



# The Responsible Travellers

[www.theresponsibletravellers.com](http://www.theresponsibletravellers.com)

## Classic Himalaya: Everest View & Sherpa Culture Trek Trip Notes



### Highlights:

- Sightseeing to UNESCO sites in Ktm valley
- 8 nights teahouse trek
- 3 Nights B&B Hotel
- Average daily walking 5-6 hours
- Mountain Flight Ktm - Lukla
- Namche Bazaar
- Tengboche Monastery

### Grade B+ 12 days

This is graded "B+" as it includes:

- Well defined trails
- Good underfoot conditions
- Relatively rapid ascent to 3500 metres altitude
- Maximum Altitude 3900m

### Introduction

A journey to Everest is something many of us see as a lifetime goal. This trip allows you to fulfil that dream with a fabulous trek to Tengboche Monastery. Our imaginative itinerary allows you to explore Sherpa culture by visiting many of the villages of the Sagarmatha National Park and see the colourful Monasteries of the region. You will spend a week in the Himalaya with views of Everest amongst many other soaring giants of the Himalaya, and return to Kathmandu to celebrate this achievement in one of the characterful restaurants of the Capital City.

You will take an exciting mountain flight to Lukla from where the trek begins. Leaving Lukla we follow the Dudh Kosi River up to Namche crossing some spectacular bridges along the way. You will reach Namche Bazaar, the capital of the Sherpa people. An early morning walk will reward you with your first glimpse of Everest from the view point above Namche. The stunning scenes from here rivals few other places in the world. Tengboche with its monastery is situated majestically on the ridge above the Dudh Koshi valley and humbly looks up to its deity, Mt Everest or Chomolungma known as the mother goddess. Traditionally, climbers stop here to be blessed by the monastery abode for success on Everest.

You will understand the awe of being surrounded by the giants of the Himalaya and experience something of the mystical spirit of this Buddhist region. Sherpa culture, the mountain flora and fauna & soaring peaks will all contribute to the trip of a Lifetime!

## Detailed Itinerary

### **Day 1: Arrival in Kathmandu**

Arrive in Kathmandu (5hrs 45mins ahead of GMT winter time, 4 hrs 45 mins ahead of GMT in the summer). Transfer to the hotel from the airport. Evening will be spent settling in and relaxing in the hotel, group dinner will be arranged in a restaurant in the evening. Accommodation: City Hotel Bed & Breakfast

### **Day 2: Kathmandu Sightseeing**

This morning there will be a full trip briefing by the leader. Today then incorporates a guided sightseeing tour of two of Kathmandu's major sights. Our first destination is the country's most important Hindu temple- Pashupatinath. The temple is situated on the banks of the Bagmati River in the outskirts of the city. The cobbled streets are bustling with ladies selling flowers, incense and other offerings, and colourful Sadhus (holy men) roaming the surrounds of the temple. Pashupati, lord of the animals is a manifestation of Shiva is believed to still roam the forests in the form of a deer. The temple dating back many hundreds of years makes it one of the most important Shiva locations across the Indian sub continent. As well as a place of worship, it is also the most important cremation site for the Hindus in Nepal. Our second visit takes us to Boudha - a Buddhist monument and the largest of its kind. As you wander round the shops surrounding the stupa, you will find yourself mingling with monks in their maroon and saffron robes, and traditionally dressed Tibetan refugees who live here - the religious center for Himalayan Buddhists. You can join the locals to circumambulate the stupa, bargain for artifacts in the shops or sit on a rooftop restaurant and absorb the atmosphere.

Accommodation: City Hotel Bed & Breakfast



### **Day 3: Lukla to Phakding**

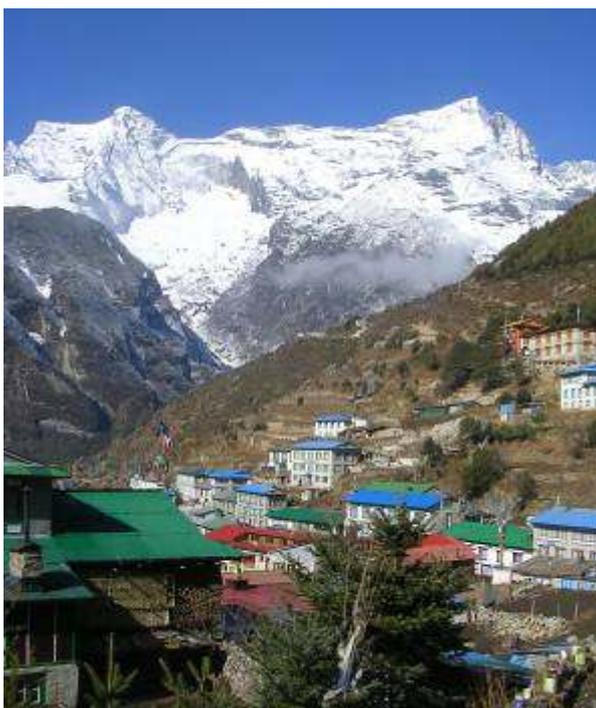
There is an early departure from the Hotel to Kathmandu Airport for the internal flight to Lukla.

Treading out on the runway tarmac you will be taking your first steps towards Everest. Weather dependant you should enjoy spectacular mountain views all the way to Lukla.

The 40 minute flight will take you over the foothills and terraces to the awe inspiring runway landing at Lukla airstrip.

Here we commence our trek. Today's effort is a relatively short and beautiful walk through small Sherpa villages up the Dudh Kosi valley to Phakding. The valley is wide at Lukla allowing for cultivation of wheat, potatoes, radishes, onions and spinach. This area, being lower and having richer soil has a broader variety of crops than the villages higher up.

The Khumbu Region is exclusively Buddhist which is very much evident in the prayers beautifully carved with the Buddhist Mantra "Om mani padme hum" on rocks. Smaller engraved slates are stacked on the walls along the trail and prayer flags are positioned on houses and chortens. These create little diversions as the local custom is to walk around them from the left. Of course



Killing is banned in the region, thus meat has to be carried up from below Lukla. Because of this religious faith the wildlife is not poached and therefore flourishes in the upper Khumbu region. Throughout the itinerary particular opportunities for wildlife sightings are mentioned.

Walking time 3 ½ hrs, Final Altitude: 2640m ,

Accommodation: Mountain Lodge

### **Day 4: Phakding to Namche Bazaar**

This morning we continue along the steep sided Dudh Kosi with some spectacular bridges, crossing and re-crossing the river several times before making a final steep climb up to Namche Bazaar. We should have good view of Mt Thamserkhu in the morning as we walk through villages with small stretches of cultivation with rhododendron and magnolia. We stop for lunch at Munjo, where the border entrance to the Sagarmatha National Park lies. Through the park entrance you are now walking in a World Heritage area as designated in 1979. Following lunch we begin the climb up to Namche Bazaar through forests of conifers. If the weather remains clear then you may be able to make out a small glimpse of Everest through a clearing part way up the hill.

Namche Bazaar is the administrative centre of the upper Khumbu Region. There is a Saturday market when people from all over the valley come to buy or sell their goods. Namche also has a post office, bank, international telephone service, internet cafes and shops selling handicrafts and trekking gear.

Walking Time: 6 - 7 hrs, Final Altitude: 3440m

Accommodation: Mountain Lodge © The Responsible Travellers Ltd 2008

### **Day 5: Namche Bazaar**

After breakfast we climb up to the view point above the town. From here, weather permitting, you can see a great panorama of the Khumbu Himalaya which rivals any place in the world. On the far right hand side are the Kusum Kanguru ( 3 deity sisters), then the twin peaked Thamserkhu, Ama Dablam ( one of the most beautiful peaks in the world), followed to the left by the two peaks of Lhotse, and the Nuptse Ridge with the pyramid of Everest rising behind it. The rest of the day can be spent with optional activities either walking up the Thame valley to thamo village, or simply having a rest and exploring the town of Namche. As well as the fore mentioned shops, Namche also has Sherpa Culture and the Sagarmatha Park Museums and the Monastery to visit.

Walking Time: n/a

Final Altitude: 3440m

Accommodation: Mountain Lodge

### **Day 6: Namche Bazaar to Khumjung**

The trek commences today with a steep climb up to Syangboche airstrip from Namche and then to the Everest View Hotel for refreshments. The view from the terrace here is tremendous as we rest and sip our drinks. We will then descend down to Khumjung where we will be staying for the night. Following lunch we will have a Sherpa culture experience and visit the Edmund Hillary School, the Khumjung monastery that houses the remaining yeti scalp and Khunde Hospital, which was founded in the '70s by Sir Edmund Hillary's

Himalayan Trust. The resident doctor is the first Sherpa to qualify and return to practice in his homeland. The centre provides medical support for local villages as well as an important facility for trekkers and mountaineers. We return to our lodge for dinner and a restful evening.

Walking Time: 4 hrs, Final Altitude: 3600m, Accommodation: Mountain Lodge

### **Day 7: Khumjung to Phortse**

The lodge is stunningly situated beneath Khumbila with a great view of Ama Dablam and Thamserkhu. Weather permitting we should have good views of these beautifully shaped mountains as we rise for the day. Leaving the lodge our route follows down to the lower end of the village and then taking the left trail we hug the mountain side. We then climb some steps and then have a gradual climb up to Mongla at 3972m. For the whole morning, weather permitting the views are of Taoche, Ama Dablam, Kangtega and Thamserkhu. The trail climbs high above the valley traversing grassy slopes which provide good grazing to the Himalayan Tahr and yaks. We may have the possibility of sighting these rare Himalayan breeds as well as Griffin Vultures and Lammergeiers during the next couple of days. The trail drops steeply on switchbacks on the other side of the pass down to the Dhudh Kosi at Phortse Tenga where before climbing up to Phortse Village.

Clinging to the lower slopes of Taoche Peak this is a beautiful Sherpa Village situated off the main trail. The settlement is amidst terraces of farmland where the main crop is potatoes.

Walking Time: 5 hrs

Final Altitude: 3800m

Accommodation: Mountain Lodge



### **Day 8: Phortse to Tengboche**

Leaving the settlement today we traverse the shoulder of Taoche high above the Imja Valley. This provides a vantage point overlooking Tengboche Monastery with the towering peaks continuing to impress as we progress towards Pangboche. This is the highest permanent settlement in the Upper Khumbu. The village's geographical situation provides the opportunity for superior cultivation (relative to the region) on the widening valley of the Imja River. Here you can see a more advanced stone enclosed field system which has provided the villagers with a better living. In the heart of the village is the oldest Monastery of the Khumbu, founded by Lama Sange Dhorje some 300 years ago. We can visit here while lunch is being prepared. In the afternoon as we leave the village we pass some impressive Mani walls and chortens before descending down to cross the bridge over the Imja. The trail continues through rhododendron and birch forest until after Devoche we have the final climb of the day to the meadow of Tengboche.

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Apart from being one of the best view points of the entire trek, the monastery is another addition to the highlights. The building was completely burnt down, but once again thanks to Sir Edmund Hillary's fund raising efforts, it has been restored to its present grandeur. The Tengboche Rimpoche is renowned for his encouragement of conservation policies in the region which can be appreciated by visiting the Eco Centre. This is a good location for sunset, with the final rays of the day cast over the Everest pyramid rising up behind the Nuptse ridge.

Walking Time: 5 ½ hrs

Final Altitude: 3867m

Accommodation: Mountain Lodge



#### **Day 9: Tengboche to Monzo**

We leave the saddle of Tengboche descending steadily to begin with and then more steeply through conifer and rhododendron forest to Phungi Tenga. From here we ascend to Kyengjuma and then traverse across to Namche Bazaar. If it is market day you should be able to enjoy soaking up the atmosphere of the Sherpa bazaar. In the afternoon we will descend further down to Munjo.

Walking Time: 6 ½ hrs

Final Altitude: 2900m

Accommodation: Mountain Lodge

#### **Day 10: Monzo to Lukla**

Today is the final trekking day. We follow the trail along the Dudh Kosi past Phakding and on to Lukla. The descent in altitude is evident once again with a more picturesque flora. Tonight will be the last evening spent with the staff crew and will be a chance to celebrate together the experience of the trip.

Walking Time: 5 hrs

Final Altitude: 2886m

Accommodation: Mountain Lodge

#### **Day 11: Lukla to KTM**

We take a morning flight back to Kathmandu with the sensational take off from the mountain airstrip. You will arrive at the hotel to enjoy the luxury of a hot shower and a change of fresh clothes! The rest of the day is free to either relax at the hotel, do extra sightseeing or shop for souvenirs and Nepal handicrafts.

Accommodation: City Hotel Bed & Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel Bed & Breakfast

#### **Day 12: Depart Kathmandu**

Today we will transfer you from the hotel for your international departure at the airport

Your sense of achievement after trekking in the Sherpa country and home to Everest, and the culture you will have witnessed along the way will be a fabulous experience. However, the best memory will surely be that as a result of your holiday the Nepali community will benefit from development projects through our affiliated charities.

#### **Recommended Extensions**

We suggest the following extensions which can be added to the end of this itinerary:

- i) 2 days chitwan Safari ii) 2 day Spa Resort

#### **Independent & Bespoke Group Trips**

This trip can be tailor made for either an independent trek or for your own group.

You can select any departure date and adjust the itinerary if necessary to suit your needs.

**please contact us at:**

[info@theresponsibletravellers.com](mailto:info@theresponsibletravellers.com)



To book e-mail: [info@theresponsibletravellers.com](mailto:info@theresponsibletravellers.com)

# Additional Information

## What's included in your holiday?

- ✓ Carbon Balancing of international flights
- ✓ Group Leader
- ✓ Mountain Flight KTM – Lukla return
- ✓ 3 nights hotel B&B accommodation
- ✓ 8 nights teahouse accommodation
- ✓ 1 days guided sightseeing, transport and entrance fees in and around Ktm as specified in the itinerary
- ✓ All transportation included in the itinerary
- ✓ Porterage and guides fees
- ✓ National Park Entrance fees & permits
- ✓ 100% profits donated to charity

## What's not included:

- ❖ International flights & airport taxes
- ❖ All Meals not included in the itinerary
- ❖ Incidental extra personal expenses
- ❖ Nepal Tourist Entry Visa
- ❖ Single persons supplement
- ❖ Additional sightseeing not specified in the itinerary
- ❖ Travel Insurance
- ❖ Staff tips

**Travelling alone.....**and don't want to pay a single supplement? No problem, you will be paired up with someone of the same gender to share a room. If you would prefer the privacy of a single occupancy the Single Supplement for this trip is £95. Please note that single rooms in the mountain lodges will be dependant on availability and **can not** be guaranteed. We will do our utmost to meet your needs.

### Thought of Funding raising for charity?

You may choose to take this opportunity to raise sponsorship for one of our affiliated charities, if you wish to do so please contact us at: [info@theresponsibletravellers.com](mailto:info@theresponsibletravellers.com) and we will forward details to you.

## First class staff & service levels

We are a highly credible tour operating organisation specialising in the Himalayan countries. All our staff are specially selected based on their experience, expertise and qualifications. We pride ourselves on a highly personalised airport to airport service with quality of care. The trip Leader will be an experienced professional leader working full time in the Himalayas & Central Asia with many years of experience. He/she will have full mountain wilderness & first aid qualifications and will have received training from either Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Nepal Mountaineering Association or one of the European Alpine Clubs. As a responsible employer we pride ourselves on hiring local staff and paying wages higher than most organisations. If you want to read more about our employment policy please go to: [www.theresponsibletravellers.com/our-ethics/employment-policy.html](http://www.theresponsibletravellers.com/our-ethics/employment-policy.html)

### Further Information:

If you have any queries regarding this trip, whether it is about preparation, the itinerary or general travel information please do not hesitate to contact us. If this trip is not for you perhaps you would like to contact us for details of alternative trips.

All our trips and additional extensions can be viewed online at: [www.theresponsibletravellers.com](http://www.theresponsibletravellers.com) or write to us at [info@theresponsibletravellers.com](mailto:info@theresponsibletravellers.com).

## Administration & Practicalities

**Insurance:** It is compulsory to take full holiday insurance which covers trekking to the maximum altitude of your trek/trip, and also covers full rescue and repatriation costs. You will need to provide a copy of your insurance details, including an emergency 24 hour telephone number to the trek leader before departing Leh. This should include any correspondence stating clarification of the required cover. If your policy documents are not available or prove to provide insufficient cover you may not be able to continue your trip. Please ensure that your policy also covers any extra activity outside of the stated itinerary you wish to do if you are extending your trip.

**Passport:** Passports need to be valid for a minimum period of 6 months from the date of visa application if you are applying in the UK and from the date of entry into Nepal.

**Visa Details:** Visas are available in advance from the Nepal Embassy online at:

<http://www.nepembassy.org.uk/visa.php>

You can also have the visa processed at Kathmandu airport. If you intend to wait until your arrival at the airport please remember to bring two passport photos and US \$30 or 50 in cash (N.B US dollars - is the only accepted payment).

**Money:** The local currency is Nepali Rupees (approx exchange rate 120 NRS - £1 – subject to daily fluctuation) Please note this can not be purchased in the UK. It is advised to take either sterling or US Dollars. Traveller's cheques and cash can be exchanged for local currency in Kathmandu. Credit cards are not generally accepted. In Kathmandu there are ATMs available to access cash via Cirrus / MasterCard / Visa.

**Flight Information:** This trip is land only and operates Ktm to Ktm. Please contact us if you want advice about international flight options and how to purchase.

**Health:** It is important you are prepared & fit and healthy for your trek. We strongly recommend you visit your local GP and ask advice regarding any vaccinations required.

**Itinerary:** All that is possible will be done to ensure the trip follows the outlined itinerary. However, due to factors beyond our control such as local weather, politics and airlines it may be necessary to vary one or more of the days. If this does occur we shall do our utmost to ensure minimal impact to you.

## What to expect

### Weather

October to April is the dry season. During this time you should have warm days with temperatures between 15 - 25 degrees Celsius depending on altitude with relatively clear skies and little precipitation. During the winter months temperatures may reduce to -15 degrees Celsius during night-time at higher altitudes.

### Group Size

Due to the remote locations that are visited, we remain sympathetic to the local culture and environment by limiting our trips to a maximum of 12 places. This may be slightly smaller than other operators, and we believe it ensures the maximum enjoyment and fulfilment of our trip members and minimize the pressures on the environment. This also avoids the feeling of "herding" from being part of a large group. There is a minimum of 6 to operate the trek.

### Wildlife

The Everest region is home to the Himalayan Tahr and Musk deer. There are also high Yak pastures a favourite prey of the elusive snow leopard. You are likely to get sightings of the Himalayan birds of prey such as Griffon vultures and lammergeiers. If you travel in the autumn to landscape is a myriad of colours and in spring the Rhododendrons Magnolia are in blossom.

### Baggage:

You should use a Rucksack or Kit bag that is strong enough to withstand the rigors of transportation in the mountains. Suitcases or rigid bags can not be used as these are a difficult and awkward load for porters. The weight limit for your trek bag is 12.5kg. The limitation for luggage on the internal flight is 15kg for the hold and 10kg for hand luggage. Please see your airline for details of your international flight luggage allowances.

## More about us & Our Ethics.....

Here at **The Responsible Travellers** we take great pride in the fact that we are **doing the right thing** by you our customers, by our staff, and by the people, country and environment in which we operate. We believe actions speak louder than words, over the next few pages you can read how our ethics are put into practice.



### Our Guarantee:

100% of profits are donated to Charitable Projects

- ✓ We pay the cost to Carbon Balance your international flight to the Himalayas
- ✓ Through a committed Environmental Policy we work to ensure minimal impact of our activities
- ✓ We have a simple and fair Pricing Policy with no extra fees charges – price us up against other companies!
- ✓ Have a fair and ethical Employment Policy which is committed to employing local staff and paying fair wages

*Are you ready for a change in the way you approach your holiday?*

**Before you go.... we start to take responsibility for your trip by carbon balancing your flights.**



The impact on climate change from the way in which we live today is a topic we have all heard about, and is under much debate from the world's scientific community. This is something that we can not and should not ignore. This is why when you go on holiday with "The Responsible Travellers", we commit as part of our Responsible Tourism policy to ensure your trip contributes towards renewable energy technologies in the Himalayas. Given the great "green debate", we have chosen to implement this policy in a way that ensures we know we are making a difference. For every traveller to the Himalayas we donate twice the amount it costs to purchase commercial carbon credits\*\* to either Nepal's Renewable Energy support programme BSP. Or Ladakh's Ecological Development Society depending on your destination. Travel with peace of mind with **The Responsible Travellers**

**Whilst you are there....** Our Employment and environmental policies demonstrate our continued sense of responsibility. Firstly, our belief in aid through trade and therefore the generation of local employment and how this is managed is at the very heart of our operation. This is why we have a 100% commitment to employing only local staff. Our customers benefit from this by being able to get closer to the culture and learn more from the experience in the Himalayas, travelling with those who are born and bred in the area. By employing this policy we are also ensuring that the local economy benefits as much as possible rather than commercial organisations. We take great pride in ensuring fair wages to all our local staff and protecting our porters from exploitation. Secondly, our environmental policy addresses waste management, water usage, and encourages and supports the use of renewable resources. In addition, we work closely with the Nepal Sustainable Tourism Development Unit and WWF to ensure the strongest commitment to the local environment. Read more at: [www.theresponsibletravellers/ethics.html](http://www.theresponsibletravellers/ethics.html)



**The choice is easy when you are...**

*After you've gone.....* The Responsible Travellers donates all profits from its travel operations to charitable projects in Nepal. We believe the most effective way to invest is with the help of specialist organisations. We work with our partners to find suitable projects and locations to invest and then all the funds go directly to the local project. Our partner charities and areas of investment include:



### Education

We believe all development starts with educating the people. We support community education programmes, child support programmes, and interest free loans for adult education through our beneficiary charity CHANCE Registered UK charity. 1107201..



### Community Development

We help communities to provide themselves with improved facilities and encourage this to be done in an environmentally friendly way. Our volunteer programs allow visitors to experience this first hand when they opt for a family home stay and participate in the community project holidays.



### Re-Forestation & Renewable Resources

Our third area of work involves working with BSP – the national biogas organisation in Nepal. The WWF estimate that only 29% of the original forest covers in Nepal still remains. Between 1990 and 2005, Nepal lost 1.2 million hectares of forest We work with BSP Nepal in order to help the communities develop Biogas – a renewable energy resource which provides clean fuel, stops deforestation, and offers far reaching health and sanitation benefits.



*To see more details of our charitable giving please go online to:  
<http://www.theresponsibletravellers.com/ethics/projects.html>*

Our commitment to **Doing the Right Thing** extends from investing in local charitable projects, to making sure that our customers also get a good deal.

To help you have a hassle free holiday, we provide a fair and simple **pricing policy**:

- ✓ We charge a fair price: to make sure the holiday is as satisfying as possible; we charge what we believe is a fair price, not what we can get away with – compare us to other companies!
- ✓ No extra land charges or hidden fees: To keep life simple we make a single charge
- ✓ No profiteering from single supplements: we charge a fair price based on cost & do not charge excessive premiums for single supplements
- ✓ No nagging for donations: We do not request charitable donations from you in order to justify our responsible tourism policy. We work hard on your behalf so you can just concentrate on having a great time!

**....Doing the right thing**