

Island Peak Expedition



Hello team!

Welcome to this Epic adventure!

Located in the heart of the legendary Everest region of Sagarmatha National Park in Nepal, this Island Peak expedition offers up the chance to gain experience climbing a 6000-meter peak, learning from experienced guides, all while taking in the unique culture and incredible views of this special part of Nepal.

Island Peak, locally known as Imja Tse, offers a worthy challenge and jaw-dropping views of some of the most impressive peaks in Nepal. At 6,189m, it is a great introductory peak for those looking to get into the world of mountaineering as a mixture of essential climbing skills are learned and then applied during this trip.

This information pack will be your primary trip resource and one you can keep circling back to in preparation for the Island Peak Expedition during the months ahead.

Table of contents.

3

ACCOMMODATION

What is a Tea House?

3

VISA

Visas for Nepal are super easy.

3

TRAINING

What you need to know

4

RESEARCH AND PLANNING

Familiarize yourself with the Island Peak route

4

EXPEDITION SAFETY

Helicopter and Travel Insurance

5

INTERNET ACCESS

WiFi and SIM Cards

5

ALTITUDE SICKNESS

AMS/HAPE/HACE

6

MONEY FOR THIS TRIP

How much to bring and Tipping FAQ

6

MEALS, SNACKS, ALCOHOL

What is included

8

WHAT TO PACK

Packing list and Porter allowance

9

FINAL NOTES

Early client departure protocol, Liability Waiver and Paying the Balance

Accommodation

In Kathmandu, the team will base out of a comfortable 4-star hotel in the heart of the legendary Thamel neighborhood. The hotel is equipped with a pool on the top floor, a gym, sauna, fast wifi, cafe\bar, and one of the best breakfast buffets in town.

Single room supplement in Kathmandu is \$90 USD per night.

What is a Tea House?

The accommodation along the trek will be in the famous Khumbu tea houses. These are run by local families and are often simple, but very comfortable facilities. For expedition members in the tea houses, this is where many lifelong friendships and memories have been made! Expect to eat a lot of tasty food and play a lot of cards. Usually in most tea houses, hot bucket showers, wifi, and alcohol are available at an extra charge.

Single room supplement for tea houses is \$200 per person for all trekking days if you want to have a private room (not sharing).

Visa

Visas for Nepal are super easy. Most nationalities can get a tourist visa upon arrival (VOA), so there is no need to apply in advance. Depending on how long you want to stay in Nepal, the price is different. For a 30 day visa, this price is around \$50 USD. You pay for this at the airport in cash when you arrive in Kathmandu.

Training

Though classified as a trekking peak by the authorities in Nepal - climbing Island Peak (or any other mountain) should not be underestimated.

We strongly recommend that you familiarize yourself with the technical gear required to climb Island Peak (IE crampons, harness, carabiners, etc) before arriving in Nepal.

We also suggest that you learn the basics of climbing safety and technique so that you feel comfortable rappelling and using a belay device. You will use this skill on the descent of the Island Peak climb and you will only feel more confident the more you practice.

Practicing jumars technique is less important, though if you are able to practice jumaring on a fixed rope, you will only feel the benefit during our climb.

We also factor in 2 days for training prior to making our summit attempt. This training is meant to be more of a rapid refresher than a highly detailed training session - though if you are unable to do any training beforehand, you will have enough basic training to safely do the climb.

Hike as much as possible before the trip to prepare your muscles for the mountains. If you are going to the gym, focus on core muscles, cardio, and leg strength training.

We advise all of our team members to stop doing all physical contact sports / high-intensity trail / other activities that could result in injury running, etc at least 6 weeks before the start of the trip to avoid suffering a serious injury that prevents you from joining the trip.

Research and Planning

Like the physical training element of the planning phase of this expedition, any aspiring mountaineer should do their proper homework before any climb. Familiarize yourself with the Island Peak route and what it entails.

Here are some things you can do to prepare yourself for the climb:

- Study Google Earth and maps of the route
- Watch Island Peak related Youtube videos
- Check out the photos and blog articles on our website
- Seek out all the information you can about the climb

Helicopter and Travel Insurance

IMPORTANT: We require every trip participant to take out a travel membership with [Global Rescue](#) with high altitude coverage or equivalent insurance for emergency rescue services.

Global Rescue also offers full medical travel insurance, but the important policy to take out is a [Global Rescue Membership](#).

Note: You can get it for just the Global Rescue Membership for the time frame of the actual trek if you want, as an example: for 14 days. These are the dates that we aim to be physically hiking and climbing, thus when a heli rescue scenario could occur.

You must also have medical travel insurance (with no high altitude exclusions).

Recommendations:

- [World Nomads Explorer Package](#)
- [Saftey Wing Adventure 2.0](#)

Staying Safe on this Expedition

You may have guessed, but this adventure tour carries a certain amount of risk since we are trekking and climbing DEEP into the mountains in a developing country. This is not your average holiday per se. There will be no cocktails on the beach, sorry about that :).

- Member safety is Epic's #1 priority and our experienced ground team does everything within their power to set our group up for a safe adventure.
- The name of the game is safety first and injury prevention.
- In case of emergency, your Epic trip leader is equipped with a satellite communication device AND a Thuraya satellite phone. Both of which have communication capabilities to contact outside emergency first responders from any place in Nepal.

Wifi and Internet Access

- Nepal is a fairly connected country. In Kathmandu, it is easy to pick up a local SIM card if you want to have local data on your phone during the trip.
- On the trek, there is phone/internet signal only sporadically. It is possible to purchase "wifi cards" from the tea houses. Prices vary but usually, they are not more than \$5 for a 24-hour wifi card.

Altitude Sickness: AMS/HAPE/HACE

Altitude sickness symptoms can be a problem for some people, especially when sleeping above 3500 meters. Staying hydrated, well fed, warm, and not over exerting yourself on the hikes will go a long way to keeping yourself feeling good. There is the option to take altitude sickness medication like Diamox.

Diamox is the most commonly used AMS (acute mountain sickness) drug on the market. Diamox works as a preventative measure though, so if you do plan to take it, you will need to start your pill regimen a few days before we set off on our hike. Talk to your doctor about the side effects of using Diamox.

More severe symptoms generally occur at over 12,000 ft (3,600 m). Acute mountain sickness can progress to high-altitude pulmonary edema (HAPE) or high-altitude cerebral edema (HACE). Both of these conditions are very rare at the altitudes where we will be going. All the same, it is best to have had some experience previously with being at altitude for an extended period so you know how your body handles altitude.

The two main serious altitude sickness complications are high altitude edemas of the lungs and brain. High altitude cerebral edema (HACE): A lack of oxygen causes fluid to leak through tiny blood vessels into the brain, which leads to swelling. Usually, HACE occurs when a person stays at high-altitude (7000+ meters) for at least one week.

If you feel you are struggling significantly with the altitude at any point, it is vital you let your guide know so we can take action to get you down.

Again, both of these conditions are extremely rare and are much more common for mountaineers sleeping at altitudes above 7,000 and 8,000 meters for extended periods, so please don't worry too much.

- The highest point on the Island Peak Expedition is the summit @ 6189 meters.
- The highest sleeping altitude is at Island Peak Base Camp @ 5200 meters.

Money for This Trip

It is important to bring enough cash with you to the mountains as ATM machines do not always work and/or can't be found once we leave Kathmandu.

We recommend that you bring at least \$500 USD in cash with you to Nepal (or currency equivalent).

A mix of local rupees and USD/Euro/GBP is fine - but mostly you will need rupees for anything besides tips.

Please ensure you bring enough cash for: personal snacks - Alcohol - Tips - Souvenirs - Gear rentals and meals paid on your own.

In Nepal, for this type of expedition, it is customary to offer tips to the staff. Here is what to plan for: Sherpa Guides at Island Peak, Porter Team, Island Peak Base Camp staff, Nepali Epic guide, and drivers. The minimum amount you should anticipate TOTAL for all Nepal staff including our main Nepali guide is \$300 per team member. More is always appreciated, but \$300 is the minimum industry standard for this sort of expedition. This can be a mix of USD and Nepali rupees or a single currency.

Note: To simplify the tipping process, we will collect tips (\$300) from each team member at the start of the trip (during the first team meeting).

For your western/Epic guide: tips are at your discretion and can be gifted at the end of the trip when back in Kathmandu. Tips for the Western Epic guide can also be paid via Paypal or Bank Transfer post-trip tips are also supplemented by Epic.

Meals, Snacks, and Alcohol

All meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner) on the trekking/climbing part of this itinerary are included.

- You can order what you want off of tea house menus.
- The welcome and final team dinners in Kathmandu are included.
- You are entitled to 4 hot drinks of your choice per day at the tea houses
- All lunches and 1 dinners during our stay in Kathmandu are **not** included (also in case of early return from the expedition that is not scheduled in the itinerary).
- All alcohol and soft drink purchases during meals or elsewhere are not included.
- Bring your favorite assortment of snacks for the trip. Nuts, jerky, energy gels, Cliff bars, dark chocolate, superfood powder, bliss balls. It is also possible to purchase snacks in Kathmandu.

Weather

Trekking and climbing season in Nepal is primarily in the spring (April - May) and Fall (September - November). We try to time our trips around the slight shoulder season when the weather is still fine, yet the crowds are not at the season peak.

- **Kathmandu** - Expect mild to warm temperatures during the day, Maximum is 30 C / 86 F. Pleasant at night.
- **Namche Bazaar** (3500 meters) - This is where we start to feel the variation of mountain weather. Highs range from 22 C / 71 F to lows potential around 0, depending on the weather at the period. Snowfall in Namche can happen at any time of year, but is less common in the fall.
- **Island Peak Base Camp**: Above 5000 meters, the weather will be cold and usually clear at night - max low temperatures around -10 C / 14 F. Snow is possible any time of the year. During the day with the sun shining, max high temperatures are around 10 C / 40 F.
- **Island Peak Summit Push and Summit** (6189 m) : Weather can again vary a lot. Usually the weather when we start is cold, but people quickly warm up as you begin to climb. Max low temperature on this day is in the -15 to -10 C / 5 / 14 F range, depending on factors like wind.

Full Gear Kit List

You can purchase all of the required clothing and/or rent all of the climbing gear in Kathmandu if you don't want to purchase the entire list before coming to Nepal. If you want to have warm/high quality/proper size 6000 meter boots though, we recommend that you don't rely on rentals for boots - especially if you have exceptionally small or large feet.

If you plan on getting the majority of your gear upon arrival in Kathmandu, we suggest that you arrive at least one day earlier than the planned itinerary so that you can dedicate a day to gear shopping in Thamel.

There will be a section in the Google Onboarding Form where you can indicate to us if you want us to reserve any rental gear for you.



PACKS & BAGGAGE

- Expedition Duffel Bag
- Day Trekking Backpack with rain cover

SPECIALTY EQUIPMENT

- Trekking Poles
- Headlamp
- Grayl Filter Bottle
- Gaiters
- Summit Socks
- Heavy weight Gortex Gloves with fingers
- 2 climbing slings 60cm or safety cord
- 3 Locking Carabiners
- Belay Device (ATC climbing device)
- Helmet *
- Crampons *
- Ascender/Jumar
- Harness *

BOOTS & FOOTWEAR

- Trekking Boots
- 6000-meter Boots **
- Camp Shoes
- Sandals/Tevas/Keens for use in the lodges

OTHER PERSONAL GEAR

- Dry Bags ***
- Polarized Sunglasses
- Personal First Aid Kit
- Power Bank
- Chargers/Phone Cable
- Personal snacks

TOILETRIES

- Toothbrush, Toothpaste
- Sun Cream (50 spf+)
- Spf Lip Balm
- Biodegradable Soap
- Deodorant
- Wet wipes
- Travel Towel

ESSENTIAL PERSONAL GEAR

- 0F \ -17C Sleeping Bag
- Inflating Sleeping Pad
- Inflatable Camp Pillow ***

CLOTHING LAYER SYSTEMS

- Rain Shell Pants
- Hard Shell/Rain Jacket
- Fleece
- Base Layer Top
- Base Layer Bottoms
- Sun Hat and Beanie
- Buff and Bandana
- Gloves Light Weight
- Trekking Shirts
- Trekking Pants
- Synthetic Multisport Pants
- Merinos Trekking Socks
- Underwear / Bras
- Mid weight Down Jacket
- Heavy Weight / Hi Loft Down Jacket

* Items can be rented free of charge.

** We do recommend bringing your own 6000 meter boots if you have them.

*** Optional.

Early client departure protocol

In the event that a trip participant needs to leave the planned trip itinerary early due to illness, injury, family emergency, personal reasons, or simply because they want to, etc then there are a few things to note:

Should a trip participant choose to leave the planned itinerary early for any reason, from the moment they leave the tour, all expenses from that point onwards are the responsibility of the trip participant. This includes, but is not limited to, hotels/accommodation, transportation, emergency helicopter evacuation, internal flights (even if we have purchased you a flight for the trip you are attending), meals, airport transfer, guide services - everything that is normally covered by Epic during your tour is no longer covered once a trip participant decides to leave.

Once the decision has been made to leave the tour, the trip participant must sign an "Early Departure Waiver Form" - formally releasing Epic of any further obligations to fulfill our tour/guide/transport/logistics services.

That said, in an emergency situation or in case of severe illness, Epic staff will do everything within our means to aid the trip participant until they are in a safe/stable condition. When possible, Epic staff can also help you book new accommodation, flights, transport, etc when possible - but all of these expenses are for the trip participant to pay.

Point being, our staff will always be available to the best of our ability to facilitate the logistics of your departure, should you choose to leave the trip early.

Liability waiver

All tour participants will be required to sign an industry-standard waiver releasing Epic from liability related to any aspect of this trip. Waivers are usually issued on day 1 of the tour at our first team briefing. If you would like to request a copy of the waiver in advance, please email us.

Paying the balance

Final balance payments will be due approximately 3-4 months before the tour begins. If you have a balance owing we will advise you of how and when to pay this. Please remember that deposits are non-refundable.

If you would like to pay the balance sooner, please email us!

Again, we are very excited to get to meet you in person in Nepal soon!
The Epic Team

