From these black rocks atop the hill at 5545m the views are spectacular. Most eyes are locked on the mass of Everest, its rocky buttresses immediately before us. Many of the famous ascent routes are quite clear. Below us the Khumbu Glacier snakes towards the icefall and Western Cwm. We can see the area where modern Everest expeditions set their base camp but the original site was at Lake Camp, now known as Gorak Shep. Take a look in every direction and soak it in. The view south and our route out are particularly beautiful. We descend to Gorak Shep for lunch. Snow Cocks gather around for scraps as we pack for the walk downhill to Lobuche.

**DAY 13 To Pangboche (3867 m). Walk approx 9 hours.**

Whilst the toughest parts of the challenge are behind us there will still be some long walks ahead, but it is time to enjoy the region a little more to ensure vivid memories of your challenge. Descending alongside the glacier we reach the snout and drop steeply onto the old moraine. We reach the site of a row of cairns to climbers who died in the mountains, before we continue to the small settlement at Tugla. Your path is along the old valley floor through the village of Periche. There can be a tendency now to rush, particularly as we are walking downhill, but there is still much to see. We descend to Pangboche and visit its historic old monastery, thought to be the oldest in the Khumbu.

**DAY 14 To Namche Bazaar (3440m). Walk approx 7 hours.**

Retrace your steps to Thyangboche, and continue onto Namche. The early morning mountain views are outstanding. Everest, Lhotse and Nuptse are at the head of the valley, their line of sight flanked by Tawetse on one side, and Ama Dablam on the other. Almost directly above us are Kantega and Thamserku. Completing a 360-degree panorama of mountains are Khumbliya and Kongde Ri which encircle us from across the valley.

**DAY 15 To Lukla (2800m). Walk approx 8 hours.**

Continue down through the forest to the valley floor to follow the Dudh Kosi downhill and out of the national. Retracing your steps along the valley, you will pass through a variety of settlements and forests before a gentle climb to Lukla. Savour your final mountain sunsets of the trek as you finally complete this exhilarating challenge (getting to Base Camp is really only 'half' the challenge. Our last evening on the challenge is a time to celebrate and to have a small party for all the challenge team, especially the porters who will return to their villages from here. There is usually lots of music, dancing and singing and if we are lucky, one of the superb cakes that our Nepali chefs are renowned for.

**DAY 16 To Kathmandu by air (1330m).**

This morning we fly to Kathmandu, a thrilling flight over forests, fields and villages, with the Himalaya in the background. On arrival, we transfer to the hotel. The rest of the day is at leisure.

For any reason if the mountain flights are not operating today there is a buffer day built in tomorrow just in case. All going to plan tomorrow is a day you will have time to discover Kathmandu and the nearby valley.

**DAY 17 Day at leisure in Kathmandu.**

There are a million things to see in Kathmandu and we recommend you spend this day wandering the town and exploring the valley on bicycle or by taxi. The old Royal Palace, Durbar Square, Swayambhunath (the Monkey Temple), Pashupatinath (a major Hindu shrine) and the giant Buddhist stupa at Bodhnath are absolute musts. Our W.E. staff can arrange a guide and/or transport should you wish, or you can head off armed with a map and let the day unfold.

**DAY 18 Trip concludes Kathmandu. Return to Dublin.**

Sadly, the time has come to return to Dublin unless you have arranged to stay for longer and visit Chitwan National Park, or simply enjoy more of Kathmandu. You will be transferred to the airport for your flight back to Dublin.

**The challenge itinerary is a guide to the trek and may be varied. There is sufficient time for a comfortable pace for people of good fitness to acclimatise adequately, and to vary the days in accordance with specific needs. Please note that this itinerary is not set in stone and may change, depending upon your trek leaders decisions.**

**~THE COUNTRY AND ITS PEOPLE~**

Nepal is known for its beautiful and dramatic scenery. Avid walkers and non-walkers alike are drawn to its mountains and foothills to view the Himalaya and the world's highest peaks. Many also discover the beauty of the forests and the enjoyment of time spent as a self-contained expedition, far from the rush of the modern world and in the delightful company of the trek crew as they tend to our needs and ensure that we are comfortable and able to enjoy the trek to the fullest. They are physically strong, sharp-witted and have an incredibly positive attitude towards a life that we would consider extremely tough.

There is something about a trek in the Himalaya that draws you back time and time again. For keen walkers it is a paradise and even avowed non-walkers find that one foot just seems to follow the other, drawn by the appeal of what lies beyond.

Nepal's population of around 20 million people is a blend of Hindu, Buddhism and animist religion. Nepal is a mosaic of cultures, ethnic groups and languages. It is remarkable that in a country of this size there are over 30 different ethnic groups, with at least as many languages. One million people live in the Kathmandu Valley, but at least ninety percent of the population live in the rural areas of the lower and middle hills of the Himalayan Range. Nepal is predominantly a simple rural society and a trek in the foothills of the Himalaya is a strong cultural experience as we spend time with our crew and meet local village people.

## **~WEATHER PATTERNS~**

Our trekking season extends from mid-September to May. From early September the monsoonal rains decrease. By mid-October through to December the weather is usually stable with mild to warm days, cold nights and clear views. Daytime temperatures can reach 25 deg C at low altitude and nights can drop to below -15 deg C at higher altitudes.

Winter trekking, from December to February, offers cool to mild and clear days with often very cold nights. Daytime temperatures at low altitudes will be mild, around 15 deg C and at night may drop to -15 deg C. At altitudes above 3000 m temperatures can vary from 10 deg C during the day to -15 deg C at night. Occasionally winter storms can bring snow as low as 2500 m.

In March the cold, dry winter season begins to give way to warmer, wetter spring conditions. Mornings are usually clear with cloud build-up occasionally bringing afternoon rainstorms. Daytime temperatures increase quickly in March, with temperatures of up to 20 deg C and mild nights at low altitudes. At higher altitudes it is still cool during the day and at night temperatures can drop below -10 deg C. The increase in rainfall in the hills is more than compensated for by the spectacular displays of rhododendrons and other wildflowers at this time of year. Late spring conditions, as in April and May, are generally hot at low elevations and as the clouds build up to the next monsoon, daily afternoon rainstorms are common. This is a period that generally has clear weather at the higher altitudes and is traditionally a time when mountaineering expeditions commence their ascents.

The weather patterns are never so predictable that you can be absolutely positive of weather conditions before hand, but there are well-established patterns. Day time temperatures and night temperatures at lower altitudes vary through the seasons, but night temperatures at high altitude are cold whatever the season. Modern equipment and clothing will keep you warm.

## **~DAILY TREK ROUTINE~**

You will be woken with a cup of tea brought to you between 6 am and 7 am, followed by a small bowl of warm water for washing. Before breakfast you pack your gear into your kit bag which is then taken by the porters and will not usually be available to you until camp that afternoon. We are usually on the trail between 7.30 am and 8.30 am. Following a good morning's walk, we stop for lunch at around 11 am. Lunch is usually a 2 hour break to allow for the trekker's meal followed by the crew meal. This break also enables you to do your washing in the warmest part of the day, catch up on your diary, read or rest. The afternoon walk is generally a little shorter and camp is usually reached by around 3 pm to 4 pm. On arrival at the lodge your guide will show you to your rooms and the general facilities available. Your kitbags will be available to you at your rooms at this time. In the meantime afternoon tea (hot drinks and biscuits) is served in the main dining/lounge area of the lodge/mess tent. Until dinner there is time to rest, explore the surrounding area and villages or sit and chat with the crew and local people. Dinner is usually served around 6 pm to 7 pm. Remember to bring your water bottle to the dinner so it can be filled with boiling water. It then makes a great hot water

bottle. Evenings afford some of the best memories of your challenge, whether it is talking, playing cards, chatting with the crew or joining in some singing and dancing with the local people, it is always a special time.

All chores are done for you, leaving you free to use your time to the fullest. You carry only a light day pack as your gear is carried by yaks or porters.

### **~MEALS~**

Our menu is based on fresh food to provide three nutritious, plentiful and tasty meals daily. Breakfast is a selection of cereal, muesli, porridge, followed by pancakes, chapati, puri and local breads. An egg dish usually completes the meal. Lunch is a selection of salads, pasta, traditional breads, cheese and potato dishes. Our evening meal commences with soup and is followed by rice, pasta and a range of vegetable and meat dishes. Fruit or a local dessert completes the meal. Tea, coffee, hot chocolate, cordial and biscuits are provided at meals and on request. We can cater for specific dietary needs if we know in advance. First-time trekkers are pleasantly surprised at the quality of the meals.

### **~HEALTH~**

All our leaders undertake intensive first-aid and medical skills courses with Dr Jim Duff. Jim was the doctor on the 1975 British Everest expeditions with Chris Bonnington and Doug Scott. He is a recognized wilderness expert and has been advising our company for many years. The leaders carry an extensive medical kit following Jim's guidelines and if necessary we are well versed in the procedure for a prompt evacuation.

### **~LEADER AND CREW~**

We have been working in Nepal since 1975 and our leaders and program is second to none. Our leaders include males and females who are of Nepali background. All have years of experience and are professional guides dedicated to providing the best experience possible. They have a high level of competence in wilderness and emergency medicine as they all complete annual courses with Dr. Jim Duff. We travel as a self-contained expedition ensuring that we do not deplete limited local food resources, and provide valuable employment for the local people. We enjoy the company of the crew members with whom we share our days. Guides will ensure we take the right trail, kitchen hands prepare our food and do the washing up, the skilled cook's meals will enthrall you, porters and yak handlers move your gear from camp to camp and the sirdar oversees the operation. The times you spend with these people - walking, talking, playing games - will often be the fondest memories of your trek.

### **~TIPPING~**

There is no set rhyme or reason with tipping and one should take every opinion with a grain of salt. Tipping is a tradition throughout the Indian sub-continent. At the end of the trek your leader will collect what you wish to give and distribute it fairly amongst the crew. The staff will work very hard and look forward to your tip as an indication from you of a job well done. As a guide, you should budget on tipping around 300 rupees (approximately £2 / €3) for each trek day. If you wish to tip the leader please do this in addition to

the crew's tip. The reason we do not include the tip in the cost of your trek is that the crew would not see it as an expression of your satisfaction.

### **~ITINERARY~**

Our itineraries are designed to allow you to acclimatise to the altitude gains comfortably and without risk. Although it would be possible to do this trek in fewer days, we believe that extra time in addition to the minimum days must be included to allow for contingencies such as bad weather, or the opportunity to attend a festival.

The walking hours mentioned are only a guide and could vary considerably according to each individual, depending on your particular pace and how often you stop for photographs or breaks. The route and overnight stops are at the discretion of the group leader and the itinerary should be seen only as an indication.

### **~ACCOMMODATION~**

World Expeditions clients will generally stay at the Radisson Hotel, a first class hotel within walking distance of the town centre, where a full breakfast is provided. However at peak times it may be necessary to use other hotels of equal standard. You will leave all those items not required on the trek at the hotel.

### **~LUKLA FLIGHTS~**

Prior to April 1998, helicopters were the primary mode of passenger transport between Kathmandu and Lukla. However the government has ceased the use of helicopters and implemented Twin Otter aircraft services to and from the airstrip at Lukla. This means that without scheduled helicopter services any helicopter flight is an "evacuation" and requires a helicopter charter. The Twin Otter flights are much more weather dependent than the scheduled helicopter flights that previously operated. In the event that the scheduled Twin Otter flight is delayed or cancelled, thus jeopardising your connection with international out-bound flights, a helicopter will be utilised.

Payment for this must initially be met by yourself, and later claimed from your insurance. (We strongly recommend you take the insurance offered by World Expeditions as this has been designed to cover these rare instances) (Some insurance policies may not cover this, and World Expeditions will not reimburse this amount should this event arise)

In light of this it is necessary for you to lodge US\$250.00 deposit with our office in Kathmandu prior to your trek. This will be collected and receipted by your group leader and can be lodged in US cash, or travellers cheques, or credit cards (Visa card, American Express only). If required, your deposit will be used to pay for the costs involved with helicopter evacuation and you will need to recoup these monies from your travel insurance company on your return.

If a helicopter is not required, a full refund will be given. While the helicopter option is rarely used, the deposit is precautionary and we request your

cooperation with our staff in Nepal. Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact our office.

### **~ACUTE MOUNTAIN SICKNESS~**

When we ascend above 2500 meters our bodies have to acclimatise to the decreasing amount of the oxygen available. To allow our bodies to adjust World Expeditions has structured its treks so that you ascend slowly, allowing acclimatisation to occur. However, during the acclimatisation process, you may experience some of the following symptoms.

- Headache
- Tiredness
- Disturbed sleep
- Loss of appetite/nausea
- Shortness of Breath
- Cough
- Palpitation
- Swelling of the hands and face

Individuals acclimatise at different rates. Your best strategy is to take your time and drink plenty of water. These symptoms may not indicate the onset of A.M.S. and if you experience them it does not necessarily mean that you should not continue. All World Expeditions group leaders have extensive first aid training and we urge you to communicate with the group leader at all times should you believe you have any symptoms in order that we can effectively monitor your symptoms. The only cure for Acute Mountain Sickness is to descend.

Please note that your group leader has ultimate responsibility and may ask you to descend if symptoms persist.

### **~ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS~**

Nepal's environment is extremely fragile. The rapidly increasing population puts immeasurable pressure on the country's environment and resources and it is our responsibility as visitors to minimise the impact of our presence. Deforestation is Nepal's greatest environmental problem and World Expeditions pioneered the use of kerosene as an alternative fuel to wood on all expeditions. We do not have camp fires and we strongly discourage trekkers from buying wood-fuelled hot showers that they may encounter. We do not use wood for cooking or heating water whilst in lodges but use kerosene stoves that we carry with us.

We carry our own food supplies in order to maintain high hygiene standards and meal quality, and do not deplete local resources.

### **~GEAR~**

We provide much of the gear you require. We provide good quality a quality sleeping bag and inner liner, insulating rubber mat, and a down or fibre-filled jacket. You will need walking boots, a day-pack and a water bottle in addition to your clothing and personal gear.