

Mera Peak Ski Expedition

21 days in Nepal / Skill Level: Introductory



Oct. 16- Nov. 5, 2017

Oct. 15- Nov. 4, 2018

*Land costs- **\$9,950***
(including internal heli & plane flights)

*All costs included with the exception of alcohol, in-town meals

Difficulty Level: Introductory Ski – No technical climbing or altitude experience is necessary. It is imperative that you are in good physical shape and are able to hike and ski tour in rugged terrain for long days. Each skier should have a solid background in “all-mountain” skiing as variable snow conditions often exist and the skier should have a minimum of 10 days on alpine touring equipment in the backcountry. We are happy to detail physical and technical training programs as needed to get you ready for our introductory high altitude ski expeditions.



Overview

Alpenglow is thrilled to be offering a ski expedition in the Himalaya. Our high altitude guides are also big mountain ski mountaineers; the combination of their expertise and high-end logistics that have been a priority of Alpenglow’s for over a decade, uniquely positions us to offer international, high altitude ski expeditions. We created this program as a perfect segue for backcountry skiers looking to gain the skills that will enable them to ski higher and/or more technical mountains. This program is for the backcountry skier who wants to become a ski mountaineer, and the ski mountaineer looking to progress to high altitude peaks.

Alpenglow Expeditions’ guides have been skiing, climbing, and guiding in Nepal for two decades and believe that visiting the Himalaya with skis on your feet is the ultimate way of experiencing this range. The beauty of the Himalaya will leave you awe-inspired, while the scale will inherently increase your focus, which is essential for true big mountain ski descents.

We have chosen Mera Peak (21,247’ / 6476m) as an ideal place to bring your backcountry skiing to the next level. While it is possible to ski tour the entire route if conditions permit, we will focus on teaching you technical skills that you might not have

needed in the backcountry settings you've previously experienced. You will be utilizing ropes for glacier travel and on exposed terrain, while also managing the effects of high altitude. Incorporating these elements and skills with your backcountry skiing experience is a significant step in your progression from "backcountry skier" to "ski mountaineer." During our acclimatization climbs (Chukkung Ri, Kala Patar, Lobuche East) and once on the Mera La glacier, we will be preparing everyone on the team with the skills and knowledge needed not just for these peaks, but for bigger or more technical peaks around the world.

The highest mountains of the Himalaya have long captured the imaginations of people the world over and to be amongst the few who are able to experience them on skis is very special and a proud achievement. While trekking, climbing, and skiing in the Khumbu, it becomes apparent that it's not only the heights to which the giants around you soar that make this place so special; it's the greater picture of the range, including the history, the weather, the people who live there, the biodiversity, and the adventurous people who visit.

While skiing with Alpenglow Expeditions in Nepal, we utilize the same high-level logistics as those used on our major climbing expeditions. With our strong and experienced Sherpa support staff, cook staff, and guides, top-of-the-line equipment, and the best food in the business, you are able to focus your energy on yourself and your surroundings. We carefully arrange our logistics and itinerary, maximizing acclimatization, while also utilizing helicopters in order to complete this expedition in just three weeks. Join us on this very unique trip for the adventure and ski experience of a lifetime!

Mera Peak Ski Expedition Itinerary

Day 1	Arrive in Kathmandu, Nepal (4,600 feet / 1,400 meters). We transfer to our hotel, and begin the process of getting over jetlag.
Day 2	Explore Kathmandu. Today we explore some of Kathmandu's most famous sites. These include Swyambunath (the Monkey Temple), Pashupati (Nepal's largest Hindu temple), Boudanath (Kathmandu's most important Buddhist temple) and the old city's original central square, Durbar. We also have our first team meeting, and organize our gear.
Day 3	Fly Kathmandu (4,600 feet / 1,400 meters) to Lukla (9,000 feet / 2,743 meters), 4-5 hours. One of the most beautiful and memorable mountain flights in the world, our 45-minute flight takes us from Kathmandu to Lukla, the town where we begin our trek. After organizing our yaks and porters we begin our hike to the town of Monjo. The trail is excellent, and after descending to the town of Phakding, it climbs easily from the river and across our first suspension bridges up to our lodge in Monjo.
Day 4	Trek Monjo (9,300 feet / 2,835 meters) to Namche Bazaar (11,300 feet / 3,444 meters), 3-4 hours. The walk begins with a couple of thrilling suspension bridges and wanders along the banks of the raging Dudh Khosi River, before climbing steeply up a 2,000 foot (610 meter) hill into Namche Bazaar. This hill is the first of our challenging climbs. Along the way we are rewarded with our first views of Mt. Everest, and plenty of well-built stone terraces to stop and rest. We have lunch in Namche Bazaar, and spend the afternoon exploring the vibrant town. Namche is the most important town in the Khumbu Valley, and is filled with fun shops, great bakeries, and colorful winding streets. We also visit the local monastery and the Sherpa Museum of Culture and Himalayan Climbing History. The museum's exhibits chronicling sherpa climbing history are not to be missed.
Day 5	Trek Namche Bazaar (11,300 feet/3,444 meters) to Khumjung (12,400 feet/3,790 meters), 1 hour For acclimatization purposes we spend a second night near Namche Bazaar. After a relaxing morning exploring town and enjoying our first stunning views of Ama Dablam from a viewpoint above town, we have lunch and then take a one-hour walk to Khumjung and our sirdar's (lead sherpa's) home. We spend the night with Phurba Tashi and his family in his comfortable lodge, and possibly visit the Hillary School in Khumjung, and the Khunde hospital, both projects of Sir Edmund Hillary, and significant centers of Sherpa life.
Day 6	Trek Khumjung (12,400 feet/3,790 meters) to Phortse (12,450 feet/3,800 meters), 3 hours Phortse is home to most of our sherpa team. It is an incredible mountain town perched on the walls of a massive river valley and sees almost no Western visitors. To get there we set off from Khumjung on small trails, featuring a long stone staircase through vertical rock cliffs that ends at the Mong La, a high pass with striking 360 degree views of Ama Dablam, Thamserku, and Kantegri. From the pass we descend to the river, and then climb easily to Phortse, arriving in time for lunch. We spend the afternoon visiting our sherpa team in their homes, drinking tea and tasting the locally made yak yogurt.

Day 7	Trek Phortse (12,450 feet/3,800 meters) to Dingboche (14,800 feet/4,530 meters), 5-7 hours We begin today's trek far from other trekkers on the trail from Phortse to upper Pangboche. In Pangboche we visit the oldest monastery and temple in the region and explore its paintings and statues. If we are fortunate, we may also receive blessings from the local lama. Once finished, we continue hiking to Dingboche, a small seasonal town perched at the base of Lhotse's South Face that has incredible views of Ama Dablam's North Ridge.
Day 8	Climb of Chukkung Ri (17,600 feet/5,364 meters), 6-8 hours round-trip. Chukkung Ri is not glaciated, but provides an excellent way for us to gain additional acclimatization, as well as stunning views of Lhotse's South Face and the huge glaciers filling the Amphu Valley. In the afternoon we return to our lodge in Dingboche in time for a late lunch and some time relaxing in the sun. As needed, this day also makes for a great rest and recuperation day.
Day 9	Climb Kala Patar (18,192/5,164 meters), 6-8 hours roundtrip. Climb Kala Patar (18,192/5,164 meters) and return to Lobuche. Summiting Kala Patar is a non-technical but strenuous hike on good, generally snow-free, trails. The views of Everest from its summit are the best anywhere in Nepal, and well worth the hard hike.
Day 10	Practice skills and rest Today we get some much needed rest and practice the skills we'll need on Mera.
Day 11	Climb to Lobuche high camp (17,716' feet/5,400 meters). The route from Lobuche climbs out of the valley on a progressively steepening scree slope. Eventually, we cross a series of rock bands (fixed ropes) before reaching this beautiful camp perched below Lobuche's glacier and summit.
Day 12	Summit day on Lobuche East (20,075 feet/6,119 meters). Possible ski - conditions dependent. We start early, climbing through rock slabs and steps. When we reach the glacier, from there steep snow and ice takes us to the final knife edge summit ridge. After enjoying the views we reverse our route and descend all the way to the town of Lobuche.
Day 13	Rest, heli to Khare (15,285 feet/4,660 meters). In Khare, we are now above tree line, leaving us with incredible views of our main objective, Mera Peak.
Day 14	(Possible heli contingency day) Rest in Khare.
Day 15	Hike or Skin to Mera Base Camp (17,766 feet/5,415 meters) Today we hike/skin to base camp, getting our legs back underneath us, and reviewing techniques along the way.
Day 16	Skin to Mera high camp (19,030 feet/5,800 meters). For today's move to high camp, we are able to spend most of the time skinning. As we approach our camp, we are are rewarded with stunning views of some of the world's highest peaks, including Everest, Lhotse, Cho Oyu, Makalu, and Ama Dablam.

Day 17	Mera Peak (21,247 feet/6,476 meters) summit day and ski! Return to Khare. We skin for as long as possible today before changing over to crampons if necessary for the final portion of the ascent. We then descend 4,000+ foot (1,220 meter) on skis, providing us with the ski experience of a lifetime! Every time we stop to catch our breath, we will be staring at the peaks that give the Himalaya its fame.
Day 18	Summit and ski contingency day.
Day 19	Heli to Lukla, continue by plane to Kathmandu. This 45-minute flight begins with one of the most exciting takeoffs in the world. Once airborne the flight offers incredible views of the mountains, the foothills, and finally the city. After landing in Kathmandu we return to our hotel for an afternoon of celebration, great food, and perhaps much needed massages. Night in hotel.
Day 20	Contingency day for flights from Lukla to Kathmandu. Since the flights to and from Lukla are often delayed or cancelled due to bad weather in the mountains, this is an essential extra day. If we arrived back in Kathmandu on time, this day can be used for sightseeing in the city, shopping for souvenirs, or sleeping in and enjoying the fantastic pool at the hotel.
Day 21	Depart Kathmandu for home. After a final group breakfast, return to the airport to catch international flights home.

Client Expectations and Timeline

90+ Days to Departure	
Reserve Spot	Make your deposit to confirm registration - if you haven't already, head over to our website and click "Reserve Spot" and select your dates. The rest of the process is as easy as buying a book online. Make sure that you select to add an extension if you wish to extend any expedition.
Q&A	Q&A with Alpenglow - time to ask any question about travel, logistics, training and everything in between.
Application	Complete full application including medical questionnaire & travel information.
Reserve Rentals	Reserve rentals if needed within application. For our climbing schools, we have a small rental inventory of boots, ice axes crampons, helmets and harnesses. These are provided at no cost on a first come first serve basis. Please let us know what you plan on renting as soon as possible.

Within 90 Days to Departure

Complete Payment	Full Payment will be collected at the 90 day mark. Alpenglow will contact you prior to taking final payment and once you confirm we'll simply move your booking into the final stages. For international trips, a wire transaction is the best way to send payment. We also accept credit cards with transaction fee of 3% or you can pay by check.
Book Travel	We recommend reviewing flight options outside of 90 days and confirming with Alpenglow on travel times. Use us to guide you to the best flight schedules to make travel as easy as possible. Once you book your flights don't forget to share with the Alpenglow office so we pick you up on time from the airport.
Training	This is the hard part. The hours of training you put in directly correlates to your success in the mountains. Train hard and be ready for the adventure of a lifetime!
Equipment	Compile all equipment using the equipment list as a guide.
Purchase Insurance	Purchase travel and rescue insurance. We recommend Global Rescue and Travel Guard. Click here to find links to each.

General Trip Information

Payment

1. A deposit of \$1,000 is required for all private treks and expeditions. Deposits are due upon registration, and can be paid by check made out to "Alpenglow Expeditions, LLC". All payments should be mailed to Alpenglow Expeditions at P.O. Box 3122, Olympic Valley, CA 96146 or sent via wire transfer. If wiring payment, please contact us for bank details and be certain that you are covering ALL fees! We also accept credit card payments with a transaction fee of 3%. Deposits are non-refundable and non-transferable. This is not a flexible policy. Planning our trips takes significant time and has non-refundable costs as well.
2. Balances are due 90 days before the expedition departs from the United States. Payment should be made as described above.
3. The cost of your trip includes your land costs (excluding in-town meals). This includes: double occupancy lodging while in town, meals on the mountain, scheduled transportation while in the countries we are visiting, group camping and climbing equipment, individual technical climbing equipment (boots, ice axes, crampons, helmets, harnesses), and guides.
4. The cost of your trip does not include: flights to/from the city where the expedition begins, airport taxes, visas, in-town meals, immunizations, tips for guides or local staff, travel, rescue, or any other type of insurance, hospitalization or evacuation costs, single supplement charges, excess baggage charges, alcohol, or other personal expenses.

5. The costs of delays or changes to itinerary that are beyond the control of Alpenglw Expeditions or its agents are not included.

Cancellations

1. We reserve the right to cancel any trip at any time. Reasons for cancellation might include (but are not limited to) political instability, natural disasters, or inadequate enrollment. If we cancel a trip prior to its start for low enrollment, we fully refund your payments. If we cancel your trip prior to its start due to political instability, natural disasters, or other reasons of that nature, we will refund all but non-recoverable costs. Changes to a trip itinerary made by our guides for any reason do not constitute a cancellation, and no refunds will be made in this case.
2. If you cancel your trip more than 90 days prior to departure, Alpenglw Expeditions will refund your payment minus the non-refundable deposit. 60-89 days prior, Alpenglw Expeditions will refund 50% of your payment. Fewer than 60 days prior, there are no refunds or credits.
3. On any trip, our guides reserve the right to remove any person, for any reason. These reasons generally stem from a person jeopardizing the safety of themselves or another team member. This includes a person who is not physically able to climb at the level necessary for the chosen route. In all these cases, there are no refunds whatsoever, and the client will be responsible for any additional costs incurred in leaving the trip.

Flights

We recommend using Kayak.com as a primary source for finding low-fare airfares. If you prefer to work with a travel agent, we recommend Jane Chauvin at Penny Pitou travel: (1-888-526-4488) or jane@pennypitoutravel.com. She is fast, efficient and affordable and intimately aware of the challenges of booking mountaineering trips.

****Please confirm your itinerary with Alpenglw Expeditions before you purchase it.****

Insurance

We require that all participants carry rescue insurance, travel insurance, and health insurance. Your policy numbers must be provided to us prior to leaving the USA. Homeowner/Renter's insurance is also recommended.

- Rescue Insurance- For US citizens, we recommend obtaining rescue insurance through American Alpine Club and upgrading that service via Global Rescue. Visit www.americanalpineclub.org to become a member and obtain the appropriate level of coverage based on the altitude of the peaks you will be climbing with us. Helicopter rescues in foreign countries, while unlikely, can cost up to \$20,000. International climbers have several options as well for rescue insurance. Our recommendation is Global Rescue as we have had great success with them in the past. Your insurance must not have a mountaineering exclusion and must cover up to your trip's highest altitude. This coverage is very important.
- Travel Insurance- Coverage should include lost/damaged baggage, unexpected delays, accident/life, and trip cancellation. Trip cancellation will cover you for non-refundable air and land costs should you need to cancel your trip due to an emergency. Since our costs are often not refundable, this coverage is very important as well, and should be purchased as soon as possible after registering for an expedition.
- Health Insurance- All members of our teams are required to have current health insurance. This insurance should cover emergency hospitalization abroad as well as domestically.

- Homeowner/Renter's Insurance- While unusual, thefts can occur while overseas. We recommend a policy to cover these losses.

Medical

All of our expeditions and treks are physically demanding. Regardless of the skill level or experience needed, it is essential that you arrive in good physical shape, and prepared to handle extreme conditions, including cold, heat, and long tiring days. Alpenglow Expeditions, LLC and its guides reserve the right to remove any member of our trips at any time if we do not believe they are ready for the rigors of the trip.

Our guides are certified in wilderness medicine, CPR, and are experienced in client care in remote high altitude locations. However, Alpenglow Expeditions, LLC is not a medical facility and Alpenglow Expeditions, LLC assumes no liability regarding medical care.

You are responsible for your own medications, inoculations, and deciding whether you are physically able to participate in an Alpenglow Expeditions trip. You should discuss your participation in this trip, and the dangers involved, with your physician.

Some of the medications you may consider carrying with you include:

1. Tylenol – a simple painkiller for headaches and minor pains.
2. Ibuprofen – mild altitude headaches, along with body aches and pains, are common.
3. A cold and flu remedy of your choice (strong decongestant).
4. Pepto Bismol - for minor stomach upset, best taken in caplet form.
5. Immodium AD – to control diarrhea, when necessary. Again, tablets are preferred.
6. Cough Drops – the air at altitude is very dry, and many climbers develop hacking coughs.
7. A laxative agent of your choice.
8. Dramamine (or equivalent) – an anti-motion sickness agent of your choice as bus/plane rides to our trailheads are often very bumpy.
9. Diamox (Acetazolamide) required – prescription medication often used prophylactically to prevent altitude sickness. You should have a large enough supply to take 250mg/day (best as scored tablets so you can take 125mg twice a day).
10. Z-pack required – a broad spectrum anti-biotic.

Also be sure to discuss vaccinations with your doctor. Often a travel clinic has the most up-to-date information on which shots are necessary for the country you are visiting. Be sure to mention that most of our trips explore only the highlands and capital cities. This might mean that you need fewer immunizations, and anti-malarials are often not necessary. Determine this with your doctor, and refer to your trip itinerary for the exact locations we will be visiting. At the very least, your tetanus shot should be up-to-date and you should have protection against Hepatitis A.

Aerobic Conditioning

We cannot stress enough the importance of being in excellent aerobic condition before arriving on your trip. Arriving fit will increase your safety on the trip and reduce the risk of medical issues. It will also dramatically increase your enjoyment and learning during your trek or expedition. At the minimum, we recommend an exercise regimen that includes a minimum of 3 one-hour workouts per week (biking, running, swimming) along with a few long days hiking as you get close to your departure date. Please call us if you would like to discuss a specific

routine to fit your needs.

Money

The countries we visit can still be challenging places to use a credit card or find an ATM. While you may choose to bring these for backup, we recommend you bring enough cash for your planned spending. American dollars are still the easiest way to carry money. Be sure you carry clean, new bills and have some smaller denominations. Carry your money and important documents in a hidden waist pouch under your clothes.

The amount of money you need varies by how many presents you plan on bringing back! In addition to souvenirs and gifts, plan on spending on airport departure taxes, alcohol and snacks, and tips for local staff and your guides.

Additional Notes

- Single Supplement - If you prefer a single room while we are in hotels, please let us know as soon as possible. There will be an additional cost associated for this.
- Cameras – high quality point and shoot digital cameras are an excellent option. We have found that small pocket cameras are much better than big DSLRs for summit days. You need a simple light system, and the new generation of digitals take great photos. A guide favorite is the Sony RX 100.
- Be sure to create a data sheet of all of your essential information – passport, credit card or ATM numbers, airline ticket information, visa number (if applicable), etc. This sheet should then be photocopied and scattered amongst your luggage. If any of your documents are stolen, having this information will be essential.
- Rental Equipment - Alpenglow Expeditions offers a limited number of mountaineering boots, crampons, ice axes, helmets, harnesses, carabiners, perlon, and belay devices for use by our clients. There is no additional charge for using this equipment, but please let us know as soon as possible if you intend to use Alpenglow Expeditions' equipment. Check your expedition's equipment list to see what technical climbing equipment is necessary for your climb or trek. Rental gear from Alpenglow is only available for shipment within the US. Rental gear must be taken home by the renter and shipped back to Alpenglow within two weeks of end of trip at the renter's expense.