

# Nepal: Trek the Sacred Gokyo Lakes & Beyond

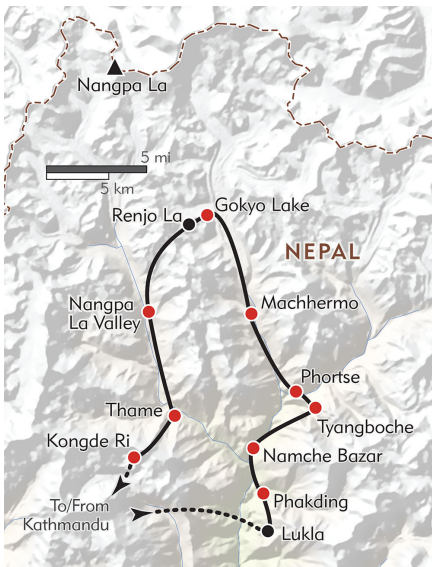
OVER THE RENJO LA PASS INTO THE REMOTE  
NANGPA LA VALLEY WITH LEILA THOMPSON



Wilderness Travel



# Overview



## TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

- Length:** 23 days  
**Arrive:** Kathmandu, Nepal  
**Depart:** Kathmandu, Nepal  
**Lodging:** 4 nights hotels, 14 nights Sherpa lodges, 4 nights camping  
**Meals:** All meals included except 2 dinners and 2 lunches  
**Activity:** Trekking

**Trip Level:** 1 2 3 4 5 ⑥

Strenuous hikes, 5-7 hours a day, altitudes between 10,000-16,000 feet, with a maximum elevation of 17,716 feet (crossing the Renjo La), plus an optional hike to the top of Gokyo Ri at 18,000 feet.

## QUESTIONS?

Our Area Specialists are your single point of contact and would be happy to answer any questions about your trip!

800.368.2794 | 510.558.2488

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the unrivaled majesty of the Everest region on less-crowded trails
- Meet Sherpas in their beautiful and remote villages and learn about authentic Sherpa life
- Hike over the Renjo La Pass (17,716') for unique views of Everest
- Walk on the moraine of the mighty 22-mile-long Ngozumpa Glacier
- Climb Gokyo Ri (18,000') for views of five of the world's 14 highest peaks—Everest, Lhotse, Makalu, Kangchenjunga, and Cho Oyu
- Take an amazing scenic heli-flight over Mt. Everest and the Khumbu Icefall



# Introduction



Head out for an amazing Himalayan adventure filled with glaciers, turquoise lakes, and savage mountain scenery! We'll take a thrilling route far from the main Everest trail as we hike up to the high Gokyo Lakes (15,600'), nestled in a sublime valley surrounded by the world's 8,000-meter peaks. We head further into a surreal Himalayan glacier wilderness to cross the Renjo La (17,716'), then traverse the wild Nangpa La Valley, an ancient trade route with glorious Everest panoramas. We'll use helicopters to bring us in and out of the region, giving us an eyeful of epic scenery. This is a rigorous 19-day trek but also a once-in-a-lifetime chance to experience the splendor of the less-traveled areas of the majestic Khumbu/Everest region of Nepal.

## TRIP DATES

October 16-November 7, 2024



# Itinerary



## Overnight: Hotel Yak and Yeti

Perfectly located in the heart of Kathmandu yet on a quiet street, the Yak and Yeti is a combination of old and new. Its restaurants and conference rooms are in a restored century-old Rana palace, a showcase of the era's opulence. The hotel's newer wings blend with the old palace, offering guest rooms with a high degree of comfort and traditional Nepali decor. The hotel's gardens, complete with swimming pool, walking trail, and temple dedicated to the goddess Kumari, make it a relaxing hideaway from the hustle and bustle of Kathmandu.

## DAYS 1-2 KATHMANDU (4,600')

**Day 1:** Arrive in Kathmandu where you are met at the airport and transferred to the Hotel Yak & Yeti, a lovely accommodation with a beautiful garden. Set in Durbar Marg, the city center, it offers a tranquil oasis in Kathmandu. The remainder of the afternoon is free for independent sightseeing. Once a traditional medieval city of breathtaking Newari architecture, Kathmandu is now fully grown into a busy urban capital. One still finds magic here, especially in the ancient, narrow streets and in countless temples and shrines where Buddhist and Hindu iconography mix in fascinating ways. We'll gather in the late afternoon/early evening for a trek briefing followed by our Welcome Dinner...D

Should you wish to arrive in Kathmandu early to rest up from jet lag and enjoy the city, we are happy to book extra hotel nights for you at our group hotel (an "on your own" expense).

**Day 2:** This morning we'll have a guided tour of Bodhnath and Pashupatinath. Bodhnath is a 1,400-year-old stupa that attracts pilgrims from across Buddhist Asia. With new monasteries sprouting up all around it, it is rapidly becoming a world center of Tibetan Buddhist study. Pashupatinath, with its triple-roofed temple, cremation ghats, and wandering sadhus (holy men), is set along the banks of the sacred Bagmati River, whose waters flow south to join the mighty Ganges, the holy river of India. It is one of four major sites of Shiva worship on the subcontinent. After the tour, we meet for lunch in Thamel to do some last-minute gear shopping, if needed. Dinner tonight is on your own so that you can get organized for our very early morning heli-flight to Lukla. Leila is happy to make recommendations, depending on how local or fancy you want to go...B



# Itinerary



## **Overnight: Sherpa Lodges, Khumbu**

Rustic but comfortable lodges owned and operated by Sherpa families have been built throughout the Khumbu region. The lodges we have selected for this trip offer a big step up in comfort from camping. They are a wonderful way to experience local hospitality and gain an insight into the lives of the Nepalese people. Each night, you'll have a private room but only some of the lodges feature private bathrooms, and hot water may not be available at every lodge. We provide good quality sleeping bags, sleeping pads, and liners for extra comfort. We also bring our own private cooking staff with us so all our meals will be prepared for us by Wilderness Travel trained cooks.

## **DAYS 3-5 HELI-FLIGHT TO LUKLA (9,350') / TREK TO PHAKDING (8,694') / PHAKDING TO NAMCHE BAZAAR (11,270')**

**Day 3:** We'll be getting a pre-dawn start for the airport and our 45-minute heli-flight to the mountain airstrip at Lukla, our gateway into the Khumbu region of Nepal. On arrival in Lukla, we'll spend a short time in a local lodge as our trekking crew organizes our gear and supplies, then we'll hit the trail. Our first hike is mostly downhill as we cross the Dudh Kosi ("Milk River"), which runs almost white with glacial sediment. Many of the bridges in the Everest region were first built by Sir Edmund Hillary's Himalayan Trust and later replaced by metal suspension bridges. We'll have a hot lunch en route to Phakding, our final destination for the day.

Overnight at Sonam Lodge in Phakding...BLD

**Hiking Details:** 3 hours, 650' descent

**Helicopter Details:** 45 minutes

**Day 4:** Heading up the Dudh Kosi gorge, we pass through a number of small Sherpa villages of stone-built houses and officially enter Sagarmatha (Mount Everest) National Park, established in 1976 as the first national park in the Himalaya. Once inside the park, we have our first challenge: the ascent of "Namche Hill," where steep, switchback trails lead up a forested hillside to Namche Bazaar, the heart of Sherpa country and home to many legendary Sherpa mountaineers. Halfway up this ascent-about 90 minutes- we may get our first glimpse of Everest, peeking from behind the Lhotse-Nuptse wall. We'll arrive at our lodge in Namche in time for afternoon tea and a little time to relax. Namche is magnificently set in a tiered, horseshoe-shaped bowl. Overnight at the Panorama Lodge...BLD

**Hiking Details:** 8-9 hours, 2,800' ascent

**Day 5:** We enjoy a rest day in lively Namche to acclimatize and explore this center of Sherpa culture and its surroundings. We can hike up to the Sagarmatha National Park Visitor's Center and Museum, where there are tremendous vistas of the icy summits of the Everest region. For the energetic, an optional longer hike brings us to the beautiful twin villages of Khunde (12,600') and Khumjung (12,400'). Above them rises the peak of Khumbila (18,800'), sacred to the Sherpa people and representing a Tibetan Buddhist protector deity. We visit the Hillary Hospital in Khunde, and in Khumjung, we may visit the Hillary School and the village monastery-with its purported yeti scalp. As well as visiting the sights of Namche, we may have the opportunity to drop in on some of Leila's oldest Sherpa friends, who no doubt will invite us into their homes, a great chance to experience the real local culture. Overnight at Panorama Lodge...BLD



# Itinerary



Overnight: Sherpa Lodges, Khumbu

## DAY 6 TENGBOCHE (12,650')

We'll hike out of Namche and travel through amazing rhododendron forests on our way to Tengboche. After Kangjuma, we begin a long, traversing descent to the bridge across the Imja River at Phunki Tenga, and as we descend, we'll keep an eye out for Nepal's national bird, the danphe, a brightly colored pheasant. Beyond the river and after passing a series of water-powered prayer wheels, we ascend through forest to the beautiful ridgetop site of Tengboche Monastery, one of Nepal's finest monasteries, totally rebuilt after a devastating fire in 1989. Tengboche Monastery (12,750') is the spiritual center of the Khumbu and a training center for new monks. Expeditions to the world's highest peaks have traditionally stopped here to receive the blessing of the Rinpoche. Tengboche is surrounded by spectacular mountains, with Kangtega ("Snow Horse Saddle," 22,235') and Thamserku ("Golden Figure," 21,674') looming directly over us. Ama Dablam (22,494'), one of the most spectacular peaks in the whole of the Himalaya, rises regally just up the valley. Everest and Lhotse can also be seen from the monastery. We'll have time to relax, visit with the monks in their cultural center, or simply enjoy the spectacular scenery. Overnight at Tashi Delek Lodge...BLD

**Hiking Details:** 6-7 hours, 2,300' ascent / 900' descent



# Itinerary



Overnight: Sherpa Lodges, Khumbu

## **DAYS 7-9 PHORTSE (12,467') / MACHERMO (14,665') / REST AND ACCLIMATIZATION DAY**

**Day 7:** There's a good chance that we'll see some danphe pheasants, musk deer, and Himalayan tahr (wild goats) today. We'll head down to the Imja Khola River and then climb the hill up to the wonderful village of Phortse, where we'll have lunch before doing some exploring. Situated away from the main trekking trails, this village has made a special effort to keep their traditional way of life alive and well and it's a fantastic place to explore. As many of our Sherpa friends and crew have their family homes in Phortse, we will have plenty of opportunity to visit and immerse ourselves in Sherpa life and culture and visit the spectacular new Phortse gompa (monastery). Overnight at the Phortse Deng Lodge...BLD

**Hiking Details:** 7-8 hours, 1,300' ascent / 600' descent

**Day 8:** We make our way to the high village of Machermo, just below the terminal moraine of the Ngozumpa Glacier, the longest glacier in the Himalayas. We will spend two nights here in the comfortable Namgyal Lodge...BLD

**Hiking Details:** 5-6 hours, 1,500' ascent / 500' descent

**Day 9:** We'll use our "active" Rest Day to acclimatize and explore the valley leading up toward Machermo Peak. There is a magnificent view of this sharp peak from the village. Overnight at Namgyal Lodge...BLD

**Hiking Details:** roughly 4-5 hours, depends on the hike we do on our "active" Rest Day



# Itinerary



Overnight: Sherpa Lodges, Khumbu

## **DAYS 10-12 GOKYO (15,600') / GOKYO VALLEY EXPLORATION**

**Day 10:** A fairly short trek today takes us to Gokyo, located lakeside on the third of the six sacred lakes of Gokyo. We'll have lunch in Gokyo and the option to hike over the nearby moraine ridges and explore the massive Ngozumpa Glacier. The less energetic can bask in the sunshine of our comfortable lodge and read and relax near a cozy (yak dung) fire. Overnight at the Gokyo Resort...BLD

**Hiking Details:** 3-4 hours, 1,350' ascent

**Days 11-12:** We'll have two full days in the Gokyo region with multiple options to explore this amazing area. This absolutely stunning valley is dominated by views of Cho Oyu (the sixth-highest mountain in the world) and there are a multitude of fabulous day hikes, all with views of the Gokyo Lakes and/or the Ngozumpa Glacier, one of the largest in the Himalayas. Options include exploring the fourth and fifth Gokyo Lakes, and climbing to the summit of Gokyo Ri (18,000'), the highest point on our trip, for breathtaking views of five of the world's 14 highest peaks—Everest, Lhotse, Makalu, Kangchenjunga, and Cho Oyu, all in one panorama with the massive Ngozumpa Glacier stretching out from the base of Cho Oyu, and the sparkling Gokyo Lakes below, gleaming deep blue and green. Overnight at the Gokyo Resort...BLD each day

**Hiking Details:**

**Day 11:** 5-6 hours, 1,340' ascent / descent (Gokyo Ri summit hike)

**Day 12:** 4-5 hours, 800' ascent / descent



# Itinerary



## DAY 13 RENJO LA BASE CAMP (16,700')

From Gokyo, we follow a grassy trail heading up to a glacial area at approximately 16,700 feet and then to an open area where we make camp. We'll have a well-deserved rest here. Weather permitting, we should have clear views of the Renjo La, our next objective, as well as stunning views of Everest, Nuptse, and Lhotse, and beyond. Overnight in tented camp...BLD

**Hiking Details:** 3-4 hours, approximately 1,500' ascent

### Overnight: Nangpa La Valley Tented Camps

In the Nangpa La Valley, you are accompanied by our experienced team of Sherpa trail guides, and all your gear is carried for you (leaving you free to hike with just a daypack to hold your camera, water bottle, rain jacket, etc.). Camp amenities include a dining tent with a table and chairs (with backs), meals prepared by our trained staff, and a toilet tent. Our camp crew takes care of all camp chores, including bringing tea or coffee to your tent each morning and providing picnic lunches each day at a scenic spot along the trail. Accommodations are in sturdy mountain-style tents. Sleeping bags, pads, and liners are provided.



# Itinerary



Overnight: Nangpa La Valley Tented Camps

## DAYS 14-16 CROSSING RENJO LA (17,716') AND WILD CAMPS IN THE NANGPA LA VALLEY

**Day 14:** Following a switchback trail up a glacier, we make a challenging ascent of the Renjo La, where we will be greeted at the summit with strings of fluttering prayer flags. Though the two-hour climb to the top is arduous, we are well rewarded with breathtakingly beautiful views: the Gokyo Valley, its stunning turquoise lakes, and panoramic views of a host of Himalayan giants of the Everest range! After spending some time atop the pass, we descend for about two hours to our lunch spot by a beautiful lake at 16,830 feet. Please note that today's trail conditions may be difficult: expect to cross rocks, snow, and ice (depending on weather conditions). We are very likely to need our Yak Traks today (traction cleats that attach to our hiking boots). After lunch, we hike to the first of our wild camps...BLD

**Hiking Details:** 6-7 hours, 1,000' ascent / 3,600' descent

**Days 15-16:** On these two days, we spend time exploring the remote Nangpa La valley, which is the old trading route from Tibet and has very little habitation. We'll adjust our camps and exploration depending on conditions and group interests. Overnights in tented camps...BLD each day

### Hiking Details:

**Day 15:** 3-4 hours, 1,000' ascent (wild camp)

**Day 16:** 4-5 hours, 1,600' ascent/descent (wild camp)



# Itinerary



## **Overnight: Sherpa Lodges, Khumbu**

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## **DAYS 17-18 THAME (12,540')**

**Day 17:** Today we'll follow the Bhoté Khosi River as we make our way down to the old Sherpa village of Thame and the comfortable Valley View Lodge...BLD

**Hiking Details:** 6-7 hours, 4,100' descent

**Day 18:** We will have an extra "rest" day in Thame, which gives us time to visit and explore Thame Gompa, one of the oldest and most traditional monasteries in the Khumbu, built into the mountainside. It houses approximately 25 monks who provide valuable religious services to the surrounding communities. This will give us a nice chance to relax before our challenging hike up to Kongde on Day 19. Overnight at the Valley View Lodge in Thame...BLD



# Itinerary



Overnight: Sherpa Lodges, Khumbu

## DAYS 19-20 KONGDE / DAY HIKE

**Day 19:** Today's little-used but recently renovated trail follows the traditional route into the Khumbu used prior to 1950 and is completely off the beaten track. We'll be climbing up through forests of rhododendron and passing rushing waterfalls with spectacular views of our hiking trails from the last few days. With a packed lunch en route, we make our way up to Kongde at 14,000 feet, which sits on a high plateau flanked by the massive snow-covered Kongde Ri. The lodge here is the highest "luxury" lodge in the Khumbu region, with 15 rooms with room heaters and a restaurant with a spectacular view of Everest, Lhotse, Makalu, Cho Oyu, Ama Dablam, and other giants of the Khumbu. Our hike takes about eight hours on a steep and undulating trail. Overnight at the comfortable Mountain Lodges of Nepal in Kongde...BLD

**Hiking Details:** 8 hours, 2,500' ascent, 1,000' descent

**Day 20:** After breakfast and coffee overlooking the fantastic views of the Everest range from our dining room, we'll take an optional day hike to a beautiful mountain lake located above the lodge, with a packed lunch en route. This is a view that is usually only seen by climbers as they ascend the difficult ridge of Kongde Ri. Thanks to the new lodge and trails, we'll be able to take advantage of this fabulous hike and view. Overnight at Mountain Lodges of Nepal in Kongde...BLD



# Itinerary



## Overnight: Hotel Yak and Yeti

Perfectly located in the heart of Kathmandu yet on a quiet street, the Yak and Yeti is a combination of old and new. Its restaurants and conference rooms are in a restored century-old Rana palace, a showcase of the era's opulence. The hotel's newer wings blend with the old palace, offering guest rooms with a high degree of comfort and traditional Nepali decor. The hotel's gardens, complete with swimming pool, walking trail, and temple dedicated to the goddess Kumari, make it a relaxing hideaway from the hustle and bustle of Kathmandu.

## DAYS 21-23 HELI-SIGHTSEEING OF THE KHUMBU GLACIER AND EVEREST BASE CAMP / KATHMANDU / DEPART

**Day 21:** After breakfast, we leave the stunning views of Kongde behind as we lift off in our chartered helicopter for a sightseeing tour of the Khumbu Glacier, Everest Base Camp and the Khumbu Icefall, including spectacular views into the Western Cwm. We will return to Kongde to refuel, then make the 45-minute flight back to Kathmandu (with another fuel stop in Lukla). We'll check into the Yak & Yeti Hotel, with various options this afternoon, depending on when we arrive back in Kathmandu. Dinner is on your own tonight. Overnight at the Yak & Yeti Hotel...B

### Scenic Helicopter Details: 45 minutes

**Day 22:** This is an extra day in case our flight from Kongde is delayed by weather, and we can use it for independent exploration of Kathmandu. Our local representatives can help organize extra excursions for you during this free exploration day (at extra cost, which you can pay directly in Kathmandu). During your free day, we recommend a visit to Bhaktapur, a fantastic medieval city located outside of Kathmandu. A visit to Swayambu is also recommended. Swayambu was established as a shrine around 500 BC and by the 13th century AD, had become an important center of Buddhist learning. Its eyes, painted on four cardinal points, keep watch over the Kathmandu Valley. Lunch is on your own. We'll gather at the end of the day for our Farewell Dinner. Overnight at the Hotel Yak & Yeti...BD

**Day 23:** Transfer to the airport for departure on homeward-bound flights



# Pricing

## TRIP COST

\$8,795 (10-12 members)

\$9,795 (6-9 members)

Single supplement: \$1,350

Internal airfare: \$2,050-\$2,650 (subject to change)

## PAYMENT TERMS

\$600 due at time of reservation

90 days prior to departure: Balance

## CANCELLATION & TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE

Minimum fee: \$600 per person

61-90 days prior to departure: 25% of trip cost

46-60 days prior to departure: 50% of trip cost

45 days or less: 100% of trip cost *\*Please note that this differs from our standard policy.*

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend you purchase travel insurance. You can take advantage of a comprehensive Travel Protection Plan designed for Wilderness Travel by Travelex, or purchase other insurance on your own. See our website for details:

[www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance](http://www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance)

## TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Expert leadership of a Wilderness Travel Trip Leader and local guides
- Accommodations in hotels, small comfortable inns, and full-service camping
- All meals included except 2 dinners and 2 lunches as indicated in Detailed Itinerary
- A glass of wine or beer with dinner in Kathmandu
- All ground transportation and baggage handling from meeting until departure
- All activities as indicated in Detailed Itinerary
- Sleeping bags, sleeping pads, and liners

## TRIP DOES NOT INCLUDE

- Travel to and from the arrival and departure location as indicated in Detailed Itinerary
- Additional hotel nights outside the trip's scheduled dates
- Optional gratuities to Trip Leaders or staff
- Optional travel insurance
- Other expenses of a personal nature (some alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.)
- Visa fees



# Extensions

To help you make the most of your adventure, we've created several exciting trip extensions. For detailed information, including full itineraries and complete pricing, please visit our webpage and click on "Extend Your Trip":

[Nepal: Trek the Sacred Gokyo Lakes & Beyond](#)



## KARNALI LODGE EXTENSION

Enjoy intimate jungle encounters at Karnali, a comfortable safari lodge on the edge of Bardia National Park, the largest wilderness area in Nepal. Bardia is home to an abundance of wildlife including tigers, rhinos, spotted deer, and a fantastic profusion of birds. Accompanied by expert naturalist guides, you'll search for the park's wildlife on foot or by jeep. You can also take a gentle river safari by boat and visit a local village school. Accommodations are in comfortable en suite rooms with ceiling fans and mosquito netting for the beds, with meals served in a dining room or al fresco in the evening around a roaring fire. *4 days. From \$1895.*



## THARU LODGE EXTENSION

Adjacent to Chitwan National Park in Nepal's southern Terai zone, Tharu Lodge offers the perfect blend of a quiet wilderness retreat fused with local cultural encounters. Built in the longhouse style of Tharu architecture, the lodge is nestled into lush forest overlooking idyllic Terai landscapes. Dine al fresco under the shade of a mango tree, take a refreshing dip in Tharu's pool, play a spot of tennis, watch elephants, or stretch your legs on a jungle walk. We offer a 2-night, 3-day extension or a 3-night, 4-day extension (call for details). *3 days. From \$995.*



## TIGER MOUNTAIN POKHARA LODGE EXTENSION

A stay at Tiger Mountain Pokhara Lodge, an exclusive retreat set on a spectacular hilltop ridge a thousand feet above the Pokhara Valley, offers the opportunity to revel in magnificent panoramic views of the Annapurna skyline, including the fish-tailed peak of Machapuchare and three of the world's 26,247-foot Himalayan peaks: Dhaulagiri, Annapurna, and Manaslu. Guided hikes through rhododendron and oak forests, farmlands, and gentle valleys, and village visits where you'll enjoy great cultural encounters are a highlight of your stay. Sightseeing, country drives, and spa services are also available. We also offer the option of a three-night stay. Call for details. *3 days. From \$1395.*



# Arrival & Departure

## ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

Kathmandu, Nepal

**Suggested Airport:** Tribhuvan International Airport (KTM)

**Suggested Date & Time:** Day 1, by 3:00 pm

**Meeting Place:** You will meet your Trip Leader on Day 1 at 5:00 pm in the lobby of the Yak & Yeti Hotel.

## DEPARTURE

Kathmandu, Nepal

**Suggested Airport:** Tribhuvan International Airport (KTM)

**Suggested Date & Time:** Day 23, anytime

A complimentary transfer will be provided from the Hotel Yak & Yeti to the Kathmandu Airport. Please note that check-out at the hotel is by noon.

If you have booked extra services before or after the trip, an Extra Services Confirmation will be sent with your Final Documents.

## INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVEL

You are responsible for making your own arrangements for flights to and from Kathmandu. Most trip members fly to Kathmandu via Bangkok, Hong Kong, Singapore, or the Middle East. A forced overnight is normally required en route.

**Warning:** We highly recommend you DO NOT book any flight schedules with Royal Nepal Airlines. Although they are operational, they have a history of last minute schedule changes and flight cancellations.

There are many online consolidators for booking travel, but for more personal help arranging air transport, you can contact Exito Travel at 1-800-655-4053 in the US or 1-800-670-2605 in Canada. They are very adept at putting flight itineraries together, to even the most far-flung places. More information can be found on Exito's website at [www.exitotravel.com](http://www.exitotravel.com).

**Please do not purchase your tickets until you are confirmed on the trip.** Once tickets are purchased, please forward a copy of your email flight confirmation from the airline. It is your responsibility to ensure your flight times coordinate with the arrival and departure logistics for this trip.



# Trip Leaders

Wilderness Travel Trip Leaders have a passion and a joy for creating an unforgettable journey. We are extremely proud of them and the incredible travel experiences they make possible. For more information, including client comments about them and which specific trips they will be leading, please visit [wildernesstravel.com/leaders](https://wildernesstravel.com/leaders).



## LEILA THOMPSON

With a solid repertoire of outdoor skills including rock climbing, river guiding, and mountaineering, Leila Thompson surely lives the life of an adventurer. Since the early 1990s, she has led trips for us in Nepal, India, Tibet, Republic of Georgia, Canada, and Europe, and shows no sign of stopping. “One of the most wonderful things about guiding for me is starting a trip with a group of strangers and finishing with a group of friends,” she says. Through travel, she has fulfilled some of her passions such as environmental stewardship and engaging in the local culture of each place. Leila is conversant in German, Nepali, and French. When she is not guiding, Leila works as a nurse at the local hospital in Bend, Oregon, where she lives with her husband (and fellow WT guide) Sean Morrissey, and enjoys cycling, hiking, climbing, skiing, and her latest sports addiction—pickleball.



# What to Expect

## WHAT THE TRIP IS LIKE

This trip is **Level 6, Very Strenuous**. A trek to the glacier world of the Gokyo Valley and the Nangpa La Valley beyond is very physically demanding. Most hiking is between 10,000 and 16,000 feet, and the maximum elevations reached are 17,716 feet (our crossing of the Renjo La Pass) and on the optional hike to the top of Gokyo Ri at 18,000 feet.

### Average Hiking Day

- 5-6 hours
- 1,200-1,500 feet ascent/descent
- Altitudes range from 9,000-18,000 feet

### Challenge Days

- **Day 14:** 3-4 hours, 1,000 feet ascent / 2,595 feet descent, 17,716 feet elevation (trail may be rocky, snowy, or icy depending on conditions)
- **Day 19:** 8 hours, ascent 2,500 feet, 14,000 feet elevation

## TERRAIN

Trail conditions are often rough, not the well-maintained switchbacks you may be accustomed to, and there is a good bit of up and down (often 2,000- to 3,000-foot gain or loss in elevation per day). On our crossing of the Renjo La, trail conditions may be difficult: expect to cross rocks, snow, and ice (depending on weather conditions). For the most part, you can hike at your own speed; the group will spread out along the trail during the day to cover a normal maximum of 6 to 10 miles per day (4-8 hours of hiking). There are a number of days when the walks are shorter, as well as rest days, allowing opportunities for day hikes and exploring the beautiful surroundings.

# What to Expect

## GETTING IN SHAPE

Every participant must understand that this trek is truly challenging—you should be in excellent physical condition. Even though trip members carry only a daypack (with camera, jacket, rain gear, water bottle, and other small necessities you may need during the day), we recommend you make a special effort to get in top physical shape for the trip by hiking, running, swimming, bicycling, or engaging in other forms of aerobic exercise well beyond your normal routine. Many activities get the heart and lungs into shape, but the most effective way of getting fit for hiking is to hike! Walking up and down flights of stairs is also an effective way to train for the steep ascents and descents in the Himalaya. Bending your knees as you go down stairs will help strengthen your quad muscles. At least two months prior to your trek, we urge you to go on weekend day hikes that involve long uphill and downhill walking.

For this trek, we require your doctor sign the Wilderness Travel Medical Form. Once Wilderness Travel has confirmed your place on the trip roster, no refunds beyond our standard fees will be made if your physician refuses to sign the form. It is very important that you and your physician fully agree that you are physically capable of undertaking a strenuous trek, and equally important that you undertake proper conditioning prior to the trek.

The Trip Leader has the right to disqualify any member from the trip at any time if it is medically necessary, to avoid endangering the group, or if the participant in question is physically unfit for the rigors of the trip. Refunds are not given under such circumstances.

## WEATHER

The popular trekking seasons are fall and spring. Nepal lies at the same latitude as Florida, but altitude is the main factor governing temperatures. In the semitropical lowlands of Kathmandu (altitude 4,000 feet), daytime temperatures can be quite warm, in the 70Fs and 80Fs, with cool, misty nights. It rarely snows below 7,000 feet.

At altitudes of 8,000 to 10,000 feet, daytime temperatures can be in the 50Fs and 60Fs for fall trips and 60Fs and 70Fs for spring trips. Nights are cool to cold, often in the 40Fs. Skies are generally clear, although the spring has more precipitation (but Nepal's famous rhododendron forests are in full bloom in the spring). Clouds often form in the afternoons, disappearing at night to reveal brilliantly starry skies.

At altitudes over 10,000 feet, weather is unpredictable and the wind chill factor comes into play. Daytime temperatures at these heights can be in the 60s, but also as low as the 30s and 40s, especially if it is windy. Temperatures drop very quickly when the sun goes down, and evening/nighttime temperatures at high altitudes often drop to around 15°F and sometimes lower. We frequently encounter sub-zero nighttime temperatures on Khumbu treks and you should anticipate chronic cold weather. Snow is not uncommon at higher elevations, and rain is always a possibility throughout the trek.



# What to Expect

## ACCOMMODATIONS

We stay in the lovely Yak & Yeti Hotel in Kathmandu for four nights, in Sherpa lodges for 14 nights, and we camp for four nights. In recent years, many Sherpas have built lodges in their villages and the standards of these accommodations have been improving continuously. Some are simple but many would vie in character and comfort with the equivalent European alpine huts. Staying in these family-run lodges will give you a true feel for the Sherpa people and their lives. In the lodges, you'll have a private room but only some lodges feature private bathrooms, and hot water may not be available at every lodge. We provide you with good quality sleeping bags, sleeping pads, and liners for extra comfort at all of the lodges. We also bring our own private cooking staff with us so all our lodge meals will be prepared for us by our own Wilderness Travel trained cooks.

**Camping:** In our four nights in the remote Nangpa La Valley region, our accommodation is in our own private mountain-style tented camps, with a full-service camping and cooking staff. Camp amenities include a dining tent with a table and chairs (with backs), meals prepared by our trained Sherpa staff, and a toilet tent. Our camp crew takes care of all camp chores, including bringing a basin of warm washing water, and tea or coffee to your tent each morning. Sleeping bags, pads, and liners are provided for all members, but you are welcome to bring your own from home if you prefer.

## CUISINE

Our own experienced cook crew is part of the Wilderness Travel trekking staff, and all our meals at the lodges will be prepared by them. Our cooks are professionally trained and offer a good variety of hygienically prepared meals. Our drinking water is always boiled, and treated washing water is put out before every meal so you can wash your hands before eating. Meals are a blend of Nepalese and Western dishes. Breakfast is normally a light meal of porridge or granola, with hot milk, tea, coffee, hot chocolate, biscuits, or cookies. Lunches may include potatoes, eggs, curried vegetables, cheese, local-style breads, fruit, tea, or a fruit drink. Dinner is typically soup and a main course such as a noodle dish, or meat or vegetable stew, depending on what is available in local villages. Dessert on trek is usually canned or fresh fruit.

# What to Expect

## TRANSPORTATION

The tickets for your internal helicopter flights (Kathmandu/Lukla/Kathmandu) are issued by our local agents in Nepal and are given to you in Kathmandu with exact flight times/information. Weather, overbooking, and other factors beyond our control often result in a trekking group not being able to depart from or return to Kathmandu on the planned day. Wilderness Travel has, however, excellent contacts in both Kathmandu and Lukla to assist our groups should delays occur. If a delay occurs en route to Lukla from Kathmandu, Wilderness Travel will provide hotel rooms and breakfast in Kathmandu; lunches and dinners are at your own expense. In the event of a delay on the return from Lukla to Kathmandu, we will continue to provide food and lodging in Lukla until the group's departure. However, the trip does officially end on the stated ending date. Regardless of flight delays, trip members remaining in Nepal beyond this date must do so at their own expense. Your invoice includes the cost of flights between Kathmandu and Lukla on the scheduled helicopter flights.

**Important:** There is a 15kg luggage weight limit on internal flights, so please pack accordingly.

## A TYPICAL TREKKING DAY

Hiking distances on trek are normally measured in hours, not miles, since maps aren't really accurate enough to assess how far we walk up and down winding mountain trails. On a typical trek day, wake-up is around 7:00 am. After packing up our duffels and having breakfast, we set off on the trail. We ask you not to hike ahead of the leader because trails are often not well-marked. We typically walk for three to four hours in the morning, then stop for a leisurely lunch of an hour or more (either in a lodge or picnic-style at a scenic spot on the trail).

After lunch, we walk for another three hours or so until we reach our next night's lodging, where we can enjoy a cup of tea and a snack on arrival. On our exploration days, we occasionally have more time in the morning or afternoon near the lodge to rest or for further individual exploration. Temperatures drop quickly as the sun falls behind the peaks, and it's easy to get chilled after exerting yourself for several hours, so have an extra layer of clothing ready.

## SAFETY & ALTITUDE

Note that there are dangers inherent in any expedition traveling to remote wilderness regions, especially when they involve travel to high altitude. These dangers include everything from rock falls to the possibility of a serious fall, accident, or sickness without access to means of rapid evacuation, availability of medical supplies, or adequate medical attention once provided. Our Trip Leaders and support crew are experienced veterans of the Nepal Himalaya, but it takes cooperation and flexibility from each participant to ensure a successful trek.



# What to Expect

HIKING DETAILS BY DAY			TRANSPORTATION DETAILS
DAY	HOURS	ELEV. ASCENT/DESCENT	HOURS
3	3 hours	650' descent	Helicopter time: 45 mins
4	8-9 hours	2,800' ascent	
5	Rest Day		
6	6-7 hours	2,300' ascent / 900' descent	
7	7-8 hours	1,300' ascent / 600' descent	
8	5-5 hours	1,500' ascent / 500' descent	
9	Rest Day		
10	3-4 hours	1,350' ascent	
11	5-6 hours	1,340' ascent / descent	
12	4-5 hours	800' ascent / descent	
13	3-4 hours	1,500' ascent	
14	6-7 hours	1,000' ascent / 3,600' descent	
15	3-4 hours	1,000' ascent	
16	4-5 hours	1,600' ascent / descent	
17	6-7 hours	4,100' descent	
18	Rest Day		
19	8 hours	2,500' ascent / 1,000' descent	
20	Rest Day		
21	Helicopter time: 1.5 hours		

AVERAGE DAILY MAX/MIN °F												
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Kathmandu	65/35	67/39	77/45	83/53	86/61	85/67	84/68	83/68	83/66	80/56	74/45	67/37
Namche	43/22	43/25	47/31	52/31	58/38	59/45	61/47	61/47	59/45	52/31	47/27	45/25
Lobuche	31/27	33/29	36/29	37/32	39/37	43/40	44/40	45/39	38/38	40/34	37/32	35/30

RAINFALL - INCHES												
Kathmandu	0.6	1.6	0.9	2.3	4.8	9.7	14.7	13.6	6.1	1.5	0.3	0.1
Namche	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	6.0	10.0	10.0	7.0	3.0	1.0	1.0
Lobuche	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	1.5	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.

# Additional Information

## CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRIP

Adventure travel often involves exotic destinations, unusual levels of physical exertion, or activities you may not have participated in previously. We work hard to help you choose the right trip for you, paying attention to your individual interests, abilities, and needs. If you have questions about the level of comfort or any of the activities described in this itinerary, please call Wilderness Travel at 1-800-368-2794 or email us at [info@wildernesstravel.com](mailto:info@wildernesstravel.com).

## REFERENCES

We'd be happy to put you in touch with a past client that has traveled with us on this trip.

## ABOUT NEW TRIPS

This is a new adventure and one that we are particularly excited about offering. However, as with all new departures, flexibility and a spirit of adventure are always appreciated! Activities are described in the itinerary but they can vary, sometimes considerably, depending on weather conditions, the group, and other factors.

## VISIT OUR WEBSITE

At [www.wildernesstravel.com](http://www.wildernesstravel.com), you can book your trip online or find out about added departures, last-minute deals, and one-time Limited Edition adventures that aren't listed in our catalog. You can also access our complete library of detailed itineraries filled with enticing photos and videos, read bios of our Trip Leaders, find descriptions of trip accommodations, and check real-time availability of any trips that interest you.





## WILDERNESS TRAVEL HAS BEEN AWARDED:

- World's Best Tour Operators: *Travel + Leisure*, 2022, 11-time winner
- Best Travel Specialists in the World: *Conde Nast Traveller*, 2022, 3 years in a row
- Best Wildlife, Hiking & Walking Trips: *AFAR Magazine*, 3 years in a row
- Best Adventure Travel Companies: *USA Today*
- Trip of the Year: *Outside Magazine*, 9-time winner
- 50 Tours of a Lifetime: *National Geographic Traveler*, 9 years in a row
- Best Adventure Travel Companies: *National Geographic Adventure*, 3-time winner

Please be advised that California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund under the California Seller of Travel Law that took effect January 1, 1996. This fund is designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous practices by discount airfare ticket sellers or air charter operators. Unfortunately, this law does not cover non-California residents and, even in the case of California residents, it does not cover any foreign travel where the foreign "providers of transportation or travel services" are not in compliance with the Sellers of Travel Law (compliance being defined as registered as a Seller of Travel in California and a participant in the Travel Consumer Restitution Fund). Thus none of Wilderness Travel's tours qualify and we are required by law to advise each client that they are not covered by the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires sellers of travel to maintain a trust account or bond. This business has a trust account. California Seller of Travel #100769640

While as accurate as possible at the time of printing, this itinerary should be considered an approximate indication of the schedule and scope of activities and trip routing, rather than an inflexible schedule of events; it is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. This trip is subject to the Limitation of Liability and all the terms and conditions as detailed in the General Information section of the Wilderness Travel Catalog.

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