

Trip Name : Gokyo Valley Chola Pass Trek

Trip Cost	US \$1850
Starting Point	Fly in KTM-Lukla
Ending Point	Fly out Lukla-KTM
Type	TeaHouse/Lodge Trek
Grade	Hard
Duration	20 Days
Daily Walk	5-7 hours
People in Group	Minimum 1 and Maximum 12
Best Time	March to mid-May and September to mid-November
Max. Elevation	5545 mt.

### Trip Highlights:

- The challenging Chola pass (5,330m/17,487ft)
- The spectacular views from Gokyo Ri
- The Gokyo valley with the blue Gokyo Lake
- Magnificent views of Mt. Everest Himalayan range
- Amazing view of the Khumbu Ice-fall
- Enchanting Tengboche monastery
- The gateway of Everest Base Camp and Sherpa hometown, Namche Bazaar
- Scenic mountain flight to/from Lukla

### Trip Details:

The unique Everest Base Camp trekking via Gokyo Lake crossing over the challenging Cho La pass (5,330m/17,487ft) is one of the most adventurous treks to the home of the legendary Sherpa people that follows along the Dudh Koshi River to its source-the Gokyo Lake to the west of the Everest Base Camp. The trek starts at Lukla after a 35-minute scenic flight continuing towards Namche Bazaar and all the way to Gokyo Valley, Chola Pass, Kalapatthar and Mount Everest Base Camp. Hence this Gokyo-Chola pass-Everest Base Camp trekking is also known as the Everest Circuit trek. This exceptional trek rewards with the panoramic views of Cho Oyo, Everest, Makalu and the dramatic landscape from the summit of Gokyo Ri (5,360m/17,586ft). One of the major attractions of this trek is the Gokyo Lake situated in the Gokyo Valley at the west of Everest Base Camp. An excursion to the fourth and fifth lakes would be an extra adventure from Gokyo. Gokyo Ri is considered as the best view point in the entire Everest Region for more spectacular views than that from the Kalapatthar. We are then ready for the return trek to Lukla following through the beautiful Thyangboche monastery and Namche Bazaar.

### Weather in the Everest region:

Trekking in the Everest region is possible throughout the year however the best times to visit are from the beginning of March to mid May and from the beginning of September to mid November. The winters are very cold and summers are wet. April and early May is a good time to see the trees bursting into bloom, with Rhododendrons, adding a spectacular splash of color to the landscape. The views are simply great after the summer monsoons have cleared the atmosphere of dust.

### High Altitude Warning:

Altitude sickness is a serious concern in the Everest region that can affect even young and healthy people.

The only medicine to high altitude sickness is to descend, descend and descend. Headache is the most common symptom and there are other signs of Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) for different people but include fatigue, dizziness, loss of appetite, nausea or vomiting, difficulty in walking and rattling breath. We are very much concerned of your safety and our guides are aware of such situations how they should be dealt with.

**Experience Required:**

We have categorized Gokyo Valley Chola Pass trekking including Everest Base Camp as hard trek and are suitable for passionate trekkers who have courage to walk at least 5-7 hours each day. You might even need to walk 7 to 8 hours or more on some days. However, if you have passions, good health with average physical fitness and self confidence, this trek can be completed successfully. Regular exercising and jogging for some weeks prior to the trip is a good idea to enhance your strength and stability. If you have any previous hiking experience, that would be an asset. It is important that you consult with your doctor before making decision for this trek if you have any medical problems in the history. Participants with pre-existing medical conditions such as heart, lungs or any other serious disease should inform Trekking Encounters before booking the trek.

**How We Make This Trip Responsible?**

**Trekking Encounters promotes Responsible Tourism and strictly follows the responsible travel guide lines.**

**Cost Includes:**

- Sagarmatha National Park permit and TIMS (Trekking Information Management System)
- Three meals (B/L/D) a day on trekking from teahouse/lodge
- Accommodations at teahouse/lodge in the mountains
- An English speaking Trekking Guide
- A porter shared between two trekkers
- Staff insurance, salary, food, accommodation and their transportation
- Regular flights for Kathmandu-Lukla-Kathmandu and ground transfers to/from airport
- First aid kit box
- Emergency co-operation service

**Complimentary:**

- A Trekking Encounters T-shirt
- A farewell Nepali dinner with live culture program

**Cost Excludes:**

- Hotel and meals in Kathmandu
- Bar and beverages bills, bottled water
- Nature of personal expenses
- Personal cloths and equipment such as sleeping bag, jacket, boots etc.
- Insurance for accidental, medical and evacuation
- Tips to the staff
- International Airfare and Taxes

**Add-Ons:**

## **Kathmandu City Tour**

**Activity:** Cultural tour to the World Heritage Sites.

**Major sites:** Swoyambhunath, Boudhanath, Pashupatinath, Kathmandu/Patan/Bhaktapur Durbar Square and Changunarayan Temple.

**Duration:** Full/Half day.

**Frequency:** Tour can be organized in any day and at your suitable time.

**Cost:** US\$ 50 per person. Group discounts available.

**Ground transfer:** Included by a private vehicle as per group size (Car/Van/Bus).

**Guide:** English Speaking City Tour Guide included. Additional language Guides are also available on demand.

**Meals:** Not included.

**Entrance fee:** Applicable and not included.

## **Mt. Everest Flight**

**Activity:** Mount Everest sightseeing flight.

**Duration:** One hour.

**Frequency:** Everyday in the morning between 6am to 9am.

**Cost:** US\$ 224 per person. Group discounts available.

**Ground transfer:** Included by a private vehicle. Two persons minimum needed.

**Airport tax:** Included.

**Airline:** Buddha Air, Simrik Airlines and Yeti Airlines.

## **Jungle Safari in Chitwan National Park**

**Activities:** Jungle safari on elephant-back, jungle walk, canoe ride, jeep drive, experience of Tharu culture.

**Accommodation:** Resorts, Hotels and Lodges.

**Transportation:** Private Car included (Kathmandu/Pokhara-Kathmandu).

**Meals:** Included.

**Duration:** 3 days and 2 nights.

**Cost:** Starts from US\$ 225 per person.

## **Jungle Safari in Bardia National Park**

**Activities:** Jungle safari on elephant-back, jungle walk, boat ride, jeep drive.

**Accommodation:** Jungle lodges.

**Transportation:** Not included.

**Meals:** Included.

**Duration:** 4 days and 3 nights.

**Cost:** Starts from US\$ 475 per person.

## **Bird Watching in Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve**

**Activities:** Bird watching, boat ride and wildlife viewing on jeep drive.

**Accommodation:** Resorts, Tented camps.

**Transportation:** Not included.

**Meals:** Included.

**Duration:** 3 days and 2 nights.

**Cost:** Starts from US\$ 480 per person.

## **Rafting in Nepal**

**Trishuli River:** 2/3 Class – 1 Day – 17 Kilometers – Cost starts from US\$ 30 per person.

**Seti River:** 3 Class – 2 Days – 32 Kilometers – Cost starts from US\$ 80 per person.

**KaliGandaki River:** 4 Class – 3 Days – 56 Kilometers – Cost starts from US\$ 140 per person.

**BhoteKoshi River:** 4/5 Class – 2 Days – 18 Kilometers – Cost starts from US\$ 85 per person.

- **Cost includes:** Top quality Rafting equipment, Highly trained Crew, Well organized camping, Hygienic food.

- **Transportation:** Bus transportation included and depends.

### **Bungy Jumping / Canyoning / Paragliding / Ultralight Flight**

We can check and deliver information and cost as per your interest received for Bungy Jumping, Canyoning, Paragliding and Ultralight Flight. Bungy and Canyoning can also be customized together.

### **Shopping Tours**

Package available on demand.

**Shopping items:** Pashmina items, Paubha/Thangka, Woolen Carpets, Root Art, Ceramics, Shaligram (Holy Rocks), Masks of deities, Khukuri, Tea, Spices, Garments and Knitwear, Musical Instruments and Music, Glass Ornaments, Jewelry and Gems, Metal Wares, Sculptures, Wood Carvings, Rudraksha (Rosary), Incense, Natural Buttons, Fiber Products, Wood Game Boards, Fancy Hats, Bamboo Crafts, Bags and Accessories, Leather Articles, Lokta Paper and items made by Lokta, Nepali Dolls, Home Decors, Books and Maps and innumerable other unique items which are found nowhere else.

### **Trip Itinerary:**

#### **Day 01 : Fly Kathmandu to Lukla (2,840m/9,318ft) and trek to Phakding (2,610m/8,563ft).**

We set off early morning from our hotel to domestic airport for Lukla flights. After a 35 minute scenic mountain flight by a small aircraft, we land in Lukla airport (Tenzing-Hillary airport). Today's trek from Lukla to Phakding is only about 3-4 hours. The trail from Lukla is seen broad and clear. From the airstrip it heads north through a kani (arch) and then slopes downhill to a low agricultural land. A splendid view of the difficult trekking peak Kusum Kangaru (6,367m/20,889ft) is seen while walking ahead. The trail is rich with teahouses, prayer wheels, gompas (Buddhist monastery) and huge boulders decorated with Buddhist mantra (prayer chant). Finally we arrive in the village separated in two parts with about a 10 minute trek between them, and a long suspension bridge over the Dudh Koshi River. This village is called Phakding where we stay overnight.

#### **Day 02 : Trek Phakding to Namche Bazaar (3,446m/11,306ft).**

Today's trek is about 5-6 hours. After crossing the suspension bridge at Phakding, we trek for 2-3 hours following the climbs steeply up rough stone steps before reaching the long paved Monjo village on the edge of Sagarmatha National Park. In addition to the lodges, single-roofed houses and a few basic shops, there is a small gumpa nearby. The trek from Monjo to Namche Bazaar will take another 3-4 hours. There is an entrance to the Sagarmatha National Park where an entry permit must be showed or obtained and kept safely for showing on exiting the park. Once passed through the gate, the trail drops to river level which is set among fields of huge cabbages, crosses to the west bank of the Dudh Koshi river on a long suspension bridge and passes teahouses and lodges in Jorsale (2,775m/9,104ft). This is the last available accommodation before Namche Bazaar. About halfway up, at a bend on this ascent we should get our first brief view of Mt. Everest, Nuptse and Lhotse. As our trek continues up mostly among trees, we will eventually come to a group of buildings, then broad stone steps and finally arrive in one of the lower streets of our overnight stop Namche Bazaar. This town is known as the Sherpa "Capital" and gateway to the Mt. Everest.

Namche Bazaar has many facilities – a post office, banks, ATMs, money exchange centre, a health post, a dental clinic, numerous shops, restaurants, cyber cafés and telephone facilities, a gompa and several chortens. The headquarters of the Sagarmatha National Park and a military post are situated above the town. We stay two overnights in Namche Bazaar for acclimatization and excursion around. Trekking time 5-6 hours.

### **Day 03 : Rest and acclimatisation day in Namche Bazaar.**

Today we stay in Namche Bazaar for acclimatisation. Because of the altitude, it will be necessary for us to spend a minimum of two nights here. On this day, we have the choice of just relaxing and roaming round this interesting hill town, or alternatively trekking round a nearby 3-4 hour circuit with stunning views. This day helps a lot for acclimatisation for our further trek to Gokyo, Chola pass and Everest Base Camp.

### **Day 04 : Trek Namche Bazaar to Thame (3,820m/12,533ft).**

Today our trek starts by passing the town's gompa and continues round the steep hillside to cross the rim where there is a profusion of mani stones, carved boulders and prayer flags. The trail then proceeds through pine and juniper woods to reach the village of Phurte (3,390m/11,122ft) which has simple teahouses, lodges, traditional Sherpa homes, a mani wall and a chorten. The trail now loses height, winds round several wooded spurs, passes through a kani (arch), crosses a wooden cantilever bridge and enters the village of Thesiyo. From this point the route starts to rise, passes another chorten and reaches the large strung-out village of Thamo (3,493m/11,460ft) with a school, mani stones, prayer flags, lodges and teahouses. Now climbing fairly steeply the trail passes through a number of houses at Samde and reaches a point from which there is a fine view to the east of the trekking peak of Pharchamo (6,187m/20,300ft). The trail now makes a short steep descent, passes a rock face decorated with three brightly painted Buddhas, crosses a bridge over the Bhote Koshi River, zigzags up to run alongside the Thame Khola (River) and comes to the walled fields and typical Sherpa homes of Thame, our overnight stop. Tenzing Norgay Sherpa who ascended Mt. Everest with Sir Edmund Hillary in 1953, spent his childhood in Thame. There is a school in the village, built by Sir Edmund Hillary's Himalayan Trust and to the west a gompa perched almost 150 meters above the fields. Thame is the village where the Everest region and the Rolwaling valley join. Trekking time 4-5 hours.

### **Day 05 : Trek Thame to Khumjung (3,780m/12,402ft).**

Our trek today is to reach the famous Khumjung village. Khumjung is the traditional Sherpa village and there are many Sherpa climbers from Khumjung village. Trekking time 3-4 hours.

### **Day 06 : Trek Khumjung to Dole (4,200m/13,780ft).**

Our trek now enters into the Gokyo valley. The trail climbs through rhododendron forest and comes to a point where, for the first time, we will be able to see Mt. Cho Oyu (8,201m/26,907ft) at the head of the valley. The route now makes twisting ascents through woodland, climbs more steeply into the open, crosses a number of streams, traverses a yak pasture with a solitary herder's hut, crosses a minor ridge and enters our overnight stop, the lodge settlement of Dole. Dole began as a kharka (a yak pasture) with a few herders' huts, but once Gokyo became a trekking destination, lodges soon established more rapidly. Trekking time 4-5 hours.

### **Day 07 : Trek Dole to Machhermo (4,470m/14,666ft).**

Today's trek is a short and pleasant one and we can relax and take things easy. Because of the demands of altitude acclimatisation, we do not go further. Beyond the first of Dole's lodges the trail goes downhill, crosses

a stream, swings right to climb a hillside and crosses pastureland with dry stone walls and several yak herders' huts. The trail continues past a few stone-built huts and contours along the hillside, descends into a small basin with more walls, stone huts and lodges, then just under two hours from Dole reaches Luza (4,360m/14,305ft) which is also a kharka (yak pasture). Because the lodges at Dole and Machhermo can be very busy in the autumn trekking season, it has become a possible site for overnight accommodation. From Luza, the path climbs out of the northern side of the basin and crosses more pastureland bordered by a chorten and prayer flags. In every direction here the views are spectacular. Eventually the trail slopes down into the valley, crosses a stream and rises up a short slope into the yak pastures and lodges of our overnight stop Machhermo. Trekking time 3-4 hours.

**Day 08 : Trek Machhermo to Gokyo (4,790m/15,716ft).**

Today will be another relatively short trek across broad pastures, through narrow clefts with steeply climbing trails, past two or three lakes and through an ablation valley beside the Ngozumpa Glacier. An ablation valley is one formed by the melting of glacier ice. The trail climbs round a hillside spur, where lofty Cho Oyu will again come into view and soon we will reach another kharka with some simple lodges. Directly ahead of us at this point, we will see the terminal moraine (ridge of rocks) that closes off the Ngozumpa Glacier. The trail now goes briefly downhill, then climbs through the aforementioned ablation valley on the western side of the glacier, goes steeply up stone steps and crosses a stream on a short wooden bridge. A succession of cairns now marks the route through a stony landscape, with a small tarn (Mountain Lake) on the left. The valley now broadens and the trail reaches a second larger tarn Taboche Tsho (4,740m/15,552ft). Beyond this point the trail passes through a narrower section of the ablation valley and comes to a third tarn Dudh Pokhari (4,750m/15,584ft), with prayer flags on its eastern shore. Dudh Pokhari celebrates a fair every year during Janaipoornima, a popular Hindu festival falls in July-August. Just beyond this lake we will come to our overnight stop Gokyo, the valley's last lodge settlement. Trekking time 3-4 hours.

**Day 09 : Rest day at Gokyo, climb at Gokyo Ri (5,360m/17,586ft) in the morning.**

We spend two nights in Gokyo to help with altitude acclimatisation. In the morning, if weather permits, we climb the hill that rises above the northern shore of Lake Dudh Pokhari, called Gokyo Ri. The summit is marked by large cairns and prayer flags. Also from the top, Gokyo's turquoise lake, far below has a picturesque view. An excursion to fourth and fifth lake is recommended for passionate trekkers.

**Day 10 : Trek Gokyo to Thangnak (4,950m/16,241ft).**

Today we continue our trek to Thangnak (Dragnag), at a point beyond the southern end of Lake Taboche Tsho, where a cairn marks a fork in the trail, we branch left, make an easy rise across the slope and crest the moraine wall at a saddle. From here we will get a splendid view northwards along the length of the Ngozumpa Glacier to Cho Oyu and also to Cholatse and Taboche in the south-east. The way now descends onto the glacier, weaves round ice cliffs, over rocky humps, skirts small lakes and crosses flats of glacial sand. Here there are impressive views in every direction. Having crossed the glaciers, the route descends into the ablation valley below our overnight stop Thangnak, which consists of three very basic simple lodges and a couple of huts. Trekking time 3-4 hours.

**Day 11 : Trek Thangnak to Dzonglha (4,830m/15,847ft) crossing over Chola pass (5,330m/17,487ft).**

Today the trail climbs steadily to a cairn on the crest of a moraine ridge, descends into a valley and arrives at a rough area of rocks and boulders, sometimes known as Cho La Base Camp and also as Phedi (4,930m/16,175ft) which means "at the foot of the hill". We will now stay close to the right hand rock wall

where cairns indicate the route down. The views ahead will now be magnificent. The steep descent now continues down rocky “steps” to reach an easy path, which will take us to the bed of the valley. The remainder of the trek to our overnight stop Dzonglha is through this beautiful valley and we will be able to enjoy the stunning views. Dzonglha consists of a few simple lodges and camping grounds in a walled enclosure. There is a terrific close view of Cholatse’s north-east face (6,335m/20,785ft) seen from Dzonglha and below to the south lies Chola Tsho lake (4,590m/15,059ft). We stay overnight at Dzonglha. Trekking time 6-7 hours.

#### **Day 12 : Trek Dzonglha to Lobuche (4,910m/16,109ft).**

Today we continue the trek along the moraine of the glacier. The views of Kalapatthar and Pumori on the way are truly magnificent. The trail now enters the Khumbu valley, crosses to the western side from which one gets a clear view of the massive Nuptse (7,861m/25,791ft) and finally arrives at Lobuche. This is a busy place with trekkers camping in various spots on the far side of the stream and around the lodges. We stay overnight at Lobuche. It can be very cold overnight here. Trekking time 2-3 hours.

#### **Day 13 : Trek Lobuche to Everest Base Camp (5,364m/17,598ft), return trek to Gorakshep (5,140m/16,864ft).**

Today, we set off to the Everest Base Camp with the trail initially crossing a stream below Lobuche and then progressing along the left-hand side of the valley, before rising to a higher narrower step. Soon we will reach a point where a narrow side valley cuts off to the left. After about 200m it takes us to the “Italian Pyramid”, a stone-built lodge and scientific station which collects meteorological and seismic (earthquake) data. Continuing on, the main trail comes to a more open area, climbs a moraine where edelweiss grows on a slope – crosses a sandy stretch, weaves among heaps of moraine, climbs once again and then drops down to Gorakshep. The trail to Base Camp begins just beyond the Gorakshep Lake, runs for some way along the moraine crest and then appears to descend to the Khumbu glacier. Once in the centre of the glacier, the route signs are somewhat dubious – e.g. the occasional cairn of yak dung! – but we will be okay with our experienced guide. Although Everest Base Camp does not provide a view of the world’s highest mountain itself, tomorrow’s trek will more than compensate for this – today we will get a real close-up of the impressive Khumbu ice fall. The Base Camp can be quite a bustling place with expeditions camping, porters, trekkers and yaks, etc. Having achieved our first goal, and after resting, we will return to Gorakshep for our overnight stay. It consists of three lodges on the rim of a level basin of glacial sand, with the small lake nearby. Tibetan snow cocks chase one another noisily across this sand flat. Although it is very close, Everest is not visible from Gorakshep, however there is a stunning view of the majestic Nuptse, soaring high in the east. We stay overnight at Gorakshep. Trekking time 7-8 hours.

#### **Day 14 : Trek/Climb Gorakshep to Kalapatthar (5,545m/18,192ft) and return trek to Lobuche.**

Today’s trip is not only literally the “high point” of our entire trek but it also has the absolutely high point with unbelievable views from the summit of Kalapatthar. The long awaited trek starts around 5.00am. The climb takes about 1-2 hours (depending upon the route chosen) to reach the summit. On the arrival at the summit, one can experience the most fantastic sunrise over Mt. Everest. Kalapatthar is a spur of Pumori (7,165m/23,507ft) and in Hindi means “black rock” which is appropriate. It has two summits and two ascent routes, both paths being clearly visible from Gorakshep. The left-hand path which wriggles its way to the secondary summit (5,545m/18,192ft) takes 1-1:30 hours and the other which zig-zags up the eastern flank to the higher summit (5,623m/18,448ft) takes 1:30-2 hours. Neither route is technically difficult. Another alternative is available which takes in both summits, climb the left-hand trail to gain the lower top, marked with a number of slender cairns and then continue along the ridge scrambling over rocks and reach the higher summit with its flutter of prayer flags. From both summits, a truly incredible panorama is spread before

you. Although Everest is of course the main focus of attention, the ice cone of Nuptse which from this view point appears higher than Everest, has stunning beauty. Having really soaked up these incredible views we will return downhill to Gorakshap and then continue our trek to Lobuche after breakfast. We stay overnight at Lobuche. Trekking time 5-6 hours.

#### **Day 15 : Trek Lobuche to Dingboche (4,410m/14,469ft).**

From Lobuche we start our trek towards southward. We pass through Dughla, re-cross the Khumbu Khola on the wooden bridge and shortly afterwards take the left-hand fork at the road junction and continue on to Dingboche, on the way passing yak-herders' huts at Dusa. Dingboche has a number of lodges, spread among its stone-walled fields. On the western hillside adjacent to the village, there are two large chortens. Dingboche is dominated by the world's fourth highest mountain, Lhotse (8,501m/27,890ft). We stay overnight at Dingboche. Trekking time 3-4 hours.

#### **Day 16 : Trek Dingboche to Chhukung (4,730m/15,519ft) and return trek to Dingboche.**

Today, we have an excursion trip to the Chhukung valley. It is an easy walk climbing up gradually to the small settlement of Chhukung. Along the way, we have great views of Island Peak (6,160m/20,221ft). Island Peak is one of the most popular trekking peaks in Nepal, situated at the top of the Imja valley in the Khumbu region and surrounded by the Imja, Lhotse and Lhotse Shar glaciers. We then retrace our trek to Dingboche for overnight halt. Trekking time 3-4 hours.

#### **Day 17 : Trek Dingboche to Tengboche (3,867m/12,687ft).**

We continue our trek southward down the west bank of the Imja Khola, cross a bridge over the Khumbu Khola close to where it is joined by the Imja Khola and proceed down the west bank through Pangboche to Tengboche. Tengboche or Thyangboche Monastery, also known as Dawa Choling Gompa, is a Tibetan Buddhist monastery of the Sherpa community located in the Everest Base Camp trail of Nepal. It is the largest gompa in the Khumbu region which was built in 1916 by Lama Gulu with strong links to its mother monastery known as the Rongbuk Monastery in Tibet. We stay overnight in this beautiful Tengboche village. Trekking time 3-4 hours.

#### **Day 18 : Trek Tengboche to Namche Bazaar.**

While trekking from Tengboche to Namche Bazaar, a large white chorten is found along the trail to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first ascent of Mount Everest on 29 May 1953. We walk through the rhododendrons and some small settlements on this popular trail and finally reach Namche Bazaar. We stay overnight in Namche Bazaar. Trekking time 4-5 hours.

#### **Day 19 : Return trek Namche Bazaar to Lukla.**

Again we proceed southward, retracing the route trekked on day 1 and 2, crossing and re-crossing the Dudh Koshi at intervals. We stay overnight in Lukla. Trekking time 6-7 hours.

#### **Day 20 : Fly Lukla to Kathmandu.**

We take the 35 minute breathtaking flight from Lukla.

**Option available for extending your trip with Jungle Safari adventure, white water rafting or a trip of your choice.**