Island Peak & Everest Base Camp

Expedition Information Pack

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Why Choose Earth's Edge:

Our mission is to support you in exploring our incredible world and experiencing life-changing adventures in the safest way possible. We are passionate about protecting the planet and improving the lives of those we meet along the way.

- We are a **100% Irish-owned small business.** Our founder, James McManus, is passionate about climbing mountains, and his extensive experience is an invaluable source of support for our office team in our day-to-day operations.
- We're the only company to have a **dedicated expedition doctor** on every Island Peak trip, providing you with peace of mind knowing you're in safe hands from start to finish.
- Our **exceptional expedition leaders** are true experts in their region, passionate about sharing their first-hand knowledge about the local culture, history, and geography while ensuring we consistently deliver unforgettable experiences.
- We keep **group sizes small** to minimise our environmental impact and foster a strong group dynamic. Whether you're traveling solo or with friends or family, our small group sizes provide the perfect opportunity to bond over shared experiences and create lasting friendships.
- We run a **pre-departure training weekend** two months prior to each expedition. It includes a detailed expedition brief, two training hikes and expert advice from an experienced mountain guide. It's also a great opportunity to meet your fellow adventurers!
- We're here to **support you every step of the way.** Our friendly office team is available to answer any questions you have by phone, e-mail or video consultations. Each team member participates in an expedition every year, ensuring they can share up-to-date advice and insights drawn from their own first-hand experiences.

- Booking an Earth's Edge expedition entitles you to a discount from our **equipment partners** at Great Outdoors to ensure that you get the best gear for your expedition.

- **Responsible travel** is at the core of what we do at Earth's Edge. As a Certified B Corp company, we are committed to using our business as a force for good; to support our communities both locally and worldwide as well as creating more environmental awareness.

We have a number of environmental programmes and community projects, including;

- A yearly scholarship that gives porters the opportunity to become guides on Kilimanjaro.
- Our clients in Nepal help to remove waste from Sagarmatha National Park through the Carry Me Back Program.
- We collect clothing and gear donations for our amazing porters on Kilimanjaro.
- We are striving to increase the number of female staff across our expeditions.

To read more about our sustainability practices, please visit our responsible travel page.

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Description & Detailed Itinerary:

Our **21-day adventure first** takes you on a historic trek through the Khumbu Valley to **Everest Base Camp (5,364m)**, offering you the best possible acclimitisation profile before we turn our attention to **Island Peak (6,189m)**. We move upwards through the valley at a slow, steady pace, taking the time to meet the locals in the villages we pass, absorbing the sights and scents of traditional Nepalese life. We stay in locally run tea-houses each night, enjoying the warm welcome of our hosts and the inviting heat of the stove after a long day's trekking.

After spending our first **10 days trekking to Everest Base Camp** we will be 'trek fit', acclimatised to life on the trail, and prepared for our ascent of **Island Peak**. Island Peak was named in 1953 by the Everest expedition team who could see it from Dingboche, where it appeared as an island floating in a sea of ice. Climbing Island Peak has since been used by many mountaineers as a preparation peak before summiting Everest.

Although it is frequently referred to as a **trekking peak**, the demands of a long summit night (much of which is spent on snow and ice using **crampons** and **ice axes**) make this a tough challenge! We start in darkness in the early hours of the morning and ascend over 700m on mixed terrain. The last 200m are the most demanding, and we use fixed ropes and ascenders to conquer the headwall and reach the summit ridge. However, the **panoramic views of the 7,000m and 8,000m peaks surrounding you at the top** make all the hard work worthwhile!

You will come away from this trek with a great appreciation of the Sherpa way of life, getting the opportunity to experience their unique mountain culture and traditions. We also spend time in Nepal's main city – **Kathmandu.** This bustling city is a melting-pot of ethnicities, and a great contrast to the relaxed pace of life in the mountains.

Throughout the expedition, an experienced **expedition team** provides constant support, led by our knowledgeable Nepalese expedition leader and assisted by a team of Sherpas and porters. A dedicated **expedition doctor** travels with us to ensure safety is always a top priority.

Please Note: *This itinerary is subject to change due to the unpredictable nature of adventure travel. Adjustments may be necessary due to unforeseen circumstances.*

Day 1: Arrive in Kathmandu

Arrive in Kathmandu (KTM). Transfer to the hotel to relax, or explore the city. There will be a full expedition briefing in the afternoon. Overnight hotel.

Day 2: Transfer to Ramechhap 5 hrs; Fly Ramechhap to Lukla, 35 minutes; Trek Lukla to Phakding, 3 hrs

Early morning transfer to Ramechhap, where we board the exciting flight to Lukla. The journey on the 14-seater plane offers breathtaking views of the surrounding mountains. Upon arrival in Lukla, we begin our trek to the village of Phakding. The trail initially descends northwest toward Choblung in the picturesque Dudh Kosi Valley. From there, we follow the Dudh Kosi River, aptly named the "Milk River," passing through the village of Ghat before reaching Phakding. Overnight tea house. Altitude 2,610m.

Day 3: Trek Phakding to Namche Bazaar, 8 hrs

After breakfast, we set off along the Dudh Kosi River, enjoying the serene surroundings. Before long, we reach the confluence of the Bhote Kosi and Dudh Kosi rivers and cross a large suspension bridge. The trail then climbs steadily through fragrant pine forests and small meadows to reach the distinctive horse-shoe shaped village of Namche Bazaar. While it's a tough day on the trail, the chance to see stunning views of Everest (8,848m), Lhotse (8,511m), Nuptse (7,879m), Ama Dablam (6,856m), and Taweche (6,542m) make all the effort worthwhile. Overnight tea house. Altitude 3,440m.

Day 4: Acclimatisation Day in Namche Bazaar

As its name suggests, Namche is famous for its vibrant local market. After breakfast, we climb to the ridge above the village, where we're rewarded with stunning panoramic views of the Khumbu peaks, including Everest, Nuptse, and Ama Dablam. If people are feeling strong, we have the option of ascending further to the air strip above the village. We then visit the National Park museum with the option of visiting the Sherpa museum too. The rest of the day can be spent exploring this colourful village or relaxing in the tea house. Overnight tea house. Altitude 3,440m.

Day 5: Trek Namche Bazaar to Phortse, 5 hrs

Today's route has some stunning views of the surrounding landscape, dominated by Ama Dablam, which towers over us for the day. Towards the end of the route we have a steep descent to the Dudh Kosi and then a big climb up a steep trail to reach Phortse. Overnight tea house. Altitude 3,950m.

Day 6: Trek Phortse to Pheriche, 6 hrs.

Another stunning day on the trail, with potential views of Everest if the weather is clear. We gain over

500m in elevation today, so it's important to take it slow and acclimatise properly. We walk above the treeline and experience a more barren, but equally beautiful, landscape. Overnight tea house. Altitude 4,371m.

Day 7: Acclimatisation Day in Pheriche

After a relaxed start to the day, we set out on an acclimatisation hike, climbing to higher ground near the village. We return to the tea house for a hot lunch, with the afternoon free to relax and explore Pheriche at your own pace. Overnight tea house. Altitude 4,371m.

Day 8: Trek Pheriche to Lobuche, 6 hrs

The day begins with a steep climb to the ridge above Pheriche. At the top, we are rewarded with fantastic views of our route so far and the iconic Ama Dablam. After about 3 hours, we stop for lunch in Dughla before tackling a long ascent to reach the memorials honouring climbers who lost their lives climbing Mt. Everest. The final stretch is relatively flat and takes us right into Lobuche. Overnight tea house. Altitude 4,940m.

Day 9: Trek Lobuche to Everest Base Camp to Gorakshep, 9 hrs

We start early, climbing almost 300m to Gorakshep, where we stop for lunch. The terrain is rough in places as we pick our way over the Khumbu glacier. From Gorakshep, it's a two and half hour trek to reach Everest Base Camp (5,364m). After eight days on the trail, there is a real sense of achievement upon reaching it! We take time to soak in the sights and atmosphere before returning to Gorakshep. Overnight tea house. Altitude 5,164m.

Day 10: Trek Gorakshep to Kala Patthar to Pheriche, 10 hrs

For those with the energy, there is an optional early start to climb Kala Patthar (5,550m). It's a tough trail to the top, but Kala Patthar offers some of the best views of Everest in the entire region. Afterwards, we return to Gorakshep for breakfast. From Gorakshep, we descend all the way to back to Pheriche. Overnight tea house. Altitude 4,371m.

Day 11: Trek Pheriche to Chhukung, 5 hrs

Today we leave the main trail to Everest behind us and trek towards Chhukung. This 5 hour walk allows us plenty of time in the afternoon for rest and to prepare our climbing equipment. Overnight tea house. Altitude 4,700m.

Day 12: Rest and Skills Day in Chhukung

During the day, we sort out our equipment for Island Peak and practice some rope skills. Overnight tea house.

Day 13: Chhukung to Island Peak Base Camp, 3 hrs

We spend the morning practicing our new rope skills with our climbing Sherpas. Under the expert tuition of the Sherpas, learning these skills is key to ensuring we move safely on the high slopes of Island Peak. We have plenty of time to ensure we are comfortable and competent with the ropes. Following lunch, we start the short hike to base camp where we will spend our first night in tents. Overnight camp. Altitude 5,090m.

Day 14: Summit Day! 17 hrs

We rise early for an alpine start and begin the 1,100m ascent to the summit. Although there is some scrambling in places, the route is well-used and easy to follow. We ascend a rocky spur to the crampon point at the base of the upper snow fields. As the sun rises, we are treated to stunning views of the surrounding 8,000m peaks, Lhotse and Makalu. From the crampon point, we move in rope teams, led by climbing Sherpas. We traverse the glacier, negotiating a safe route with the use of ladders and fixed lines to the base of the imposing headwall at 5,900m. From here, the summit is visible almost directly above us. The steep headwall is climbed with the aid of fixed lines which lead all the way to the summit at 6,189m. From the top we can enjoy spectacular views of the Everest region. We then retrace our footsteps back through high camp, where we take a short break to refuel and rehydrate, before continuing our descent to Chuckhung and a welcome bed in the tea house. Altitude 4,700m.

Day 15: Spare Summit Attempt

A spare day in case poor weather or mountain conditions prevent a summit attempt on Day 14.

Day 16: Trek Chhukung to Tengboche, 6 hrs

Today we descend to Tengboche. The route offers amazing close-up views of Ama Dablam, widely considered one of the most stunning peaks in the world. In the afternoon, we can visit Tengboche monastery, the largest and most significant monastery in the region. Overnight tea house. Altitude 3,860m.

Day 17: Trek Tengboche to Namche Bazaar, 4 hrs

From Tengboche, we descend for 1 hour to reach the Dudh Kosi river. We then climb for over an hour and follow the river canyon to Namche Bazaar. In the afternoon there is plenty of time for shopping in the market. Overnight tea house. Altitude 3,450m.

Day 18: Trek Namche Bazaar to Phakding, 5 hrs

Today we retrace our steps all the way back to Phakding. We notice a big change in the landscape as we descend almost 1,000m. Overnight tea house. Altitude 2,610m.

Day 19: Trek Phakding to Lukla, 3 hrs

Our last day of walking always brings mixed emotions. The trail follows the Dudh Kosi river and then climbs into Lukla. There is plenty of time for reflection and to enjoy your last views of the highest mountains in the world. We say goodbye to our support team in Lukla and enjoy our final dinner on the trail. Overnight tea house. Altitude 2,850m.

Day 20: Fly Lukla to Ramechhap, transfer to Kathmandu

We fly back to Ramechhap in the morning and transfer to Kathmandu, where we check into our hotel. We then have some free time for resting at the hotel or exploring the surrounding area. In the evening, we enjoy a celebratory meal in one of Kathmandu's best restaurants. Overnight hotel.

Day 21: Depart Kathmandu.

Enjoy your last bit of relaxing or do some more exploring in Kathmandu before heading to the airport.

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Summit Day Policy

Our goal on this expedition is for the entire group to reach the summit and return safely. Due to the difficulty of the summit day on these mountains, and the importance of maintaining a good guide to client ratio, it is essential we attempt the summit with a strong team. Any clients who are deemed by our expedition leader as not fit enough to reach and return from the summit safely will not be allowed to attempt the summit. This ensures we have a strong team for summit, and that those clients who are fit enough are given the best opportunity to attempt it.

Expedition Costs

You can find our detailed expedition pricing on our website.

- A **deposit** of EUR/USD/GBP 399 is taken at the time of booking to secure your spot
- A **part payment** of EUR/USD/GBP 1,000 is due 6 months prior to departure
- The **final balance** can be paid in instalments, but is due 90 days prior to departure

For up-to-date prices in GBP and USD, based on today's exchange rate, please visit our website.

Flights:

We'll outline a recommended flight itinerary to Kathmandu's Tribhuvan International Airport (KTM) so that you can avail of our free group transfer. This will be shared with you approximately 10 months pre-departure.

You are, of course, welcome to choose alternative flights and make your own way to Kathmandu in time for the briefing on Day 1.

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Expedition Inclusions & Exclusions

Expedition Costs Include:

- Internal flights in Nepal
- Pre-departure training weekend in Wicklow
- Experienced expedition leader
- Dedicated expedition doctor
- Earth's Edge team of guides and a full support team
- All accommodation based on twin sharing in hotels in Kathmandu. During the trek you will be staying in tea houses where the room configuration is a mixture of twin rooms and dormitories, or in two-person tents
- All meals and drinking water (except in Kathmandu and Ramechhap (where needed) in which accommodation is based on a B&B basis)
- A celebratory dinner at the end of the expedition
- All group transport throughout the expedition

- Permit for trekking to Everest Base Camp
- Climbing permit for Island Peak
- All group gear consisting of a fully stocked med kit including an oxygen tank
- An Earth's Edge jacket, cap and buff for all participants

Expedition Costs Exclude:

- International flights
- Training weekend accommodation and food
- Personal travel insurance
- Medical vaccinations
- Tourist visa
- Personal equipment
- Tips
- Expenses of a personal nature such as laundry, phone calls, alcohol, WiFi or showers in the tea houses, and excess baggage charges
- Any costs arising out of unforeseen circumstances which affect the itinerary, such as bad weather, landslides, road conditions, and any other circumstances beyond our control

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Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is mandatory for all travellers, and it is your responsibility to ensure that you have suitable personal travel insurance in place for this expedition.

We strongly recommend arranging travel insurance as soon as possible after booking, so that you may be covered for unforeseen events, such as illness or injury, that could prevent you from travelling.

If you are aged over 65 and resident in the Republic of Ireland, suitable cover may be more difficult to obtain, so we recommend arranging your insurance as early as possible.

At a minimum, your policy must provide cover for:

a) Medical expenses for personal injury or sickness
b) Trekking up to 6,467m
c) Helicopter evacuation in an emergency situation
d) Repatriation to one's country of residence

You must declare any pre-existing medical conditions to your insurer and obtain written confirmation of the cover provided for these conditions.

We recommend considering **TrueTraveller** for your travel insurance, as their policies can provide cover for the requirements outlined above and include cancellation cover. You must confirm directly with the insurer that the policy and activity pack selected cover your age, country of residence, all declared medical conditions and the specific climbing activities involved on Island Peak.

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Spending Money and Tipping

Spending Money

We recommend that you put aside approximately **USD/EUR500** in spending money for this trip. You should also have access to additional emergency funds or a suitable payment method for unexpected weather-related costs.

We recommend that you exchange a small amount of EUR (or GBP/USD) into the local currency, Nepalese Rupees (NPR), either at the airport or in Kathmandu, for purchasing small items like snacks on the trail. There are ATMs available in Kathmandu and Namche Bazaar where you can withdraw cash using a credit/debit card. Whilst on the trail, wifi and hot showers are available in some tea houses at a cost of approx USD/EUR 5 each, usually payable in Nepalese Rupees (NPR).

At the time of writing, **EU passport holders are able to obtain a tourist visa upon arrival in Nepal.** The visa fee is approximately **USD/EUR50** payable in cash at the airport. This is included in the amount recommended above.

Our recommended **tip amount is USD/EUR300** per person. Please give your tip to the Earth's Edge Expedition Leader and they will distribute the tip evenly among all of our Earth's Edge team in Nepal. The recommended spending amount above includes the tip for the Earth's Edge Team.

Tipping

At Earth's Edge it is important to us that the tipping process is transparent and that all team members are tipped fairly.

Here is an example of how we divide the tip to give you an idea of what share of the tip each person gets on the trek. Our average group size is 13 climbers plus our doctor = 14 people.
We recommend everyone tips **USD/EUR 300**. If everyone tips, that will give us a total tip amount of USD/EUR 4,200 (13 x USD/EUR 300 + USD/EUR 300 as we tip on behalf of our doctor).

With a group of that size, our Earth's Edge team in Nepal will be made up as follows and receive roughly the following share of tips.

Expedition Leader: 1 person	USD/EUR 530 x 1	= USD/EUR 530
Assistant Sherpas: 3 people	USD/EUR 400 x 3	= USD/EUR 1200
Porters: 9 people	USD/EUR 270 x 9	= USD/EUR 2430
Driver: 1 person	USD/EUR 40 x 1	= USD/EUR 40
	TOTAL	= **USD 4,200**

Please note the above figures are a guideline based on an average of 13 trekkers. We ask our clients not to tip any of the Earth's Edge team directly as it's important that all of the team get their fair share of the tips.

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Flights to Lukla & Weather Contingencies:

In the event that your group's flights to or from Lukla are cancelled due to inclement weather, additional spending money will be required. The domestic airline will aim to get us on the next available flight when weather conditions are favourable, either later the same day or on one of the following days. While we visit this region when the weather is most favourable, it's essential to note that adverse weather conditions can occur during the trekking season.

In some cases, the **weather may be too poor for planes to fly but helicopters can often operate**, as they can fly in less favourable conditions. Should the need arise, the cost of helicopter hire must be covered by you as changes due to weather are outside the control of Earth's Edge and as per our booking conditions, we don't cover costs associated with changes outside our control (Force Majeure). The estimated cost of helicopter hire is in the range of €300 - €600 per person per flight, but this is subject to variation. Please ensure you have **access to sufficient additional finances** for potential weather-related disruptions during your trek.

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Training Weekends:

Before every expedition, we organise a training weekend where you'll have the chance to meet your fellow adventurers! Led by experienced guides, these weekends include a comprehensive expedition briefing, two training hikes, and invaluable advice covering everything from equipment to weather conditions. Not only are these events educational, but they're also enjoyable, set against the breathtaking backdrop of Glendalough, Co. Wicklow. Please note that food and accommodation for this weekend is not included.

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Safety Standards:

At Earth's Edge, your safety is our top priority. Each expedition is led by an experienced leader supported by a qualified doctor with a keen interest in adventure travel and expedition medicine.

Our expeditions are further supported by our dedicated Earth's Edge team of Sherpa guides and porters, all selected for their skills, experience, and excellent references.

Our teams are familiar with the locations of local medical facilities and hospitals in each destination. While our doctor carries a comprehensive medical kit, we ask all participants to bring a basic first aid kit as outlined in the equipment list. Always follow the guidance of your expedition leader to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience.

We recommend participants research local laws and customs before travelling to Nepal. Up-to-date travel advice is available on the DFA website.

On expeditions, the most common cause of illness is gastroenteritis (Delhi Belly), often caused by poor personal hygiene. The good news is that it is easily avoided by practising the following:

- Always **wash your hands** and **apply hand sanitiser** after going to the toilet and before touching food.
- Always **use drinking water** to brush your teeth and avoid ingesting water while showering or washing your face.
- Maintain a **healthy diet** and consider taking **multivitamins and probiotics** for one month before and during the expedition to help your body adjust to changes in your diet and keep you healthy throughout the expedition.
- **Drinking water** is provided by Earth's Edge on each day of the trek, this water is boiled and cooled. You may also wish to bring your own water treatment tables. If you wish to change the flavour of the water it is recommended to use electrolyte tablets/sachets or add a concentrated flavour drink.

To read more about our safety standards please visit our safety page.

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Special Offers:

- **Return Customer Offer:** If you have travelled with us before, please visit our return customer page for details on what discount you are entitled to.
- **Refer a Friend Offer:** If you have a friend who wants to travel with us, please visit our refer a friend page for details on our referral programme.
- **Group Discounts**: If you are booking as part of a group, please visit our group discounts page for details on what discount you are entitled to.
- **Couples Offer:** If you are booking with a friend or partner, please visit our couples offer page for details on what discount you are entitled to.

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Carry Me Back Program

In 2019, 720kg of waste was generated per day in the Khumbu region during the trekking season. At present, most of this is left behind in pits that are dug throughout the valley and the Sagarmatha National Park, where it is then burnt. This is due to the lack of infrastructure in the high regions and the difficulty of transporting it out of the valley.

Through the Carry Me Back Program, run by Sagarmatha Next, we are helping to combat this

issue. This is a crowdsourced waste removal system which utilises the movement of tourists to transport waste from this area to places where it can be recycled.

For any clients travelling in Nepal who are willing, we organise for them to carry a bag containing 1kg of segregated and shredded waste material to a pick-up point. From here, this waste is collected and transferred to a recycling facility. You can read more about the project here.

Book Your Consultation

You can now schedule a **free trip consultation** with a member of the Earth's Edge team! We're happy to talk you through the itinerary, preparation and training, equipment, and anything else you'd like to know. Book your consultation here.

Expedition FAQ:

Do you have a question that wasn't answered in this information pack? If so, please visit our FAQ page for a full list of frequently asked questions. If you can't find your answer there please contact us.

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