

Makalu Base Camp

REGION	Barun Valley
DURATION	19 days
MAX ALTITUDE	5700 m
GRADE	Strenuous
SEASON	Mar-May · Sep-Dec
FROM	from \$3,300

Overview

Under the fifth-highest face on earth

A wild, roadless route through the Barun valley - cloud forest, hanging glaciers and the colossal black pyramid of Makalu, the world's fifth-highest peak, with almost nobody else on the trail.

The Makalu Base Camp Trek is an immersive journey through one of Nepal's most remote, authentic, and pristine Himalayan trails, deep in the eastern Himalayas. Over 19 days, this adventure winds through the wilderness of Makalu Barun National Park, reaching the foot of Mount Makalu (8,485 m / 27,838 ft) - the world's fifth-highest peak.

The journey begins with a scenic flight from Kathmandu to Tumlingtar, offering aerial views across the eastern Himalayan range, before the trek proper starts from the small riverside village of Seduwa (1,500 m). From here, the trail climbs steadily through farmland, traditional Nepali villages, and dense forest, crossing two high passes - Shipton La and Keke La - before reaching Makalu Base Camp at 4,870 m.

Along the way, trekkers pass through the Makalu Barun National Park, home to rare wildlife such as the red panda and snow leopard and enter the Barun Valley - Nepal's first and only Strict Nature Reserve, set aside purely for scientific study. This is a strenuous trek, with long stone stairways, steep climbs, and high-altitude passes above 4,000 m, but a well-paced itinerary with built-in acclimatization days makes it achievable for trekkers with reasonable fitness and determination.

The best seasons to attempt the trek are spring and autumn, when skies are clear and trails are dry. A Makalu Barun National Park Permit is required, as the entire route runs through this protected conservation area. For those seeking a raw, undocumented, and genuinely off-the-beaten-path Himalayan experience, few treks in Nepal compare.

Highlights

- Stand at the foot of Mt. Makalu (8,485 m / 27,838 ft), the world's fifth-highest mountain
- Cross two high passes, Shipton La and Keke La
- Step into the Barun Valley, Nepal's first and only Strict Nature Reserve
- Observe the region's blend of Hindu and Tibetan Buddhist culture
- Walk through the Makalu Barun National Park and Conservation Area
- Gain a raw, authentic high-altitude trekking experience

Itinerary

Day 1 - Arrival in Kathmandu

On arrival, our representative will meet you at the airport and transfer you to your hotel. After some time to rest, we hold a short pre-trek briefing covering the route, trail conditions, and any relevant weather updates, along with the distribution of essential trekking gear.

- Note: for late-night arrivals, the briefing will be held the following day.
- Overnight stay at hotel in Kathmandu.

Day 2 - Preparation Day in Kathmandu

After breakfast, use the day for final preparations - checking trekking poles and boots, and packing your duffel bag and daypack. It's also a good opportunity to visit the shops around Thamel for any last-minute essentials like sunglasses or toiletries.

- Overnight stay at hotel in Kathmandu.
- Breakfast included.

Day 3 - Fly to Tumlingtar, then Drive to Seduwa (1,540 m / 5,052 ft) - 45-min Flight + 5-6 hours, Drive 80-90 km

We take a scenic 45-minute flight from Kathmandu to Tumlingtar. From there, we continue overland by private vehicle to Seduwa, a small riverside village that serves as the trailhead for the Makalu Base Camp Trek.

- Overnight stay at a guesthouse in Seduwa.
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included.

Day 4 - Trek from Seduwa to Tashigaon (2,100 m / 6,890 ft) - 5-6 hours, 6-8 km

The trekking portion of the journey officially begins today, starting on relatively flat terrain with gentle ups and downs. The trail is a mix of vehicle track and dedicated footpath, passing through subtropical forest, rhododendron groves, and traditional Sherpa settlements in route to Tashigaon.

- Overnight stay at a guesthouse in Tashigaon.
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included.

Day 5 - Trek from Tashigaon to Khongma Danda (3,500 m / 11,483 ft) - 7-8 hours, 5-7 km

After breakfast, we continue over gradually flat terrain, cross a river, and begin a steep climb up stone staircases through dense jungle. Lunch is typically taken at Danda Kharka, after which the uphill trail continues to Khongma Danda. Along the way, we stop at Khongma Viewpoint for views across the Kanchenjunga range.

- Overnight stay at a guesthouse in Khongma Danda.
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included.

Day 6 - Trek from Khongma Danda to Dobate (3,865 m / 12,677 ft) - 6-8 hours, 7-8 km

Today begins with an hour-long climb via Khongma Viewpoint, offering views of the Kanchenjunga range, Makalu, and surrounding peaks. We then cross the first of two high passes, Shipton La (4,100 m), descend for about an hour to Kal Pokhari, and climb again toward the second pass, Keke La (4,250 m), before descending to Dobate. With two passes and continuous elevation changes, this is one of the more demanding days of the trek.

- Overnight stay at a guesthouse in Dobate.
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included.

Day 7 - Trek from Dobate to Yangle Kharka (3,600 m / 11,811 ft) - 6-7 hours, 8-9 km

We descend through pine and rhododendron forest for around two hours to reach the Barun River, following a riverside trail through areas prone to landslides - locally known as Yak Kharka - with some

caution required, especially during monsoon season. After lunch at Nhe Kharka, we continue along relatively flat terrain to Yangle Kharka, a riverside settlement for the night.

- Overnight stay at a guesthouse in Yangle Kharka.
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included.

Day 8 - Acclimatization Day - Optional Hike to Shiva Dhara & Parvati Cave - 8-9 hours, Round-Trip, 4-6 km

Today's optional hike leads to the sacred Shiva Dhara and Parvati Cave, beginning with a two-hour walk across gentle terrain and a crossing of the Barun River before climbing toward the caves. The final approach is demanding, requiring careful footing along roped sections. The site is a popular pilgrimage destination, with local tradition holding that the water flowing from Shiva Dhara cleanses one's sins.

- Overnight stay at a guesthouse in Yangle Kharka.
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included.

Day 9 - Trek from Yangle Kharka to Langmale Kharka (4,410 m / 14,469 ft) - 5-6 hours, 7-8 km

The trail winds through forest with gradual ups and downs for around 1.5-2 hours before reaching Merak, a common lunch stop. From there, the route continues toward Langmale Kharka, crossing landslide-prone terrain and river sections, followed by a steady 45-minute climb to our destination.

- Overnight stay at a guesthouse in Langmale Kharka.
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included.

Day 10 - Trek to Makalu Base Camp (4,870 m / 15,978 ft) + Optional Hike to Swiss Camp - 3-4 hours + 2-4 hours

An initial uphill hour gives way to relatively flat terrain as we reach Sherson - with an optional side trip to a nearby glacial lake along the way (about an hour round-trip). From Sherson, we cross a small river and arrive at Makalu Base Camp. After lunch, there's time to rest or take an optional side hike to Swiss Camp for views of Makalu, Peak 6, Peak 7, Mt. Everest, and Lhotse.

- Overnight stay at a guesthouse in Makalu Base Camp.
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included.

Day 11 - Acclimatization Day - Optional Hike to Makalu Viewpoint (5,700 m / 18,700 ft) - 8-9 hours Round-Trip

From base camp, we climb uphill along rocky trail toward Makalu View Point, arriving around midday. From here, an extraordinary panorama unfolds - Mt. Makalu, Mt. Everest, Lhotse, Chomo Lonzo, Mt. Baruntse, Mt. Chamlang, Kangchungtse (Makalu II), Peak 6, and Peak 7 are all visible on a clear day.

- Overnight stay at a guesthouse in Makalu Base Camp.
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included.

Day 12 - Trek from Makalu Base Camp to Yangle Kharka (3,600 m / 11,811 ft) - 6-7 hours, 16-17 km

We begin our descent from base camp, following varied terrain - mostly steep downhill with stretches of gentler walking - while enjoying close-up views of the surrounding peaks. We stop for lunch at Langmale Kharka around midday before continuing down to Yangle Kharka for the night.

- Overnight stay at a guesthouse in Yangle Kharka.
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included.

Day 13 - Trek from Yangle Kharka to Dobate (3,800 m / 12,467 ft) - 5-6 hours, 7-9 km

The trail starts with a short flat stretch, followed by roughly 1.5 hours of gradual downhill along stone pathways toward Nhe Kharka. After crossing a landslide-prone section and continuing over flat terrain, the trail turns steadily uphill for a final stretch of over two hours to reach Dobate. Between the long climb and a later-than-usual lunch, this can be one of the more tiring days.

- Overnight stay at a guesthouse in Dobate.
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included.

Day 14 - Trek from Dobate to Danda Kharka (2,900 m / 9,514 ft) - 7-8 hours, 12-13 km

After breakfast, we climb for around two hours toward Keke La Pass, then descend briefly toward Kal Pokhari before climbing again toward Shipton La Pass. From there, a 2-3 hour descent brings us to Khongma View Point, with views of Mt. Makalu, Baruntse Himal, Chamlang, Peak 6, and Kanchenjunga. After a later lunch at Khongma Danda, we continue on to Danda Kharka for the night.

- Overnight stay at a guesthouse in Danda Kharka.
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included.

Day 15 - Trek from Danda Kharka to Seduwa (1,540 m / 5,052 ft) - 6-7 hours, 12-14 km

We descend for 2-3 hours to reach Tashigaon, where we stop for a warm lunch and some rest before continuing downhill, transitioning from high mountain ridgelines back into river valley terrain. Along the way, we pass through Sherpa, Rai, and Gurung villages, terraced farmland, gompas, and dense rhododendron and bamboo forest, arriving in Seduwa by evening.

- Overnight stay at a guesthouse in Seduwa.
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included.

Day 16 - Drive from Seduwa to Tumlingtar (518 m / 1,699 ft) - 5-6 Hrs

After breakfast, we drive to Tumlingtar by private vehicle. The first half of the route is unpaved, particularly near Num and Khandbari, before the final stretch from Khandbari to Tumlingtar becomes flat and paved. Along the way, we take in scenic views of the Arun and Sabha valleys and traditional villages - a fitting last glimpse of Himalayan life in the Makalu region.

- Overnight stay at a guesthouse in Tumlingtar.
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included.

Day 17 - Fly from Tumlingtar to Kathmandu - 45-Min Flight

We bid farewell to eastern Nepal with a scenic flight back to Kathmandu, typically departing around 10:00 AM. During the 45-minute journey, we take in aerial views of the Arun River valley and the eastern Himalayas as the landscape transitions from rugged mountains to the bustling Kathmandu Valley.

- Overnight stay at hotel in Kathmandu.
- Breakfast included.

Day 18 - Leisure Day in Kathmandu

After a hearty breakfast, spend the day at leisure exploring Kathmandu's vibrant culture and heritage. An optional guided city tour is available at additional cost, covering Boudhanath, Swayambhunath, Kathmandu Durbar Square, and Patan Durbar Square. This is also a great opportunity to book a relaxing spa session, browse the shops of Thamel for souvenirs, or simply unwind after the trek.

- Overnight stay at hotel in Kathmandu.
- Breakfast included.

Day 19 - Departure

On your departure day, our representative will collect you from the hotel after breakfast, or approximately three hours before your scheduled flight, allowing ample time for security, baggage, and immigration processing. As you depart, you'll carry home countless photos and memories of an unforgettable journey through the Himalayas.

- Breakfast included.

What's included

- All ground transportation by private vehicle, including airport transfers

- Four nights' accommodation with breakfast at a 3-star category hotel in Kathmandu
- Guided sightseeing tours in Kathmandu, including tour guide, entry fees, and vehicle
- Meals on full board (breakfast, lunch, dinner, tea & coffee) during the trek
- An experienced guide and required porters, including their food, accommodation, salary, insurance, and equipment (1 porter provided between two trekkers)
- Teahouse accommodation during the trek - simple, clean, and comfortable
- Nepal Hiking Team duffel bag, down jacket, and sleeping bag for the trek
- Round-trip flight from Kathmandu to Tumlingtar and back, including departure taxes
- First aid medical kit, including an oximeter to monitor oxygen level and heartbeat
- All necessary trekking permits
- All government and local taxes
- Office service charge

Not included

- Meals not specified in the itinerary's meal inclusions
- Travel insurance
- International airfare
- Nepal entry visa fee
- Cold drinks and beverages, including alcohol, water, Coke, Fanta, and juice
- Personal shopping, laundry, phone, and internet expenses
- Personal trekking equipment
- Tips for trekking crew

Available departures

- 15 Mar 2026
- 02 Apr 2026
- 21 Apr 2026
- 12 May 2026
- 18 Sep 2026
- 06 Oct 2026