

Everest Base Camp Trek



Saturday 10th November - Sunday 25th November 2018



DESTINATION: NEPAL / DURATION: 16 DAYS / DIFFICULTY: CHALLENGING-EXTREME

Nepal

Nepal is a landlocked Himalayan country in south Asia covering an area of 147,181 sq. km, bordered by Chinese Tibet to the north and by India to the south, east and west. For a small nation, the Nepali landscape is diverse, ranging from the humid Terai in the south to the lofty Himalayas in the north. Nepal boasts eight of the world's fourteen highest mountains, including of course Mount Everest on the Chinese border.

Everest Base Camp

Nepal's Everest Base Camp is not just a popular trekking route for tourists; it is actually the starting point for mountaineers who intend to reach the summit of Mount Everest. The Nepal Base Camp is located at 5364m and mountaineers base themselves here for weeks to acclimatise on the mountain, return to rest and prepare themselves for their ascent. The scenery along the trail is beautiful with views of huge Himalayan peaks dominating the landscape. Staying in teahouses along the trail offers a unique insight into the lives of the local people.

The Challenge

This is a 12-day trek to Nepal's Everest Base Camp, including an optional (but highly recommended) summit of Kala Pattar. This classic trek allows you to walk in the footsteps of some of the world's most respected mountaineers and offers you an insight into the culture of the Sherpa people all while being surrounded by a breath-taking landscape.

How tough is it?

This trek is graded *challenging to extreme* because you will be trekking for 12 consecutive days over rough terrain, you will be exposed to increasing altitudes each day, averaging 4000m and up to a maximum of 5545m, and you will stay overnight in basic teahouses. Each day's trek is between 5 and 8 hours in duration (variable depending on group pace) and you will cover approximately 10-15km per day. The Everest Base Camp trek is a challenge of endurance so you are strongly advised to build up to a good fitness level before departure to ensure fast recovery from each day's exertions. Being away from home comforts and family for an extended period of time is often a challenge for participants although access to communications on the trail is very good overall.

Difficulty: Challenging to extreme

High altitudes (max 5545m), 12 consecutive days trekking, extreme temperatures, rough terrain.

Accommodation: Hotel (2 nights), Teahouses (12 nights)



Weather: Average daytime temps: 20°C to 5°C Average nighttime temps: 0°C to -10°C. Rain or snow possible. Bright and sunny while very cold.

Terrain: Constant uphill and downhill trekking. Dry, rocky and dusty, rough underfoot. Several high suspension bridges over rivers.



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Challenge Cost:

Registration fee: **£395**
and either...

Self funded balance: **£1975**
or...

Sponsorship to charity: **£3950**

What's included in the price?

Return flights from London to Kathmandu (including current airport taxes and fuel supplements), internal flights, all transfers & transport in Nepal, accommodation in a 3 star hotel in Kathmandu, teahouse accommodation on trek, all meals including a welcome dinner with cultural show, local expert English-speaking guides, porters and support crew, Sagarmatha National Park entrance fees and trek permits, a UK Different Travel tour manager.

What's not included in the price?

Personal expenses (such as drinking water, snacks, drinks, souvenirs, etc.), any vaccinations required, Nepal visa (current cost US\$25 on arrival), travel insurance, tips (approx. £50-60 per trekker), laundry services, personal trekking kit (see kit list) .

What is the terrain like?

The terrain will vary throughout the 12 days but in general you will trek up and down hills constantly throughout the day as the terrain throughout is undulating. Some days you may have a full day trekking uphill, followed by the next day trekking downhill all day. It is essential that your training includes plenty of hillwalking and trekking up gradients over consecutive days in order to condition your muscles to this type of exertion. Underfoot the conditions will be dry, rocky and very dusty (you must bring a 'Buff' to cover your nose/mouth to prevent the infamous Khumbu cough). There are numerous river crossings which utilise very high suspension bridges. During the trek, there is the option trek to the top of Kala Pattar 'black rock' at 5545m where you will discover exceptional views of Everest (conditions allowing), it involves a slow slog up to the top but the stunning panorama from the top makes it worth the effort.

Who accompanies us?

You will be accompanied throughout the trek by professional English speaking local Sherpa guides who have an excellent knowledge of hiking in the region and may have summited Everest on multiple occasions. The guides are first aid trained and will support you throughout your journey, sharing their experience and wisdom with you. You will also be supported by a team of assistant guides and a Different Travel UK tour manager. Your luggage is carried by a team of local porters.

Where will we stay?

You will stay each night in tea houses which are locally owned lodges accommodating trekkers and climbers from all over the world. The tea houses are comfortable but basic and feature a main lounge-dining area which is heated with a central yak-dung burning stove which makes it a very cosy environment. You will take your breakfast and evening meals in this room and will probably play cards and get to know each other here each evening too. Battery charging facilities, soft drinks, hot drinks, snacks and souvenirs are available to purchase at many tea houses along the way. The bedrooms usually have two or three single beds per room which have mattresses and occasionally pillows and blankets. You will need to bring your own sleeping bag.



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What about toilet and bathroom facilities?

The facilities at the tea houses will vary. Some have hot water showers or access to buckets of hot or tepid water for washing; some may only have cold water for washing. Washing facilities are increasingly expensive the closer you get to base camp. Toilet facilities are basic. In the early stages of the trail there will be a combination of Western and Asian squat toilets which are flushing. Further along the trail there are fewer flushing toilets and instead water buckets are provided for flushing. Please **DO NOT** put toilet paper down the toilet as this will block the toilets and make the facilities unusable for other trekkers.

What is the climate like?

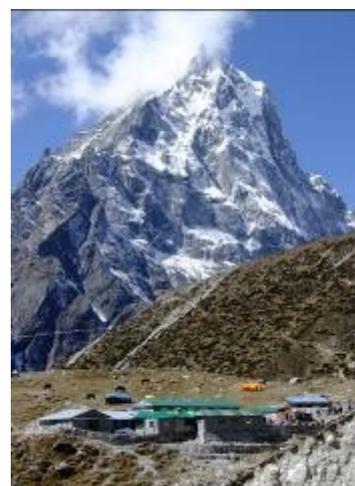
Nepal's climate varies with topography and altitude. Temperatures during the trek will be dependent upon the weather but you can expect temperatures to average 20°C during the first few days, dropping down to 0°C at night, then decreasing to 5-15°C during the day as you approach base camp, with sub-zero night time temperatures (down to -10°C on average). It tends to get dark between around 5-6pm during the trek. The dry season (October to May) is the best time to trek in the Everest region and generally offers clear skies to enjoy incredible views of the mountains.

Please note: the temperatures and conditions above are historically accurate for this time of year but climate change can impact the seasons so you may experience uncharacteristic conditions during the trip which are out of our control. Should this happen the guide will assess the situation and make decisions to ensure the best enjoyment and ultimately safety of the group as a whole.

What is the food like?

During the trek the food is plentiful and delicious although the teahouses tend to offer similar menus so be prepared for a menu which is repeated. Generally you will be met with variations of rice, potato and noodle dishes, and soups. A typical breakfast will include a choice between eggs, omelette, toast, cereal, porridge. Lunch will typically include: dal bhat (steamed rice with a lentil soup), pasta, noodles, vegetables, rice, soup, momos (dumplings), whilst a typical dinner will include soup, dal bhat, vegetables, pasta, noodles, rice, potato dishes.

There will also be plenty of snacks and drinks available to purchase at each teahouse (prices vary). In tourist areas of Kathmandu you will find a wide range of restaurants catering for international and high-quality Nepalese food.



"I had the trip of a lifetime. I loved every minute of it. Kathmandu was an amazing experience but on day 2 of trekking we started to get stunning views of the enormous peaks and they just got better. Hot chocolate at the Everest View Hotel with the impressive peak of Ama Dablam peering through the clouds was pretty special."



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What about altitude and acclimatisation?

The altitude you experience on this trek is up to 5545m which is very significant and as such there is a likelihood of altitude related sickness. Your local guide will be very experienced in spotting the signs of altitude sickness but it is important that you also do some research into the effects so you can be aware of how your body is adjusting. A source of information can be found at <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Altitude-sickness/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

The trek includes two important acclimatisation days. These days involve exposure to higher altitudes before descending back to your teahouse for the night. This exposure offers your body a chance to adjust to the altitude in a controlled way, before you ascend to higher altitudes over the coming trek days. Acclimatisation days are also a great opportunity to do some local exploring and learn more about the history and culture in the Himalayas. Please note that acclimatisation days are not rest days although you may have the opportunity to spend the afternoons at leisure.

Common mild symptoms of altitude sickness are headache, nausea, loss of appetite, disturbed sleep and fatigue. These generally subside after a few days, once your body acclimatises to the altitude. It is vital that you make your guides and tour manager aware of any symptoms immediately so you can be monitored.

You may also wish to consult with your GP about Acetazolamide (Diamox). Please note that this medication is an unlicensed prescription-only medication in the UK and as it is unlicensed, your GP may not wish to prescribe it to you.

Important info about altitude

If you begin to show symptoms of moderate altitude sickness, don't go higher until symptoms decrease. If symptoms increase, you must descend immediately. Your tour guide and tour manager's decision for you to descend must be respected.

Different people acclimatise at different rates. You must keep aware of your own symptoms.

- Stay well hydrated. You need to drink lots of fluids to remain properly hydrated (at least three litres per day from water, soup, tea, juices etc.). Urine output should be copious and clear to pale yellow.
- Take it easy and don't overexert yourself when you first arrive at altitude.
- Avoid tobacco, alcohol and other depressant drugs including, barbiturates, tranquillisers, sleeping pills and opiates such as codeine. These decrease the respiratory drive during sleep resulting in a worsening of symptoms.
- Eat a high calorie diet while at altitude.
- Acclimatisation is inhibited by overexertion, dehydration, and alcohol.



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Who is suitable for this trek?

An ideal candidate for the trek would be someone who enjoys trekking and being out of their comfort zone, trying something new, interested in different cultures and willing to train for the challenge. The minimum age is 18, or 16-17 if accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

What kind of training do I need to do?

If you do not already regularly exercise it is crucial that you start training (including plenty of hills) as early as possible departure to ensure your best chance of enjoyment on the trip. The best training for trekking to Everest Base Camp is hill walking. You must take fitness training seriously in order to enjoy the challenge and have the best chance of reaching Base Camp and the summit of Kala Pattar. Supplementary training could include running, cycling, gym workouts, team sports, boot camps, swimming, yoga etc. You can download a number of free apps, which will help you train and track your progress. E.g. iMapMyRide, C25K (couch to 5k run) and MyFitnessPal. The trek does not require technical climbing skills but it is still a tough trek at high altitude so it is important to **take your training seriously and arrive in Nepal as fit as you can be.**

Health considerations

We require a medical form to be completed by everyone upon registering, and any pre-existing conditions, medications used and other medical issues **must** be noted and (if relevant) signed by your GP. Any conditions that develop must be declared and a new medical form completed and signed.

Online personal training

Different Travel has a link with online personal training company Brightside Personal Training, who are offering a great value online training package for those who may not have access to fitness advice tailored to their requirements: <http://brightsidept.kajabi.com/sp/34357>

“The trek was a once in a lifetime opportunity and was memorable from start to finish. To reach Everest Base Camp was amazing. I would love to go on another trip with The Different Travel Company in the future.”



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Itinerary

Day 1 (Sat 10th November): London – Kathmandu

Depart London on an overnight flight to Kathmandu.

Day 2 (Sun 11th November): Kathmandu (1400m)

Arrive in Kathmandu and check into our hotel. Today is free for you to explore the local area before having a briefing on the challenge ahead from our main Sherpa guide and enjoying a welcome dinner and cultural show tonight. Kathmandu is a living museum with something new around each corner! Literally hundreds of Hindu temples sit alongside Buddhist stupas and Tibetan monasteries with their evocative prayer flags flapping in the breeze.

Overnight at hotel in Kathmandu.

Day 3 (Mon 12th November): Kathmandu – Lukla (2843m) – Monjo (2835m) 4 hours

Fly with our guide to Lukla this morning on a scenic 40-minute flight landing on a steep mountain runway which sets the scene for our forthcoming trek! We will meet our assistant guides and our porters before starting the trek up the Dudh Koshi Valley on a well-marked trail towards Phakding where we cross and re-cross the river on a series of high suspension bridges before we arrive into the small village of Monjo where we stay overnight.

Overnight in teahouse. *Approx. 9km trekking.*

Day 4 (Tues 13th November): Monjo - Namche (3445m) 5-6 hours

Beyond Monjo is the entrance to the Sagarmatha National Park, set up in order to protect and preserve the fragile mountain environment for future generations of trekkers and mountaineers. From Monjo we take a steep hike to Namche where, if the weather is clear, we catch our first glimpse of Mt Everest. Namche is the

main trading village in the Khumbu and has a busy market, numerous shops, cafes and most famously, freshly baked apple pies!

Overnight in teahouse. *Approx. 7km trekking.*

Day 5 (Weds 14th November): Namche (acclimatisation day)

Spend today in the Namche area to acclimatise to the altitude before continuing to trek higher. This morning you will take an acclimatisation walk and this afternoon you can enjoy the bustling town of Namche (and try a slice of famous apple pie!). For your walk, you may walk up to the Everest view hotel (3880m) with views of Ama Dablam, Lhotse, Thamserku and more. There is plenty to do around Namche; such as visiting Khunde Hospital, set up by Sir Edmund Hillary or visiting the interesting Sherpa museum and Syangboche airport (3780m) where you may catch a glimpse of Everest.

Overnight in teahouse. *Approx. 3km trekking.*

Day 6 (Thurs 15th November): Namche – Deboche (3820m) 5-6 hours

From Namche, the trail contours on to the side of the valley, high above the Dudh Kosi river where we get our first really good views of the great peaks of the Khumbu. Passing several villages and numerous tea shops we descend steeply into the forest towards the village of Phunki Tenga situated next to the river, where we stop for lunch. After lunch we take a steep climb out of the forest to Tengboche which is famous for its monastery, the largest in the Khumbu. We then descend to a village nearby, Deboche, where we stay overnight.

Overnight in teahouse. *Approx. 10km trekking.*



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Itinerary

Day 7 (Fri 16th November): Deboche – Dingboche (4410m) 6-7 hours

This morning we continue to descend through the forest until we cross the river and start our steady ascent up towards the village of Dingboche, stopping at a village for lunch. The trail this afternoon opens up into what feels like a vast plain after following a narrow trail earlier in the day. You can notice the temperature dropping as you approach Dingboche, which is at the highest altitude on the trek so far.

Overnight in teahouse. *Approx. 12km trekking.*

Day 8 (Sat 17th November): Dingboche (acclimatisation day)

Today is another important day for acclimatization. You will ascend to around 4600m from where you will have panoramic views of the nearby peaks and the rural farmland in the valley below. Look out for Ama Dablam, Amphu Gyabjen, Cholatse and Tabuche which surround vast glaciers and turquoise lakes. This afternoon you can explore the village and perhaps visit one of the bakeries or cafes for refreshment.

Overnight in teahouse. *Approx. 3km trekking.*

Day 9 (Sun 18th November): Dingboche – Lobuche (4910m) 5-6 hours

We retrace our steps from yesterday's acclimatization up the wide valley beneath the impressive peaks of Cholatse and Tabuche but turn right and take a steep ascent towards the foot of the Khumbu Glacier. We stop to have lunch at Thukla (4620m), a small village surrounded by vast peaks before continuing on the trail towards the memorial, home to tributes to all those who have died in Nepal's Himalayas. After some time to reflect, we continue following the Khumbu glacier up towards the cluster of houses at Lobuche where we stay for the night.

Overnight in teahouse. *Approx. 9km trekking.*

Day 10 (Mon 19th November): Lobuche – Everest Base Camp (5364m) - Gorak Shep (5140m) 8-9 hours

Today we make our final journey to our goal, Everest Base Camp! Starting our trek just after dawn we continue to follow the ice pinnacles and crevasses of the Khumbu Glacier as it winds its way through the valley. After around 4 hours trekking we stop for an early lunch at Gorak Shep before making the final push to reach Base Camp, arriving a few hours later. After celebrations, group photographs and time to appreciate the stunning surroundings at Base Camp we return to Gorak Shep for a well-deserved rest!

Overnight in teahouse. *Approx. 10.5km trekking.*

Day 11 (Tues 20th November): Gorak Shep - Kala Pattar (5545m) – Pheriche (4240m) 7-8 hours

The trek to the top of Kala Pattar is optional but it offers superb sunrise views of Everest (which you can't actually see from Base Camp) and other vast peaks. If you wish to do this trek a pre-dawn start is required to make it to the top for sunrise. For those trekking Kala Pattar, you will return to Gorak Shep in time to meet the rest of the team for breakfast before starting the descent to Pheriche, a small town you will have seen from across the valley in Dingboche when we stayed there on day 7 and 8.

Overnight in teahouse. *Approx. 10km trekking (plus 2km for Kala Pattar).*

Day 12 (Weds 21st November): Pheriche - Kyangjuma (3550m) 5-6 hours

Today's trek is mostly downhill as we retrace our steps and descend to Kyangjuma, a village just outside of Namche. There are lots of places of interest along the way including a trekker's health post, water driven prayer wheels and rhododendron forests.

Overnight in teahouse. *Approx. 10km trekking.*

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Day 13 (Thurs 22nd November): Kyangjuma - Monjo (2840m) 4-5 hours

Today we continue on the trail to Namche and Monjo. We will take a small detour this morning to visit Khumjung (3780m) and Khunde (3840m), where you can visit the Edmund Hillary School and hospital, both still in use today. We descend into Namche for lunch before making our way back to Monjo for the night. Overnight in teahouse. *Approx. 8km trekking.*

Day 14 (Fri 23rd November): Monjo - Lukla (2843m) 4 hours

Today marks our final day of trekking as we follow the Dudh Kosi back to Lukla for a rest before flying back to Kathmandu the following day. Here you may wish to visit one of the many bars, cafes and restaurants including Starbucks, Yakdonalds and the Irish Pub or simply relax and reflect on the incredible achievement you have made over the past 11 days. Tonight you will enjoy a celebratory meal together and have a thank you and tip ceremony for the Sherpa staff. Overnight in teahouse. *Approx. 9km trekking.*

Day 15 (Sat 24th November): Lukla – Kathmandu

We pack up early this morning and head to the airstrip for the flight back to Kathmandu. You can enjoy the rest of the day at leisure. This evening we will enjoy a celebratory farewell dinner in Kathmandu. Overnight at hotel.

Day 16 (Sun 25th November): Kathmandu - London

There may be time for some shopping in Kathmandu this morning, before you transfer to the airport. Depending on flight times you may land in London on Monday 19th November.

N.B. This itinerary is subject to change and will depend on the group ability and the daily circumstances to ensure the best chance of acclimatisation and success. Any changes in the itinerary will be made in the interest of group safety and enjoyment. You will be informed each evening of the plans for the next day. Your guide and tour leader will have the final say in the interest of the health and safety of the group.



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Everest Base Camp Challenge Information: A-Z

A is for Arrival. British nationals require a 15-day tourist visa for travel to Nepal. Visa applications should be prepared online via the Nepalese Immigration Authority website: <http://online.nepalimmigration.gov.np/tourist-visa>. Applications should be lodged no earlier than 15 days prior to arrival in Nepal.

A is also for Accommodation. You will stay in a central hotel in Kathmandu before and after the trek and you will stay in teahouses during the trek. The accommodation at the hotel is on a twin-share basis but in the event of there being an odd number of people, a triple room or single-occupancy supplement may be offered. At the teahouses there may be twin, single, triple or quad rooms.

A is also for Altitude. Please see the feature above. Everyone will have some symptoms to varying degrees including: headache, nausea, lack of appetite, insomnia, fatigue, dehydration. Drinking lots of water and trekking '*bistari bistari*' (slowly) helps you acclimatise. See your GP about options for medication to help with the altitude and refer to online sources such as

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Altitude-sickness/Pages/Introduction.aspx> or <http://www.traveldoctor.co.uk/altitude.htm> for more details. It is vital that you are honest about your condition and inform your local guide or tour manager if you experience any symptoms of illness so you can be assessed. It is imperative that you listen to the advice of the guides and if you are asked to descend because you are suffering from altitude sickness, you should not question their authority for your own safety and the safety of the group.

A is also for Asthma. If you suffer from asthma, there are some important issues to consider when preparing for this trek. Please visit your GP, and read the website of Asthma UK for advice and support. <http://www.asthma.org.uk/knowledge-bank-living-with-asthma-high-altitude>

B is for Begging. Begging in Nepal can be an issue particularly in tourist hot spots due to the best but ultimately wrong intentions of tourists. As part of our responsible tourism policy we strongly advise against giving anything directly to beggars or offering gifts to children. This can lead to these individuals pestering other

travellers or considering that begging is more profitable or beneficial than searching for work or attending school.

B is also for Books. There are several excellent guide books on trekking in the Everest region. A highly recommended book is *Trekking in the Everest Region – 5th Edition* (Trailblazer Guides) by Jamie McGuinness. ISBN 978-1-873756997. For tips on learning the local language, why not pick up the Lonely Planet Nepali Phrasebook (Sept 2014); ISBN: 978-1743211908 £4.99.

B is also for Boots. You will need to wear hiking boots during the trek so please ensure you have some well in advance of departure so you can break them in properly. A waterproof, breathable pair with a flexible Vibram (or similar) sole will be best. Make sure you try on lots of pairs before you choose some. You are strongly recommended to wear your boots on the plane (or take in your hand baggage) in case there are any problems or delays with your luggage. Comfortable boots are one of the most difficult pieces of luggage to replace/hire at short notice.



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B is also for Bottle. You will need to bring your own bottle for water. Ideally you will bring a **2-3 litre CamelBak** or Platypus hydration system (recommended for effortless access to water while you trek) and a **1-litre metal Sigg style** bottle. This metal bottle can be used as a backup for days when your water can freeze in the hydration system tube (e.g. the morning walk towards Base Camp, or on Kala Pattar) but it can also be safely filled with hot water at the tea houses so you can drink warm water during the day and also doubles up as a hot water bottle at night! See also D is for Dehydration and W is for Water.

C is for Communications. Staying in touch is easy from Kathmandu. Cyber cafes and communication shops offer phone and Internet services in every corner and most mobile phone networks can use roaming (contact your provider for information about charges and to set up roaming on your phone). Your hotel will also have phone and Internet access facilities too. On the trek, mobile phone access will vary depending on your home network, roaming capabilities,

contract type and mobile handset. Many of the villages you will stay in on the trek will have cyber cafés which are expensive and slow but generally reliable. The cost ranges from 20 to 30 rupees per minute, with costs increasing with the altitude!

C is also for Clothing: The clothing you bring for the trek should keep you warm, sheltered from the wind and dry. To best achieve this you should bring non-cotton technical base layers and use the layering system for maximum comfort, with a waterproof shell as your outer layer. During the day you may only need lightweight t-shirt and trekking trousers but as you approach base camp you will need to add a warmer fleece and windproof layer or waterproofs, particularly when you stop for lunch and in the afternoons when the weather begins to get cooler. These layers can then be removed once it dries up/warms up again / you start moving again. While in Kathmandu you will need lightweight outfits that are suitable for hot weather. Please see the packing list below for more details. You will not have a large enough luggage allowance to

bring a clean outfit for each day on the trek (10kg) so pack light!

C is also for Culture Shock: Nepal is different from many places in Europe and as such you may experience a certain amount of culture shock initially, particularly in Kathmandu. Some things to be aware of include: Dirt, pollution and garbage abound in the cities. Drivers lean on horns, radios and TVs blare loud music and even temples, mosques and churches use loudspeakers to spread their message. Nepali streets, markets, and bazaars are jam-packed with people, vehicles and animals (particularly cows, which are sacred), and streets tend to be narrow. See also B is for Begging, E is for Etiquette and H is for Haggling.

D is for Day pack. Throughout the trek you will need to bring a daypack which you carry yourself so don't make it too heavy. We recommend a 25-30 litre pack. It is likely to weigh around 6-8kg when packed, so please take this equivalent with you during your training walks. You will need to carry essentials with you as you will leave your main trek gear to be carried on the pack animals to camp.



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Things to include in your daypack include: personal first aid kit, waterproofs, fleece, sun hat, sunglasses, sun cream, water bottle, toilet paper, wet wipes and camera gear. Try on lots of daypacks before you buy and remember that it must have a hip belt and chest strap for optimum comfort and load bearing.

D is also for Dehydration. This is a potential problem caused by diarrhoea or vomiting, or just the exertions of trekking each day. Day time temperatures can rise to 30°C during the trek and even when it is cold you lose fluid, salts and sugars in your sweat so it is wise to consume at least 3l of water, plus plenty of soups, teas and coffees to avoid the risk of dehydration. You should also bring a good supply of rehydration salts with you. You can buy the small packets from chemists in different flavours and just add the powder to quantity of water mentioned on the packet. Electrolyte tablets offer the benefit of turning your water into a sport drink which helps prevent dehydration before it begins; recommended brands include Nuun or High5 and are available in a wide variety of flavours for around £6 for 12 tablets. See also B is for Bottle and W is for Water.

D is also for Dietary Requirements. The majority of special diets, such as vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, etc., can be catered for. Please ensure that you notify us of any dietary requirements at the time of booking or as soon as possible.

D is also for Discount. Nomad Travel have kindly offered a 10% discount against any purchase of kit and equipment online or in-store and 10% discount off vaccinations at their travel clinics. Also Cotswold Outdoor are offering our clients 15% discount for use at their stores or online. Please contact us for a voucher.

D is also for Domestic Flights. At the end of 2013 the EU Commission added all domestic airlines in Nepal to the list of airlines banned from operating in EU airspace as a result of a number of fatal crashes involving European citizens. This ban does not restrict EU passengers from using these airlines in Nepal and since then all domestic airlines have been working to improve standards. The regular way to reach Lukla, where you start and end your trek, is by small domestic aircraft as there are no options to transfer by road. All domestic

flights in Nepal are subject to local weather conditions, and being a mountainous region delays and cancellations are a possibility. In the event of helicopters being required in order to reach, or return from, Lukla, this will be payable locally. Current cost approx. £200 one way (it may be possible to claim this back from your insurance provider).

E is for Electricity. Electricity in Nepal is 220V, 50Hz. The plugs used are European two round pin plugs or 3 large round pins in a triangle. Electricity will be available at the hotel in Kathmandu and at some of the lodges during the trek. On the trek there is a fee to charge batteries, phones etc. which ranges from 100 rupees per hour to 350 rupees per hour at higher altitudes.

E is also for Environment. The wonderful environment of the Himalayas is also an extremely fragile one. Increasing population density and number of trekkers threatens to destroy the very beauty which attracts us in the first place. We are extremely environmentally conscious and aim to minimise our impact as much as possible. We discourage trekkers from using wood-fuelled hot showers in lodges along the way.



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Many lodges, however, now provide solar hot showers, a far more eco-friendly alternative.

Garbage disposal is another major problem and some of the busier trails can, at times, appear strewn with litter. We are well motivated towards eco-friendly practices and carry out all our garbage, apart from that which can be safely and easily disposed of at the tea houses. Our aim is to help protect and preserve this beautiful environment for future generations of trekkers to enjoy.

E is also for Etiquette. Always endeavour to be polite and respectful and take your lead from the local people around you in terms of what is acceptable or not. When in public places you should respect the preferences and cultural norms of those around you. If you show respect then it will be reciprocated. You should always remove shoes before entering temples and ask permission before taking any photographs inside. Licking your fingers is considered an unpleasant habit and should be avoided. It is common to slurp tea and hot drinks. Public displays of affection are considered inappropriate. Being respectful to your guides and porters, saying please and thank you and being aware of the feelings of other group

members are three key things to bear in mind.

E is also for Expenses. You will require cash for various things throughout the trip, including water, tipping, drinks, snacks, battery charging, and hot showers and so on. As a guideline around £200 in Nepalese rupees should be sufficient although it depends on how many drinks and souvenirs you wish to buy!

Take plenty of low denomination notes (sub 500 rupees) on the trek as change is difficult to come by, particularly at higher altitude villages. Please note that travellers' cheques are difficult to exchange and should be avoided.

There are lots of ATMs in Kathmandu if you wish to withdraw cash but be aware that your bank may charge for overseas withdrawals and transactions and some banks block overseas transactions so inform your bank before departure.

There are no ATMs along the trail although in Lukla and Namche there are banks where you can exchange currency (please do not bring Scottish or Channel Island notes with you as these will be rejected). Typical costs include: 100-400 rupees for 1l bottled water (the price increases as the altitude

increases)

50-300 rupees for 1l boiled water (the price increases as the altitude increases)

0 rupees for cold, unpurified water
100-350 rupees to charge batteries for 1 hour

400-600 rupees to have a hot shower

145-600 rupees for soft drinks and snacks (Mars bar, Twix, Pringles, Coke, Sprite, Toblerone etc.)

145 rupees for 5 mins. internet access

£50-60 for tips (*guideline*)

See also D is for Domestic Flights and M is for Money.

F is for First Aid kit. You should have a small first aid kit of essential items which is for your own personal use. You must ensure you have access to your own first aid kit in your daypack as your trek luggage will go on ahead of the team. Suggested items to include: personal prescription medicine, Diamox (see your GP), Paracetamol, ibuprofen, plasters/blister plasters, insect repellent (containing 50% DEET), anti-histamine tablets, Imodium (Loperamide), rehydration sachets, lip balm with SPF, antiseptic cream, Strepsils, cough syrup, tiger balm/Deep Heat, zinc oxide tape etc.



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F is also for Fitness. This tour is classified as challenging to extreme for someone of a good level of fitness. You cannot be too fit for this challenge so you should start a training programme well before your departure including hill walking and cardiovascular workouts to both improve your stamina and your ability to walk up and down gradients. Hills should feature heavily in your training. During the trek you will be walking slowly, but for many hours and often on steep gradients at high altitude. It is essential that you have the stamina to walk for at least 8 hours at a time for multiple days. Regular breaks are taken, but long days walking are inevitable. The Different Travel Company has the right to refuse anyone who they feel is not fit enough for the challenge, to ensure the health and safety of the individual and the group.

F is also for Food. On this trek your meals are all included; breakfast, lunch and dinner plus tea or coffee with each meal. Although the food is plentiful and delicious the menus are not particularly varied with most

teahouses offering the same variations of rice, potato and noodle dishes, and soups. A typical breakfast will include a choice between: eggs, omelette, toast, cereal, porridge. A typical lunch will include: dal bhat, pasta, noodles, vegetables, rice, soup, momos. A typical dinner will include: soup, dal bhat, vegetables, pasta, noodles/rice, potato dishes. Please be aware that for religious reasons all meat products on the trek are carried in from Lukla so although available, these may not be very fresh by the latter stages of the trek. There will also be plenty of snacks available such as biscuits, chocolate and soft drinks and in some areas you will find fresh fruit in season. This is payable locally and prices vary.

G is for Gloves. You should take 2 pairs of gloves (a thin and a thick pair) or one pair of gloves and one pair of warm mittens. It is important that you can put them both on together. Basic hand warmers such as Hot Hands hand warmers are also a worthwhile consideration for the walk up to Base Camp.

H is for Haggling. When shopping for gifts in market places where there are no price tags on items it is expected that you will haggle. The first price is sometimes up to 5 times more than the value of the item, but remember that you should engage with the vendor to encourage rapport before haggling then only pay what you think is a good price for the item, not trying to get the lowest price possible.

H is also for Head Torch. This is an essential item for the trek. You will use it each evening if you need to visit the toilet at the teahouses, during the majority of the trek up Kala Pattar and if you arrive into camp later in the afternoon it is important for your safety. The Petzl Tikka headlamp is an example of a very high quality head torch but there are some very good inexpensive head torches available if you shop around. Please ensure you take an LED torch, as ones with bulbs are not bright enough, and bring some spare batteries.



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H is also for Health. Different Travel regrets that we cannot provide medical advice on recommendations on vaccinations you should have. You **MUST** see your own GP or travel health professional at least 8 weeks before travelling for a personalised medical assessment. For general information on vaccinations visit <http://www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk> or <http://www.nathnac.org>. Please note that failure to be adequately vaccinated and protected against diseases can sometimes invalidate travel insurance policies as it is considered that you have not taken necessary precautions. Altitude sickness medication (Diamox) may be prescribed by some GPs but it is unlicensed and a thorough consultation should be sought. Never take medication given to you by other climbers or your teammates as you cannot be sure if you will have an adverse reaction to it, or how well the tablets have been kept. Only take medication prescribed by your own GP so ensure you leave plenty of time before departure to arrange an appointment.

H is also for Hiking Poles. Some people find them very useful as it takes pressure off the knees and can make trekking easier, particularly during the descents, but some people find them a hindrance. You are advised to try them out first during your training walks to see if you think they would suit you.

H is also for Hygiene. During the trek, there will be limited shower facilities available which cost around 400-600 rupees depending on the location and whether the water is hot or cold. You are advised to bring a large pack of baby wipes and use natural or biodegradable soap/shampoo so as not to contaminate the ground, or nearby water sources which may be used for irrigation or consumption. Lush products (<http://www.lush.co.uk/>) are particularly good. You will need to bring a towel.

I is for Inclusions. *Trip Includes:* Return flights from London to Kathmandu (including current airport taxes and fuel supplements), internal flights, all transfers & transport in Nepal, accommodation in a 3 star hotel in

Kathmandu, teahouse accommodation on trek, all meals including a welcome dinner with cultural show, local expert English-speaking guides, porters and support crew, Sagarmatha National Park entrance fees and trek permits, a UK Different Travel tour manager. *Trip Does Not Include:* Personal expenses (such as drinking water, snacks, drinks, souvenirs, etc.), any vaccinations required, Nepal visa (current cost US\$25), travel insurance, tips (approx. £50-60 per trekker), laundry services, personal trekking kit (see kit list below).

I is also for Insect Repellent. There are some biting insects and mosquitoes on the trek so it is advised that you take repellent with you. DEET is the most effective repellent available. The Department of Health recommends 50% DEET is the **maximum** that you should use on your skin, as higher concentrations are less effective due to their higher oil content which does not stick to the skin as effectively as lower concentrations. Be careful when using any DEET product as it can stain clothes, melt plastic and remove dye from fabrics.



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I is also for Insurance. The Different Travel Company will do everything possible to ensure a safe and enjoyable trip however unexpected things can occur such as your cancellation, delays, medical problems and baggage loss etc. Thus, the purchase of travel insurance for our expeditions, such as a policy from Campbell Irvine, is mandatory and you are advised to organise this at the time of booking to ensure you are covered immediately. Travel Insurance is a cost effective way to protect yourself and your equipment.

It is ESSENTIAL that your policy covers emergency helicopter airlifting/evacuation as well as trekking at altitudes up to 5545m.

<http://www.campbellirvinedirect.com/differenttravel>

Please note: most travel insurance policies protect you before departure too so it is advised to buy insurance as close to booking as possible to protect the loss of your registration fee as a result of cancellation due to injury, illness etc.

I is also for Internet. Namche has several Internet cafes many of which also have Wi-Fi. It costs between 100-200 rupees per hour depending on the cyber café and the village you are in. Tengboche has an internet cafe which costs around 20 rupees per minute. Dingboche has satellite internet laptops which cost around 20 rupees per minute. Gorak Shep internet café costs around 25 rupees per minute but it is very slow. Internet cafes are plentiful in Namche and Kathmandu.

J is for Jacket. You will need two jackets for the trek; a lightweight breathable waterproof jacket, and a warm, padded jacket such as a down or Primaloft jacket or a ski jacket for use on the colder sections of the trek.

K is for Kit bag. You will need a trek kit bag which will be carried by the load-bearing animals between teahouses. This will contain your entire luggage required for the trek. It must be strong, light and waterproof.

Some examples of kit bags include: North Face Base Camp duffle bag, Mountain Equipment Wet and Dry Bag and the Rab

Expedition Kit Bag but please shop around as there are many brands and models available in outdoors stores for various prices. A large rucksack with your gear packed inside a waterproof rucksack liner is suitable too.

The capacity of your kitbag should be around 70+ litres but as long as all your gear fits and is within the weight limit it doesn't matter if it is larger. **Do not** bring a solid suitcase or holdall with wheels as this is not suitable.

It is handy to bring various size plastic bags to put store items inside (such as your sleeping bag) in case of poor weather. The weight limit for your kit bag and its contents is 12kg but please note that the weight limit for the internal flights (Kathmandu – Lukla– Kathmandu) restricts luggage to **10kg hold, 5kg carry-on** so please keep this in mind.

K is also for Kit hire. Sleeping bags, hiking poles, down jackets can be hired (and purchased) in Kathmandu and currently cost between \$5-10 per day for the each items depending upon quality. You can obtain every item you need in Kathmandu if required!



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L is for Language. Nepali is the official language and is an Indo-Aryan language spoken in Nepal, Bhutan, and some parts of India and Myanmar. Roughly 50% of the population speak Nepali and many other Nepalese speak it as a second language. Here are some helpful words and phrases to get you by:

Hello/Goodbye Namasté

Thank you Dhanyabad

Water Pani

Yes ho

No hoina

That's Expensive mahango bhayo

How are you? Tapaai laai kasto chha?

Excuse me Hajur

What is this? Yo ke ho?

Good Luck saphalhos

I'm Sick ma birami chu

L is also for Laundry. Laundry facilities are available at the hotel in Kathmandu and charged per item or weight.

L is also for Luggage. You will need the following 4 luggage items.

1. **A small daypack** at around 25-30 litres which you will carry

yourself during the trek. This should have a hip belt and chest strap for optimal comfort.

2. **A suitcase or large rucksack** to hold your entire luggage (including your empty trek kit bag) for when you check in on the airline. This can be left in the Kathmandu hotel luggage room while trekking.

3. **A kit bag** to hold your trek luggage which is carried by the pack animals.

4. **1-2 combination padlocks** for keeping your baggage secure.

M is for Money. Nepalese Rupees are used in Nepal and the exchange rate is 133 Rupees to the Pound (Nov 2016). There are lots of ATMs in Kathmandu if you wish to withdraw cash but be aware that your bank may charge for overseas withdrawals and transactions and some banks block overseas transactions so inform your bank before departure. There are no ATMs along the trail although in Lukla and Namche there are banks where you can exchange currency (please do not bring Scottish or Channel Island notes with you as these will be rejected). When

travelling around Nepal, change large bills whenever you can as you will find these difficult to change at the tea houses on the trail. See also D is for Domestic Flights and E is for Expenses.

N is for Namche Bazaar.

Namche is an incredible town on the Everest Base Camp trail. It is crammed full of teahouses, campsites, hotels, cafes, restaurants, bars, bakeries and shops. You can buy anything in Namche, from trek gear from the official North Face shop, to Buddhist chanting CDs to yak wool socks and silk scarves. There are pharmacies where you can stock up your first aid kit, banks where you can exchange cash and bakeries where you can feast on the world's most incredible home baked apple pie. You cannot stop in Namche without tasting the apple pie! If you realise you have forgotten anything for your trek, or you want to buy small items such as a Buff, additional pairs of socks, baby wipes or a travel towel, you can buy it in Kathmandu or here.



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N is also for Nibbles. A limited amount of high energy snacks such as chocolate and sweets are worth bringing for the trek. Dried fruit, nuts (especially walnuts and almonds), Kendal mint cake, popcorn and energy bars such as Mulebar, Clif bars etc. are all great snacks. Don't bring too much as you will be provided with plenty of food at breakfast, lunch and dinner!

P is for Photocopies. Photocopy (and scan & email to yourself) of all your documents (insurance details, flight numbers, passport, credit/debit cards etc.) and take a copy with you during the trip. If you lose any of your documents you will then have access to a copy online and with you.

P is also for Photography. When taking photographs of the local people, it would be wisest to ask their permission. Taking a photograph of someone without their permission, especially in rural areas, can cause offence. Older people, particularly ladies prefer not to be photographed but in contrast young children are often very keen to be photographed.

P is also for Poverty. It is important not to underestimate the psychological impact of viewing extreme poverty, and a sense of helplessness and guilt that often comes from it. Some people respond to such sights by feeling they must do everything they can to help everyone they can. The risk with this is that it leads to disappointment and disillusionment as no one person can do everything. The secret here is to recognise the signs (raised levels of stress, feeling emotional, guilty, frustrated and angry), and to set realistic goals about what you can and cannot do. We also recommend that you avoid acting on impulse – especially when it comes to giving away money. People may seem genuine, but very many people still regard tourists as 'cash cows' and act dishonestly and unethically. Do check with your guides before giving money. The general advice is (i) question everything you are told, (ii) don't be afraid to say no, and (iii) check it out with your guides.

R is for Religion. Nepal is the birthplace of Lord Buddha (thought to be Lumbini). Hindus constitute approximately 80% of the

population. Buddhists make up 10%, Muslims 4%, Kirant 3%, other religions 3%.

S is for Safety. Incidences of petty theft such as pick-pocketing and bag snatching do occur in the larger cities and tourist areas so common sense precautions apply (no flashy jewellery, keep wallets out of sight, don't leave bags unattended etc.).

S is also for Sleeping bag. You will be staying in teahouses but it will still be very cold particularly at the higher altitudes. Sleeping bags are available for hire in Kathmandu for approximately \$5 per day. You will need a "5-season" sleeping bag with a **comfort rating** of at least -10°C. It is important that you check that the degrees rating for your sleeping bag is **comfort** and not **extreme**. The difference between the two is that the comfort rating is the temperature at which a person in good health, having eaten a hot meal and sleeping in a sheltered environment will feel comfortable. The extreme rating is the temperature at which a person in good health, having eaten and sleeping in a sheltered place will survive.



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Examples of suitable sleeping bags include: Snugpak Softie Winter (£65); Mountain Hardware Lamina 0 (down to -12°C comfort) (£120); Rab Alpine 600 Down bag (£345); Marmot Sawtooth (£185); Snugpak Softie Chrysalis Expedition (down to -15°C comfort) £80.

S is also for Sleeping bag liner. A silk or fleece liner is highly recommended as it adds an extra layer of insulation to your sleeping bag but also helps to keep it clean from sweat and dirt. You sweat around 300ml in a sleeping bag each night and without a liner this will absorb into your sleeping bag and will get very smelly. It is also handy to have if you get too hot and night and unzip your sleeping bag but want to be covered by something.

S is also for Socks. The most important thing to remember when it comes to socks is that they are of good quality, non-cotton and will not slip down or sag in your boots which is one of the main causes of blisters. During your trek you will be wearing your breathable, waterproof boots and so you should wear socks to compliment these. Cotton socks absorb sweat and hinder its evaporation, making them damp and therefore likely to rub against your feet, causing blisters.

Socks containing Coolmax (a brand of polyester), nylon, or Merino wool all have wicking properties. This means that instead of the fabric absorbing sweat, it pulls it away from the skin for it to evaporate. When you wear socks like these they will complement the breathability of your boots, and your feet will stay cool and you will avoid blisters.

S is also for Souvenirs. Nepal provides splendid opportunities for the shopper especially for silks and cotton, gemstones, carpets, bed linen, handicrafts in all types of medium, miniature paintings and much more.

S is also for Sunglasses. These are important as they will protect your eyes from the sun which can be very bright on the trek as it reflects off the snow. Polarized sunglasses are ideal, and taking a spare pair is recommended.

T is for Tickets (or e-tickets). These will be sent to you 2 weeks before departure. Tickets for your internal flights (Lukla – Kathmandu – Lukla) will be issued locally.

T is also for Tipping. While tipping is not mandatory it is expected and greatly appreciated by your trek team. A suggested guideline of tips

for your guide/porters is £50-60. You should also budget for tips for hotel staff that carry your luggage, the transfer driver or anyone else you feel has provided a good service and you wish to tip.

T is also for Toilets. During the trek there are toilets at each teahouse. There tends to be one squat and one Western toilet per teahouse which is shared with other trekkers. At lower altitudes these may have a working flush but higher up you will have to flush using the buckets of water provided in the bathroom. You will need to bring your own toilet paper (one roll per person) as this is not provided. You can purchase toilet paper at the tea houses if you run out.

Please do not put toilet paper down the toilet during the trip. Please dispose of it in the bins provided as failure to do this will cause the toilets to block and make it unpleasant for your fellow trekkers to use.

If you need to use the toilet during the trek day you will need to utilise a bush or private area. There are limited toilet facilities along the trails such as at teahouses, some shops and restaurants but you may need to pay to use these facilities (or purchase something from the shop).



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Please do not dispose of toilet paper on the trails; you must put it in a sanitary disposal bag or nappy sack and dispose of it properly at the teahouse.

T is also for Towel. During the trek there may be the opportunity to pay for a hot or cold shower or use buckets of water to wash. In this event, you will need a towel to dry yourself. A highly absorbent but lightweight and fast drying trek towel such as <http://www.nomadtravel.co.uk/p-69-travelproof-luxury-travel-towels.aspx> is recommended.

W is for Water. Bottled water is not provided for you on this trek. There are three options available to you for drinking water:

Refill your bottle and purify the water – cheapest

You can refill your water bottle regularly along the trail for free (or rarely for a very small charge) and you will need to bring your own water purification to make the water safe to drink. A highly recommended purification is 'Biox Aqua' tablets which contains chlorine dioxide. This kills 99.9% of all known bacteria plus cysts such as cryptosporidium and

giardia and doesn't leave water tasting of chemicals. This is the most environmentally friendly and cheapest way to obtain drinking water.

Buy boiled water and purify – good for local economy

At the teahouses you can purchase hot, boiled water which is low cost. Purchasing from the local people directly supports the local economy and goes directly into the hands of the people. Boiled water is usually safe to drink but for peace of mind you may wish to purify this once it has cooled a little.

Buy bottled water – convenient but worst for environment

This is the most convenient option as mineral water is widely available but it is also the most expensive and the worst for the environment. Empty water bottles may end up in landfill, or more often, are burnt to be disposed of which causes putrid, black smoke which is not good for the environment. Buying bottled water will avoid any chemical taste in purified water.

Please note that all *tap water* on this trip is undrinkable; this

includes the tap water at the hotel. **You must not brush your teeth or rinse your mouth with any tap water,** only use bottled or purified water.

W is also for Weather. During the trek there may be some rain or snow, but it could also be bright and sunny while being very cold. Temperatures will be dependent upon the weather conditions but you can expect temperatures to average 20°C (0°C at night), decreasing to 5-15°C during the day as you ascend, with sub-zero night time temperatures (down to -10°C on average). It tends to get dark between around 5-6pm during the trek.

Z is for Zinc Oxide tape. When your boots start to rub against your feet, you can apply zinc oxide tape to the hot spot to stop a blister developing. Prevention is better than cure!

Last updated November 2016.





Suggested Packing List

CLOTHING

- Hiking boots
- Trainers/camp booties for evenings
- Trek socks (4 pairs)
- Underwear
- Trek trousers x2
- Thermal base layer trousers & top
- Non-cotton t-shirt x2
- Non-cotton long sleeve base layer x3
- Warm fleece x2
- Waterproof jacket + trousers
- Warm jacket (down or ski jacket)
- Sun hat
- Buff (www.buffwear.co.uk)
- Warm hat
- Gloves x2 (1 heavy or mittens, 1 light)
- Casual clothes for sightseeing
- Casual shoes for sightseeing

EATING AND DRINKING

- Energy snacks
- 2-3L CamelBak or Platypus
- Backup 1L bottle (e.g. Sigg)
- Water purification (e.g. Biox Aqua)
- Electrolyte tablets (e.g. NUUN)

SLEEPING

- Eye mask / Ear plugs
- Sleeping bag (**comfort** -10C)
- Sleeping bag liner (silk or thermal)
- Pyjamas

ESSENTIALS

- E-tickets + pre-departure info
- Passport & copy
- 2 passport photos (trek permit)
- Insurance policy information
- Pen for immigration forms
- Visa documents and payment
- Cash (£) /ATM cards
- Sunglasses (preferably polarized)
- LED head torch + spare batteries
- Adaptor 2 round pins (Euro)
- Books/playing cards
- Plastic bags – various sizes

FIRST AID KIT

- Prescription medicine
- Altitude medicine (see your GP)
- 50% DEET insect repellent
- Ibuprofen and Paracetamol
- Plasters & blister plasters
- Imodium (Loperamide)
- Rehydration (Dioralyte)
- Muscle rub (tiger balm/Deep Heat)
- Anti-histamine tablets/cream
- Antiseptic cream (e.g. Savlon)
- Indigestion remedy (e.g. Gaviscon)
- Lip balm with SPF protection
- Scissors/tweezers
- Decongestant
- Throat lozenges and cough syrup
- Vaseline
- Zinc oxide tape (*optional*)

OPTIONAL

- Camera + spare batteries
- Video camera + charger
- Mobile phone + charger
- MP3 player/iPod
- Walking pole(s)
- Sewing kit
- Diary/notebook

LUGGAGE

- Suitcase/rucksack for luggage
- Trek kit bag
- Daypack (30-35 litres)
- Small combination padlocks

HYGIENE

- Shampoo / conditioner
- Toothbrush/Toothpaste
- Antiperspirant/deodorant
- Shower gel/ shave kit / loofah
- Wet wipes
- Toilet paper
- Nappy sacks for used toilet paper
- Sun cream (high SPF)
- Hand sanitizer
- Small travel towel
- Nail brush
- Feminine hygiene products

PLEASE NOTE: This list is just a guideline and is not exhaustive – it does not take into account your personal preference or requirements. If you have any questions please contact info@different-travel.com

