



# Stand Up On Everest

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The **Everest Base Camp** comprises two base camps, each on opposite sides of Mount Everest. South Base Camp is in Nepal at an altitude of 5,364 metres (17,598 ft) and North Base Camp is in Tibet at 5,150 metres (16,900 ft).

These camps are rudimentary campsites on Mount Everest that are used by mountain climbers during their ascent and descent. South Base Camp is used when climbing via the southeast ridge, while North Base Camp is used when climbing via the northeast ridge.

The Everest Base Camp trek on the south side is one of the most popular trekking routes in the Himalayas and is visited by thousands of trekkers each year. Trekkers usually fly from Kathmandu to Lukla to save time and energy before beginning the morning trek to this base camp. From Lukla, climbers trek upward to the Sherpa capital of Namche Bazaar, 3,440 metres (11,290 ft), following the valley of the Dudh Kosi river. The village is a central hub of the area, and food, sundries and even mountain climbing equipment may be purchased here.

This takes about two days. Typically at this point, climbers allow a day of rest for acclimatization. They then trek another two days to Dingboche, 4,260 metres (13,980 ft) before resting for another day for further acclimatization. Another two days takes them to Everest Base Camp via Gorakshep, the flat field below Kala Patthar, 5,545 metres (18,192 ft) and Mt. Pumori.

## Elevations and Distance and Trek Times to Everest Base Camp

**Flight Time Kathmandu to Lukla** - 30 minutes: Distance- 136.17 Kilometers (84.61 miles)

**Distance Lukla to Everest Base Camp:** 38.58 miles or 62 Kilometers 8 to 9 days walk in and a 3 to 4 day walk out. Walk in is slower due to the extra days needed to allow a persons body to adjust to the new altitudes. Upon descent the air will get richer each day as you retreat.

## Village elevations Kathmandu, Lukla to Everest Base Camp

Kathmandu (1400m)

Lukla (2880m)

Monjo (2804m)

Namche Bazaar (3445m)

Khunde (3840m)



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Tenbouche (3867m)  
Deboche (3734m)  
Pangboche (3901m)  
Dingbouche (4412m)  
Lobuje (4931m)  
Pumori Basecamp (5209m)  
Everest Basecamp (5360m)

## Everest Region Trekking Peak Elevations

Kala Pattar (5545m)

## Regions

The Everest region is officially called Khumbu and includes the Sagarmatha National Park (above Monju) and the Sagarmatha National Park Buffer Zone (between Lukla and Monju).

Villages . There are many villages scattered throughout Khumbu. Below is a list of nine of the most important to visitors.

**Ghat** - located between Lukla and Monju - small family temple and beautiful *Mani* stones and stupa

**Khumjung** - good place to take an acclimatization walk when staying in Namche - sacred cave

**Khunde** - near Khumjung - location of Khumbu's main Western medicine clinic

**Lukla** - location of airport - other than for taking a flight, no compelling reason to remain here

**Monju** - good place to stop on first night after arriving at Lukla

**Namche Bazaar** - the unofficial Sherpa capital - restaurants, cafes, museums, Tibetan medical clinic

**Pangboche** - picturesque village - small monastery

**Phortse** - very traditional village on mountain opposite Tengboche

**Tengboche** - large monastery

## Understand

Famous for its spectacular mountain peaks and the loyalty and friendliness of its inhabitants (the Sherpas), the Everest region (Khumbu) is one of the most popular destinations for tourists in Nepal. While many of the routes through the mountains are arduous, there are ample places to rest and enjoy a meal along the way. Furthermore, don't worry about getting lost. Just ask a local the way to the next village on your route, and they will direct you. Most Sherpas under the age of fifty can at least understand basic English, and many speak it fluently.



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While trekking is possible in this area the whole year round, the best times to visit are from the beginning of March to mid May and from the beginning of September to end of November. The winters are very cold and snow may make it difficult to travel higher than Tengboche, and also lodges may be closed above this altitude. Summers, on the other hand, are wet, and the spectacular peaks often lost in the clouds. April and early May is a good time to see the hedgerows and trees bursting into bloom, with Rhododendrons, in particular, adding a spectacular splash of colour to the landscape. However, dust from the plains of India during the spring routinely provide less than ideal conditions for clear mountain views. The views are much better after the summer monsoons have cleared the atmosphere of dust, but the days are shorter and cooler.

## Talk

Sherpas speak their own language called Sherpa, which is related to Tibetan. Most Sherpas under the age of fifty can also speak English and Nepali. In addition, because many Sherpas have travelled overseas to work it is not uncommon to meet Sherpas who are fluent in German, French and Japanese.

## Buy

Outside Namche, there are few souvenir shops and the handicrafts sold are similar to those on offer in Kathmandu. However, as the majority of goods are carried over from Tibet, which is much nearer to Khumbu than Kathmandu, you might find a few bargains and some unique items. Also, check out the clothing made from yak wool. This is often made locally, and so the prices may be lower than in Kathmandu. As in most parts of south-east Asia, remember to **haggle** for the best deal.

## Eat

Most lodges offer similar menus - oatmeal, hash browns, omelettes, dal bhat, spaghetti, fried rice, apple pie, etc. - though those in Namche tend to have a wider selection, which includes such things as pizza and juice.

Bakeries, which were originally a Namche phenomena, but now also operate in Khumjung and Tengboche, offer such luxuries as freshly baked pizza, German breads, pastries and even cappuccino - or as one lodge in Monju advertised: Sherpaccino!

## Local dishes include

**Riki-Kur** - the Sherpa dish of potato pancakes, which are delicious eaten straight off the griddle and covered with dzo (female yak) butter and a sauce made of mature cheese and spices called *sorma*.



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Due to the effort involved in making them, they are generally not listed on lodge menus. However, most places will oblige if you order well in advance.

**Tzen** - a heavy patte made from millet and flavored with spices.

## Drink

Locally bottled water is available everywhere in Khumbu, though the price rises with the altitude. A bottle in Namche costs about 50rs. Beer and juice are flown from Kathmandu to Lukla and carried from there by porters; consequently the price is very high. Tea, instant coffee and a drink made from lemon concentrate are the cheapest beverages in the region, and are available in every lodge or tea shop for between 25 to 50rs a cup. NB: As there is no way to recycle plastic bottles in Khumbu, you might consider bringing your own container and either purchasing boiled water or purifying spring water with iodine tablets.

## Sleep

Accommodation is in an abundance in Khumbu, and ranges from the luxurious Everest View Hotel near Khumjung to the very comfortable lodges in Namche right down to those offering very basic facilities. Generally, the higher the altitude, the simpler the accommodation.

## Religious

According to the customs of respect in Tibetan Buddhism (which most Sherpas adhere), **always** pass mani stones and other religious objects with your right side nearest to the object and circumambulate stupas and turn prayer wheels in a clockwise direction. **Never** sit on mani stones, stupas or religious objects.

## Environmental

Due to the sheer amount of trekkers passing through this valley, the eco structure is under severe strain. Therefore, it is important for visitors to be as sensitive to their surroundings as possible. Obviously, wild life and flora should not be disturbed, but in addition, trekkers can help by not leaving any kind of non-biodegradable material in Khumbu, but instead take it back to Kathmandu for disposal. Furthermore, boiled water can be purchased at all lodges, so bringing a personal container avoids the need to purchase bottled water - which anyway is very expensive. Wood for fires should be used sparingly, and not at all when possible. Also try to limit dependence on canned foods, but instead order meals made from local produce, such as *rikikul* (potato pancakes) and dishes made of yak cheese. 'Take only photographs, leave only footprints' should be the mantra of every trekker in the Khumbu area.

