



Ama Dablam Expedition Nepal



October 17 - November 15, 2016

\$13,950 (land costs)

Difficulty Level: Advanced - Must be able to climb rock, ice, and mixed terrain, often with an alpine pack on your back. You should be comfortable with camp craft in high-altitude camps and be able to perform at a high level for multiple days in a row at altitude.



No mountain in the world captures alpine climbers' imaginations like 22,525 foot (6,866 meter) Ama Dablam. It stands alone in the Solu Khumbu (Everest) valley, towering almost 10,000 feet (3,050 meters) over the famous Sherpa villages of Thyangboche and Pangboche. With no easy route to its summit, climbing Ama Dablam is reserved for dedicated alpinists, who have built skills and experience in much more than simply high altitude walking. The successful climber will have solid multi-pitch climbing experience on rock and ice, and be comfortable climbing technical terrain with a pack on, taking care of themselves in very high alpine camps, and spending days at a time in exposed terrain.

This expedition is in many ways the culmination of Alpenglow Expeditions' teaching system and mission. On Ama Dablam our expectation is that each climber takes real responsibility for their own success and that of their teammates. Members of the team will assist in setting camps, carrying loads, cooking, and melting snow in high camps. Summiting the peak will be a success you have truly earned, and can be, if you choose, an ideal stepping stone to more independent expeditions on big Himalayan peaks.

On our expedition we climb the route of the mountain's first ascent, the Southwest Ridge. First climbed in 1961, the route is incredibly varied. It offers every type of climbing along the way to the summit, and from Camp 1 up is always exposed and technical.

From Base Camp to Camp 1, we will climb up a long moderate morainal ridge, enjoying excellent views of our entire route.

From Camp 1 to 2 we encounter the route's crux rock climbing sections. There are interesting technical traverses combined with countless easy fifth class moves and some short harder pitches of up to 5.8 climbing. On all of this climbing, you will be truly climbing each move, using fixed ropes only to protect yourself. This is not a route of jug-hauling!

Camp 2 to 2.7 offers the route's most challenging ice climbing, with sustained pitches of steep ice and mixed terrain. The final section into Camp 2.7 is the famed mushroom ridge, a mostly horizontal traverse across cornices tenuously stuck to a knife-edge ridge.

From Camp 2.7 to the summit, the route lessens slightly in technical difficulty, climbing straightforward 50-70 degree ice and snow around the hanging glacier (the Dablam) and up the summit face.

An expedition to Ama Dablam will test all of your mountaineering skills, and a summit is one to be very proud of. Climbing this peak also provides a taste of true Himalayan expedition life. You will be supported by the best Sherpa staff in the Khumbu. After an 8-day trek through the villages of the Everest Valley, we will have a full Puja blessing ceremony, and then settle into



life in a very comfortable basecamp, complete with cook, heated dining tent, individual sleeping tents, and a private bathroom tent with shower. We have found that these amenities are essential in having a well-rested and strong team of climbers during our summit push. We pride ourselves in our record of safety and success. Beware of operators who offer Ama Dablam climbs with less support!

Our Ama Dablam expedition will be guided by one or more of Alpenglow's AMGA certified lead guides. AMGA (American Mountain Guides Association) certification is the highest possible training available to guides, and only the most experienced and dedicated attain it. Our guides have been climbing in Nepal for more than a decade, and have led dozens of expeditions to Himalayan peaks (including 9 successful summits of Ama Dablam). Their knowledge of Sherpa culture as well as the mountains, combined with their passion for teaching mountaineering skills to others, guarantees that your experience will be one to remember.

Our climber to guide ratio is 4:1, and our climber to sherpa ratio is 1:1. This ensures that we have unparalleled support carrying loads, fixing ropes, and building camps. The guides climb with the members every day throughout the season. The sherpa also spend lots of time climbing with us, and on summit day will be with their climbing member at all times.

All of our guides and sherpa have summited Ama Dablam and other Himalayan peaks countless times. This maximizes your safety and your opportunity to climb Ama Dablam successfully!

We combine our western guides' and sherpa's experience with the local expertise of one of Nepal's best logistics operators, and the services of our good friend and local sirdar/guide, Dorji Sonam Sherpa. Dorji hails from the beautiful town of Phortse, and along with at least 6 ascents of Ama Dablam, he has summited Everest 15 times. His management of our local staff, knowledge of the Khumbu, and friendly personality will be essential in ensuring that you stay healthy, strong, and able to enjoy each component of this experience.



Ama Dablam 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. (Monday)
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 bags for the trek.
Day 3	Fly Kathmandu (4,600 feet/1,400 meters) to Lukla (9,000 feet/2,743 meters), 45 minutes. Trek Lukla to Monjo (9,300 feet/2,835 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 to base camp. 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, 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	<p>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.</p>
Day 6	<p>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.</p>
Day 7	<p>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.</p>
Day 8	<p>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.</p>
Day 9	<p>Trek Dingboche (14,800 feet/4,530 meters) to Ama Dablam Base Camp (15,000 feet/4,570 meters), 4-5 hours. Today we split with our support trek group. As they head up the valley to Lobuche, we choose a backcountry route away from the tourist trail, traveling through tiny yak herder settlements and over countless moraines as we circle around the base of Ama Dablam. Base camp sits in a beautiful grassy valley immediately at the base of the mountain's West Face, and we arrive there in time for lunch. After lunch we spend the afternoon settling into base camp and getting our gear organized.</p>
Day 10	<p>Acclimatization Climb to Yak Camp (17,000 feet/5,182 meters) and return to Base Camp (15,000 feet/4,570 meters), 4-6 hours round-trip. After a big breakfast we begin hiking along a morainal ridge with spectacular views of the mountain. We eventually join the beginning of the Southwest Ridge, at this point a large plateau, and follow it thirty minutes or so to our tents. After a quick break and leaving some equipment, we return to base camp.</p>

Day 11	Rest day in Base Camp. We begin our day with a Puja, a Buddhist blessing ceremony. This is a meaningful ritual for our Sherpa prior to the beginning of every expedition, and a special ceremony to take part in. We will spend the rest of the day organizing equipment, eating, taking showers, and visiting other teams from around the world.
Day 12	Rest day in Base Camp. This second rest day is crucial for our bodies to recuperate from many days of trekking at altitude. It is also a busy day. We set up a long and complicated fixed-line practice course on the cliffs and rocks above our base camp. We spend half the day practicing all the skills we will need on the technical sections of Ama Dablam including jumaring vertical lines, technical traverses, rappelling, arm-wrapping, and analyzing anchors and ropes.
Day 13	Climb to Yak Camp (17,000 feet/5,182 meters), 3-4 hours. We hike to Yak Camp, this time to sleep for the night.
Day 14	Climb Yak Camp (17,000 feet/5,182 meters) to Camp 1 (18,500 feet/5,639 meters), 2-4 hours. We pack our gear in Yak Camp and climb up the Southwest Ridge as it turns from a plateau to a true knife-edge. The climb begins on easy sandy trails, but quickly enters a large talus field, where we climb up and over huge granite boulders. The final few hundred feet (200 meters) are on fixed lines up a steep rock slab. The tents of Camp 1 are perched in an incredible airy position on rock platforms at the top of this slab.
Day 15	Acclimatization Climb to Camp 2 (19,500 feet/5,944 meters) and return to Camp 1 (18,500 feet/5,639 meters), 4-6 hours round-trip. Today we get our first taste of technical climbing on the mountain. We will clip into the fixed ropes and climb to Camp 2, dropping a small load there. The climbing is incredible, with short steps of 5.6-5.8 climbing interspersed with countless fourth to easy fifth class moves. The crux pitch of the climb, the Yellow Tower, is also found here. We return to Camp 1 to sleep.
Day 16	Descend from Camp 1 (18,500 feet/5,639 meters) to Base Camp (15,000 feet/4,570 meters), 2 hours. We wake up early and have a quick snack and hot drink. The descent from Camp 1 goes slowly down the technical slabs and across the talus, but then very quickly down the good trails from Yak Camp to base camp. We leave any gear we can at Camp 1 and Yak Camp in preparation for our summit bid.
Day 17	Rest Day in Base Camp. We will have earned it!
Day 18	Rest Day in Base Camp. Our bodies need to be 100% before attempting our summit of Ama Dablam. In base camp we eat great food, write emails home, play cards, hydrate, and sit in the sun. At this point we are also carefully analyzing the weather forecasts, choosing our best days to go for the summit.
Day 19	Climb Base Camp (15,000 feet/4,570 meters) to Camp 1 (18,500 feet/5,639 meters), 4-6 hours. Today is the beginning of our summit push, and we take our time moving to Camp 1, climbing as efficiently as we can to conserve our strength for the upcoming days.

Day 20	Rest Day in Camp 1 (optional).
Day 21	Climb Camp 1 (18,500 feet/5,639 meters) to Camp 2.7 (20,800 feet/6,350 meters), 5-7 hours. After repeating the fun rock climbing from Camp 1 to Camp 2, we continue on to new terrain. The climb from Camp 2 to Camp 2.7 is mostly ice and mixed climbing, and includes some of the toughest pitches of the whole climb, including the steep and difficult Grey Tower. Just before reaching Camp 2.7 we cross the mushroom ridge, a series of cornices and ice sculptures glued precipitously onto a knife-edge rock ridge. It is a section of climbing you will never forget! We build Camp 2.7 on the Mushroom Ridge in order to avoid any serac (icefall) danger from the Dablam that has endangered the traditional Camp 3 in previous years.
Day 22	Climb Camp 2.7 (20,800 feet/6,350 meters) to Summit (22,525 feet/6,866 meters), return to Camp 2.7 (7-9 hours round-trip) or Camp 1 (12-15 hours round-trip). The climb from Camp 2.7 to the summit is actually technically easier than anything prior to it. However, we will be dealing with extremely high altitude and cold temperatures. Generally we do not leave camp until daybreak, making things warm enough to climb the steep ice and snow to the summit. The views are staggering; we will be able to see six 8,000-meter peaks, including Everest, Lhotse, and Makalu. Depending on the team's strength we will descend to Camp 2.7, or all the way to Camp 1.
Day 23	Descend to Base Camp (15,000 feet/4,570 meters), 2 hours from Camp 1, 5-7 hours from Camp 2.7. Any energy left from the climb and descent will be used to celebrate our summit push and safe return!
Day 24	Rest Day in Base Camp. After our summit push we will need and deserve this rest day. We organize gear, hang out in the sun, and feast on the kitchen's creations.
Day 25	Extra Day. To be used as needed on our climb.
Day 26	Trek from Ama Dablam BC (14,500 feet/4,420 meters) to Namche Bazaar (11,300 feet/3,444 meters), 6-7 hours. We leave base camp in the morning and hike down the hill to Pangboche. After tea we continue down the valley and through thick rhododendron forests to Thyangboche. Thyangboche is home to the most influential and active monastery in the Khumbu and we will have time for a quick visit and lunch. We then continue walking, with a big drop down to the Dudh Khosi River and a dramatic suspension bridge. After crossing the bridge we climb again to Sanasa, and then contour along hillsides and over small ridges until finally dropping into Namche Bazaar.
Day 27	Trek from Namche Bazaar (11,300 feet/3,444 meters) to Lukla (9,000 feet/2,743 meters), 5-6 hours. Our final day of walking covers the same ground we spent 2 days climbing on the way in. Now that we are acclimatized we cover the distance easily, and enjoy the many suspension bridges, tumultuous rivers, small towns and monasteries. After lunch in Phakding, the trail climbs a final 600 vertical feet (180 meters) to the airstrip in Lukla, and our final lodge where we spend the night.

Day 28	Fly Lukla (9,000 feet/2,743 meters) 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 29	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 30	Depart Kathmandu for home. After a final group breakfast, return to the airport to catch international flights home. (Tuesday)

[Please note the above schedule is only one possible scenario. A mountain like Ama Dablam requires flexibility, and every year our climb is very different.]



877-873-5376 | PO Box 3122 | Olympic Valley | CA | 96146
 alpenglowexpeditions.com | info@alpenglowexpeditions.com