

Everest Base Camp Trek with Helicopter Return

All the highlights of the classic Everest Base Camp Trek, in less time. You walk up through Sagarmatha National Park and the Sherpa villages of Namche Bazaar and...

DURATION 11 days DIFFICULTY Moderate MAX ALTITUDE 5,545m

Highlights

- Trek the classic route to Everest Base Camp (5,364m) through Sagarmatha National Park
- Climb Kala Patthar (5,545m) at sunrise for the best close-up view of Everest on the trek
- Skip the multi-day walk back down — fly out of the high Khumbu by helicopter instead
- Cross the Dudh Koshi on high suspension bridges, including the Hillary Bridge
- Visit Tengboche Monastery, the spiritual heart of the Khumbu
- Acclimatize properly with a dedicated rest day in Namche Bazaar
- Enjoy an unforgettable scenic helicopter flight over the Khumbu on the way home
- Save 3-4 days compared to the standard round-trip itinerary

Itinerary

Day	Activity	Walking Hr	Max Altitude
Day 1	Arrival in Kathmandu	—	1,300m
	You arrive at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu, where an Everest Trip Planner staff member greets you and transfers you to your hotel. Meet your guide for a trip briefing and gear check, then rest overnight in Kathmandu.		
Day 2	Fly from Kathmandu to Lukla and trek to Phakding	30-45 min flight, 3 hrs trek	Lukla (2,840m)
	A scenic mountain flight to Lukla (or via Manthali in peak season), then a gentle 3-hour trek down through pine forest and Sherpa hamlets along the Dudh Koshi to Phakding.		
Day 3	Trek to Namche Bazaar	7 hrs	3,440m
	A steep but scenic climb crossing the Dudh Koshi on high suspension bridges, entering Sagarmatha National Park at Monjo, and continuing through Jorsale to Namche Bazaar, the bustling gateway to Everest.		
Day 4	Acclimatization day in Namche	3-4 hrs	3,440m
	A short acclimatization hike, often up to the Everest View Hotel for panoramic mountain views, before returning to Namche to explore its shops, bakeries, and museum.		
Day 5	Trek to Tengboche	5 hrs	3,860m
	A gradual ascent through pine forest and a crossing of the Dudh Koshi River, with views of Ama Dablam, Lhotse, and Everest, ending at Tengboche Monastery, the largest in the Khumbu.		
Day 6	Trek to Dingboche	4-5 hrs	4,410m
	The trail follows the Dudh Koshi beneath Ama Dablam and Lhotse, passing above Pangboche before climbing into the wide Imja Valley to the windswept village of Dingboche.		
Day 7	Trek to Lobuche	5 hrs	4,910m

Day	Activity	Walking Hr	Max Altitude
	An uphill hike to Thukla, past stone memorials honouring climbers lost on Everest, then along the Khumbu Glacier's lateral moraine to Lobuche.		
Day 8	Trek to Everest Base Camp, return to Gorak Shep	8 hrs	Everest Base Camp (5,364m)
	The trail climbs to Gorak Shep, then continues past the Khumbu Glacier to Everest Base Camp itself, before returning to Gorak Shep for the night.		
Day 9	Kala Patthar sunrise hike, helicopter to Kathmandu	3-4 hrs hike + helicopter flight	Kala Patthar (5,545m)
	A pre-dawn climb to Kala Patthar for a sunrise view of Everest's summit pyramid, the definitive photo opportunity of the trip. Back at Gorak Shep, your helicopter lifts off for a spectacular flight down the length of the Khumbu, landing in Kathmandu by early afternoon.		
Day 10	Leisure day in Kathmandu	—	1,300m
	A free day to rest, explore Kathmandu's UNESCO World Heritage sites, or shop in Thamel, followed by a farewell dinner.		
Day 11	Departure	—	—
	A final breakfast, then a transfer to Tribhuvan International Airport for your onward flight.		

Trip details

All the highlights of the classic Everest Base Camp Trek, in less time. You walk up through Sagarmatha National Park and the Sherpa villages of Namche Bazaar and Tengboche to Everest Base Camp and Kala Patthar, then skip the multi-day walk back down — a helicopter flies you from the high Khumbu straight back to Kathmandu.

This itinerary keeps every highlight of the ascent — the suspension bridges over the Dudh Koshi, the Sherpa capital of Namche Bazaar, Tengboche Monastery, and the dramatic high country around Dingboche and Lobuche — while cutting three to four days off the standard round trip. Instead of retracing your steps back to Lukla, you fly out from the mountains after your summit-morning hike to Kala Patthar, landing in Kathmandu the same day.

It's a great option for trekkers who want the full Everest Base Camp experience without the time commitment of the return walk, or who'd simply rather see the Khumbu from the air on the way out.

Includes & Excludes

Includes

- Airport transfers in Kathmandu
- Kathmandu-Lukla flight
- Helicopter flight from the Everest region back to Kathmandu (weight-shared; private charter available)
- Accommodation in teahouses during the trek
- Three meals per day during the trek
- English-speaking trekking guide
- Porter service (usually 1 porter for 2 trekkers)
- Necessary trekking permits and national park fees
- First aid kit, trekking map, and duffel bag
- Sleeping bag and down jacket rental
- Salary for all staff and government taxes

Excludes

- International airfare to and from Kathmandu
- Nepal entry visa fees
- Travel insurance (including emergency helicopter evacuation)
- Personal expenses (phone calls, internet, laundry, etc.)
- Meals and accommodation in Kathmandu outside those included
- Alcoholic and cold drinks during the trek
- Hot showers and battery charging at teahouses
- Tips for guide, porters, and helicopter crew
- Extra costs from flight delays or weather-related rescheduling

Practical Info

Best Time to Go

Spring (March-May) and autumn (September-November) offer the most stable weather, clearest views, and the most reliable helicopter flying conditions. Winter and monsoon trips are possible but carry a higher chance of weather delays.

How This Differs From the Standard Trek

The ascent follows the exact same route, pacing, and acclimatization schedule as the standard Everest Base Camp Trek — nothing about the walk up is rushed. The only change is the return: instead of three to four days retracing your steps to Lukla, a helicopter flies you out from the high Khumbu after your Kala Patthar sunrise hike.

Weather and Flight Reliability

Helicopter flights depend on weather, and delays are occasionally necessary for safety. We recommend avoiding a same-day onward international flight, in case the helicopter needs to be rescheduled by a day.

Packing Checklist

- Broken-in waterproof trekking boots and camp shoes
- Warm base layers, a fleece, and an insulated down jacket
- Waterproof/windproof jacket and trousers
- Thermal gloves and a warm hat
- UV-protection sunglasses and sunscreen
- Trekking poles
- Headlamp with spare batteries
- Sleeping bag rated to -15°C or colder
- Water bottles or a hydration bladder and purification tablets
- First aid kit and personal medication
- Duffel bag for porter-carried luggage and a daypack
- Passport, permits, and insurance documents showing helicopter-evacuation cover

Do Not Do

- Don't skip the acclimatization day in Namche, even with the shorter itinerary
- Don't book a same-day onward international flight — helicopter timing can shift with weather
- Don't travel without insurance that covers helicopter evacuation and trekking above 5,000m
- Don't ignore symptoms of altitude sickness — descent and evacuation always take priority over the schedule

Frequently Asked Questions

How is this different from the standard Everest Base Camp Trek?

The route up is identical, with the same acclimatization schedule. The difference is the return: a helicopter flight from the high Khumbu instead of three to four days walking back to Lukla, shortening the trip from 14 to 11 days.

Is the helicopter flight safe?

Yes. We work with experienced high-altitude helicopter operators, flying weather-permitting morning slots when conditions are calmest.

What if the helicopter is delayed by weather?

Your guide manages the schedule and rebooking. Occasionally this means an extra night at altitude, so we recommend not booking a same-day onward international flight.

Do I need travel insurance?

Yes — it is mandatory and must cover emergency helicopter evacuation and trekking above 5,000m.

How high do I go?

You reach Everest Base Camp at 5,364m and climb Kala Patthar at 5,545m for the classic sunrise view of Everest.