



AMA DABLAM

RAPID ASCENT EXPEDITION

DURATION: 16 DAYS

LOCATION: NEPAL

SKILL LEVEL: ADVANCED

 ALPENGLOW



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Expedition Details

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LOCATION: NEPAL

SKILL LEVEL: ADVANCED

SEASON: FALL

DIFFICULTY LEVEL DESCRIPTION:

Advanced - must be able to climb technical terrain 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.

PREREQUISITES:

Team members should have experience multi-pitch climbing (rock or ice), be comfortable following grade 4 ice climbs, 5.9 rock climbs, and have climbed at altitude (over 18,000 feet).



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Expedition Introduction

Why Climb in Nepal?

Eight out of the world's ten highest peaks reside in this mountainous playground where the infamous Himalaya Range reigns.

Aside from the beautiful sight of these incredible peaks, this landlocked country is rich in culture, history, food, and people; as it stands in pride as one of the few countries of the world that has managed to avoid colonization.

Nepal offers arguably the most diverse level of climbing routes, challenges and rewards on the planet. **“There are iconic unclimbed peaks, faces, and features** that captivate the collective imagination of the mountain-climbing establishment”.

-CLIMBING



ROUTE CHOICE

The Southwest Ridge route is our path to 22,349', 6,812m and the top of Ama Dablam. Incredible 5.5-5.8 rock climbing takes us to the upper mountain, ice, and mix climbing at altitude protect the highly coveted summit of this beautiful mountain.



HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Ama Dablam translates to “Mother’s Necklace” in the Sherpa language and by many Westerners it has been deemed the “Matterhorn of the Himalaya,”

The defined jagged ridges and steep spines made many climbers like Sir Edmund Hillary perceive the 22,000 foot peak as ‘unclimbable.’ That changed in March of 1961 when four climbers successfully submitted the mountain via the Southwest Ridge.



16 Day Itinerary

The Alpenglow 16-Day Rapid Ascent itinerary up Ama Dablam is ideal for mountaineers that are fully capable and prepared for a climb that is quicker and nearly half the time as the standard expedition.

The use of helicopters helps us to advance to base camp quicker, bringing the team from Kathmandu to Namche Bazar with only two days of hiking before reaching base camp at 15,000 feet.

Our philosophy helps you spend less time away from family and business and more time playing in the mountains.

The Rapid Ascent itinerary is specifically designed for those that are prepped to climb and desire to climb the peak with a shorter itinerary.

The use of the best technology available (including weather forecasting, efficient oxygen systems, and pre-acclimatization in hypoxic tents), our team's experience, and their early arrival and late departure to pre-set and clean the mountain's camps and ropes allows our team to minimize their time on mountain, while maximizing their chances of success.



Ama Dablam is the crown jewel of technical mountaineering at altitude, and is a great test-piece for taller peaks. Cho Oyu, Gasherbrum II, and Everest are all great options for objectives after Ama.

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About Alpenglow Expeditions

Alpenglow creates and fosters a community of climbers prepared to achieve their dreams in the world's greatest mountain ranges.



About the Company

Alpenglow Expeditions is an AMGA accredited business, and prides itself on working with guides who uphold and exemplify the highest standard in the profession of mountain guiding.

Led by IFMGA mountain guide Adrian Ballinger, Alpenglow focuses on creating expeditions that reflect our high standards in mountain guiding by providing precision logistics, cutting edge technology, and thoughtful itineraries that combine for successful climbs.

History of Alpenglow Expeditions

Founded in 2004 by IFGMA mountain guide Adrian Ballinger, Alpenglow Expeditions began as a boutique guide service that focused on high altitude climbing. In those 15 years we've expanded our offerings, both internationally and in the United States. We are now proud to offer courses and expeditions ranging from a climber's first experience on the Tahoe Via Ferrata, to basic backcountry education for those interested in exploring winter landscapes, to climbing the world's highest mountain for those on the Road to Everest.

About Alpenglow Expeditions



Founder — Adrian Ballinger

Adrian Ballinger founded Alpenglow Expeditions in 2004 envisioning a more holistic climbing experience for his clients than the status quo.

Adrian is the only American who has skied two 8,000 meter peaks, was the first person to ski Manaslu, the 8th tallest mountain in the world, and in 2011 became the first person to summit three 8,000 meter peaks in only 3 weeks (Everest twice and Lhotse once).

Adrian holds both an AMGA and IFMGA guide's certifications and has achieved more than 10 summits of 8,000 meter peaks (including 6 summits of Mt. Everest).



Partner / Chief Guide — Logan Talbott

Logan has been guiding professionally for over a decade in the disciplines of Rock, Alpine and Ski Mountaineering. When not out guiding, Logan spends time in the office helping the team with the day-to-day operations of the business. From one day ascents of El Capitan to big Alpine climbs in the Himalaya, or from ski descents on Denali to backyard ski tours in Lake Tahoe, he can't help but smile when out running around the hills.

Logan is an AMGA/IFMGA mountain guide, an Avalanche course leader with AIARE, as well as a wilderness EMT. In addition to guiding, Logan has extensive experience in mountain rescue, having worked for rescue teams in both Yosemite and Denali National Parks, and volunteering locally for Tahoe Nordic SAR.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE, LOCAL PARTNERS

We partner with local logistics companies in each country and region that we operate in. Often we have partnerships that have been with us since the beginning of Alpenglow. Whenever we bring on a new operator we have vetted them thoroughly to insure their reliability and quality. Our local and regional logistics partners are the backbone of our in-country logistics and help us achieve the success that we're known for.



After 15 years of guiding expeditions all over the world, including more than a dozen 8,000-meter peak expeditions, we have refined and distilled the acclimatization and climbing process to maximize safety, health, success, and enjoyment.

The Alpenglow Difference

Alpenglow Expeditions' Rapid Ascent™ climbs are an entirely new way to approach big-mountain expeditions.

Rapid Ascent™ Strategy

First developed by Adrian Ballinger, Rapid Ascent™ is a unique approach to climbing big mountains across the world. This innovative program combines hypoxic training at home with precise logistics and small team sizes to reduce the overall time spent away from home, all while greatly increasing the chance of success on your international climbing expedition.

By pre-acclimatizing for 4 weeks at home, we're able to reduce the overall expedition time to 14 days. It is due to this pre-acclimatization that we are able to move relatively quickly through the Himalaya to base camp with no ill effects.

1:4 Maximum Guide to Climber Ratio

All guides are IFMGA qualified or aspirants working towards finishing their certification. This is the lowest member to guide ratio in the Himalaya.

1:1 Sherpa to Climber Ratio

Having 1 Sherpa per climber ensures we have the strength necessary to carry loads, set camps, and assist climbers. All of our Sherpa on Ama Dablam have worked with us on many expeditions.

The Alpenglow Difference

EXPEDITION DOCTOR ON CALL

Dr. Monica Piris, has been on fourteen 8,000-meter peak expeditions. She is in daily communication with our teams during the entirety of the expedition and is available for client consultation at any time.

SWISS WEATHER FORECASTS

Having a quality forecast for Mount Everest maximizes both our safety and our summit success. These weather forecasts were originally developed for aircraft traveling at the altitudes that we climb at.

HIGH-QUALITY FOOD

Imported and local foods of the highest quality, combined with a Western-trained cook staff. Alpenglow has the best food on the mountain, ensuring your strength and health throughout the expedition.

HELICOPTER TRANSPORT

We provide a helicopter flight from Kathmandu to Namche Bazar as well as return transport from Base Camp back to Kathmandu. This tremendously cuts down the typical time it would take to start and finish a typical climb on Ama Dablam.





Alpenglow's Ama Dablam Team

Our Ama Dablam guides are some of the best in the business, and have a long history of experience in the high mountains across the world. Most are IFMGA certified, with all others working towards their final certification. These guides are deeply familiar with the Rapid Ascent approach and utilize the advantages it creates while on the mountain.

Alpenglow's Guides, Sherpa + Climbers

Alpenglow offers an exceptional level of competency, safety, and comfort on our Ama Dablam expeditions. Our team will be limited to 12 members, with certified guides and the best Sherpa and cooks available (*staff we have been working with for more than a decade*).

Our small group size allows us to adapt to changing conditions and weather far more easily than many commercial teams, which have become so large over the last decade that they have become difficult to manage. Our member to Sherpa (**1:1**) and member to guide ratios (**4:1**), the comforts of our Base Camp, our fresh and nutritious food, and our use of maximum oxygen are details that add up to a far more enjoyable experience and successful climb.

Local Logistics Team

For our Ama Dablam expedition, Alpenglow has partnered with the premier logistics operator to provide base camp infrastructure, food and base camp staff.

TEAM MEMBER REQUIREMENTS

While many downplay the difficulty and hazards of climbing Ama Dablam, Alpenglow maintains a deep respect for the nature of this mountain and you will never find us underestimating its potential dangers. We require a significant amount of experience from each of our members to ensure that you will feel comfortable on the peak, both with your own skills and of those of your teammates.

Alpenglow requires climbers have experience multi-pitch climbing (rock or ice), be comfortable following grade 4 ice climbs, 5.9 rock climbs, and have climbed at altitude (over 18,000 feet).



Route Description + Itinerary

No mountain in the world captures alpine climbers' imaginations like Ama Dablam.

It stands alone in the Solu Khumbu (Everest Valley), towering almost (10,000' / 3050m) 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 high altitude skills and experience. 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 we take a helicopter from KatEverest Valley, we will have a full Puja blessing ceremony, and then settle into life in a very comfortable base camp, complete with a 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.

Map Overview



Daily Itinerary Overview

DAYS 1 -2 Arrive in Kathmandu, Explore the city

Get to Kathmandu. The next day, 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 helicopter flight to Namche.

Activity. Arrive and Explore
Lodging. Hotel

DAY 3 — Fly Heli to Namche, Trek to Phortse

An absolutely beautiful helicopter ride delivers us to the legendary town of Namche Bazaar. From Namche we trek roughly 4 hours to Phortse (12,450 feet / 3840m).

Activity. Fly Namche, Trek Phortse
Distance Covered. 2.5 miles
Moving Hours. 4-6 hours
Elevation Gain/Loss. +1,150'
Sleeping Elevation. 12,450
Lodging. Tea House
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 4 — Climb to Ama Dablam Base Camp (15,000 feet / 4570m)

This is our first test in the Himalaya as we hike for 4 - 6 hours until we reach our comfortable base camp. Situated at the foot of Ama Dablam, we'll be greeted by our team with hot drinks and our beautiful base camp and set up and ready to go.

Activity. Fly Namche, Trek Phortse
Distance Covered. 5 miles
Moving Hours. 4-6 hours
Elevation Gain/Loss. +2,500'
Sleeping Elevation. 15,000'
Lodging. Ama Dablam BC
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 5 — Rest day in Base Camp: After yesterday's trek, we take

a day to rest our legs and allow the reality of the climb to set in. Part of the day will be will revolve around practicing high altitude skills.

Activity. Rest Day
Sleeping Elevation. 15,000'
Lodging. Base Camp
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner



Daily Itinerary Overview

DAY 6 — Climb Base Camp (15,000 feet / 4570m) to Yak Camp (17,750 feet / 5182m). After a big breakfast we begin hiking along a morainal ridge with spectacular views of Ama Dablam looming overhead. We eventually join the beginning of the Southwest Ridge, a large plateau and follow it for approximately thirty minutes to our tents that have been setup at Yak Camp.

DAY 7 — Rest in Base Camp

We'll spend the day resting before we start our summit push

DAY 8 — Climb to Yak Camp

After a big breakfast we begin hiking up along a morainal ridge with spectacular views of the mountain. Working our way back up to yak camp to start our summit bid

DAY 9 — Climb Yak Camp (17,000' / 5182m) to Camp 1

(18,500' / 5639m). We pack our gear in Yak Camp and climb up the Southwest Ridge from a plateau to a true knife-edge feature. 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 10 — Climb Camp 1 (18,500' / 5639m) to Camp 2.7 (20,800'

/ 6350m). We continue upwards and on to new terrain. The climb from Camp 2 to Camp 2.7 is mostly made up of ice and mixed climbing. It is here we are introduced to some of the toughest pitches of the entire climb, the Grey Tower - a steep, loose, multi-pitch section that leads us to the knife-edge snow and rock of Mushroom Ridge.

DAY 10 Con't — This series of cornices and ice sculptures glued

precipitously onto the jagged rock while challenging helps to create an unforgettable experience on this remarkable peak. Upon completing the majority of Mushroom Ridge we construct Camp 2.7, lower than Camp 3 to avoid any serac (icefall) danger from the Dablam that has endangered the traditional campsite in previous years.

Activity. Climb to Yak Camp
Distance 2.5 miles
Moving Hours. 3-5 hours
Elevation Gain/Loss. +2,000'
Sleeping Elevation. 17,750'
Lodging. Tents at Yak Camp
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Activity. Rest Day
Sleeping Elevation. 15,000'
Lodging. Base Camp
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Activity. Climb to Yak Camp
Distance 2.5 miles
Moving Hours. 3-5 hours
Elevation Gain/Loss. +2,000'
Sleeping Elevation. 17,750'
Lodging. Tents at Yak Camp
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Activity. Climb to Camp 1
Distance Covered. 1 mile
Moving Hours. 3-4 hours
Elevation Gain/Loss. +1,500'
Sleeping Elevation. 18,900'
Lodging. Tents at Camp 1
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Activity. Climb to Camp 2.7
Distance Covered. 0.75 miles
Moving Hours. 6-8 hours
Elevation Gain/Loss. + 2,300'
Sleeping Elevation. 20,750'
Lodging. Tents at Camp 2.7
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Activity. Climb to Camp 2.7
Distance Covered. 0.75 miles
Moving Hours. 6-8 hours
Elevation Gain/Loss. + 2,300'
Sleeping Elevation. 20,750'
Lodging. Tents at Camp 2.7
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Daily Itinerary Overview

DAY 11 — Summit Day! Climb Camp 2.7 (20,800' / 6350m) to Summit (22,525' / 6866m). The climb from Camp 2.7 to the summit is actually technically easier than anything prior to it. Whilst we trade lower technicalities for the pressure of dealing with extremely cold temperatures and limited oxygen at these high altitudes. Generally, we do not leave camp until daybreak allowing some time for the terrain and air to warm up enough to climb the steep ice and snow to the summit. The views along our final push to the summit are staggering offering up a panorama of six 8,000-meter peaks, including Everest, Lhotse, and Makalu. Depending on energy, strength, and time we will descend from our high point to Camp 2.7, or potentially all the way to Camp 1.

Activity. Summit Day!
Distance Covered. 0.6-1.6 miles (dep)
Moving Hours. 3-4 hrs up, 3-5 down
Elevation Gain/Loss. +1,725'
Sleeping Elevation. 20,750' or 18,900'
Lodging. Tents at C2.7 or C1
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAYS 12 - 13 Extra Summit Days These are built in days that we can utilize for weather, extra acclimatization or any other reason we see fit.

Activity. Open
Sleeping Elevation. TBD
Lodging. TBD
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 14 -15 Fly via Helicopter to Kathmandu / Explore:

We are heroically greeted in base camp by a helicopter that will carry us quickly over the Khumbu Valley and back to the lights and civilization of Kathmandu. We'll explore the city further if we have time!

Activity. Fly to Kathmandu
Sleeping Elevation. 4,300'
Lodging. Hyatt Regency Kathmandu
Meals. Breakfast

DAY 16 — Depart Kathmandu for home. After a final group breakfast, return to the airport to catch international flights home.

Activity. Depart
Lodging. Hyatt Regency Kathmandu
Meals. Breakfast



Travel Details

FLIGHTS

Climbers should schedule flights to land in Kathmandu, Nepal on Day 1 of the itinerary. Climbers will meet their guides and the transport to our first hotel will be arranged.

If you do not have a travel agent, we recommend using [kayak.com](https://www.kayak.com) as a primary source for finding low-fare airfares.

VISAS

We will apply for our Visas upon arrival into Kathmandu.





Accommodations

No matter where we travel, Alpenglow strives to stay in safe, clean and comfortable accommodations. Our tents are always in good shape and are replaced regularly.

IN-TOWN

For our two nights in Kathmandu, we stay in a luxury hotel called the Hyatt Regency Kathmandu. We utilize this time to recharge our batteries from the lengthy international travel.

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

We book double occupancy rooms while in Kathmandu. We can arrange a single room for an additional cost (Single Supplement) upon request.

ON-MOUNTAIN ACCOMMODATIONS

Base camp life includes a 3 person personal tent for you and two team members. Alpenglow's base camp infrastructure includes a dining tent complete with a lounge area that is made as comfortable as possible with heaters, plush chairs, and cushy rugs.

Above base camp, we move to the traditional style mountain camps. These will all be pre-built by our sherpa team ready to go for your arrival each afternoon.



General Trip Information

FOOD

Fresh, healthy and nutritious food is both imported from the U.S. and purchased from local markets in Kathmandu to provide the best options to our team. Our western trained base camp cooks work around the clock to provide hearty meals that are both pleasing to the palate and filled with calories to replenish our depleted bodies.

MOUNTAIN TRAINING

Ama Dablam is obviously a large physical undertaking, and climbers who are joining our teams should have a deep understanding of what it takes to train for a mountain like this. For a personalized training schedule, please reach out to our in-house trainer:

lynette@alpenglowexpeditions.com.

ACCLIMATIZATION FOR NON-RAPID ASCENT CLIMBERS

While our daily itinerary doesn't change, there is an option for climbers who wish to acclimatize in-country prior to day 1 of the itinerary. Please contact the office to discuss options.

MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS

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.

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.

On Mountain Medicine

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.

INCLUSIONS

The cost of your trip includes your land costs (*excluding in-town meals*). This includes:

- 4 nights double occupancy lodging in Kathmandu within scheduled itinerary
- meals on the mountain
- group camping and climbing equipment
- scheduled transportation while in country
- certified guides

CANCELLATION POLICY

View our cancellation policy online at www.alpenglowexpeditions.com.

INSURANCE

We require that all participants carry rescue insurance and health insurance. Travel insurance is strongly recommended. Your policy numbers must be provided to us prior to leaving the USA.

EXCLUSIONS

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
- other personal expenses.

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





Expedition of a Lifetime

Summit success is only achievable with your hard work and perseverance, and of course the right team of people around you.

We think of ourselves as your partner in dreaming, planning, climbing and celebrating. Our entire team from Adrian, guides, support personnel and logistics partners are excited to have you along for the expedition of a lifetime.

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BOOKING + INQUIRES

For booking details, questions, or more information please call or email us:

1 (877) 873-5376

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This expedition is operated by Adrian Ballinger, IFMGA Mountain Guide.

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