

Everest East Face – The Kangshung Valley. Visit Kathmandu, Lhasa and the famous Rongbuk Monastery.

Itinerary in full:

Day 01: Kathmandu

Transfer day, briefing and welcome dinner in Kathmandu. We will be staying near Thamel, the main tourist section of town in order to allow you to shop without having to take a taxi.

Day 02: Kathmandu

Sightseeing for half a day, visiting Swayambhunath, Bouddhanath, and Pashupatinath, Buddhist and Hindu temples. Visiting these temples early in the morning is a magical experience as the faithful from both religions make offerings and perform religious ceremonies. Beware of the monkeys though, as they tend to like to be at the centre of the action!!

Day 03: Kathmandu - Lhasa

Flight from Kathmandu to Lhasa, which will give you spectacular views of the Himalaya Range. Transfer to our hotel in Lhasa, free time.

Day 04 + 05: Lhasa

Two days of sight-seeing and free time in Lhasa, to allow your body to acclimatize. Visit of the Pothala and Jokhang Temple

Day 06: Gyantse

Travel by jeep to Gyantse, a small Tibetan town. On the way we have time to see Yamdrok-Tso Lake. Visit of the town and Gyantse Monastery, relaxing to allow acclimatizing slowly.

Day 07: Shigatse

Travel by jeep to Shigatse, visit of Tashilunpo Monastery and the market. Ample free time to explore the village.

Day 08: Shegar - Kharta

Today we will carry on our journey to Shegar, then head for Kharta (5 hours drive).

We will have beautiful views from Pang La (17,000 ft) towards Makalu, Lhotse, Everest, and Shishapangma, if the weather is clear. The drive takes us down the Dzaka Chu and then Phung Chu valley towards Kharta. Here are the headwaters of the Arun River. Camp is made on the banks of the Kharta Tsangpo River.

Day 09: Kharta – Shao La

Hike along the Kharta Tsangpo valley past several villages. The trail to Shao La leaves the Kharta valley to climb steadily up a side valley to the south. We will camp on a ledge overlooking the valley and villages (at about 13,000 ft) or, if we feel strong, continue up the side valley following a small stream for another 2 hours to camp on meadows by the stream at about 14,000 ft.

Day 10: Shao La - Joksum

After a hearty breakfast, we will follow the lake towards a ridge at the far end, where another lake comes into view. The trail ascends steadily over rocky ground to reach Shao La (16,000 ft) in about 2 hours. Weather permitting, the views from here towards Makalu, Lhotse and Everest are stunning.

Once at the top of the pass, the descent on the far side follows rocky slopes steadily for about an hour and then plunges steeply to the valley below.

Straight away the scenery changes from barren slopes to shrubbery and rhododendrons, birch and willow. The one-hour hike down this fascinating valley to our camp at Joksum follows the stream through thickening fir and juniper forest.

Day 11: Kama River

After a good nights' sleep, we start to climb steeply through thick juniper and rhododendron forest to reach the high pastures above the Kama River.

On clear days, we will have splendid views of Everest and Lhotse. The high ridge south of the Kama River is covered with hanging glaciers, and during Spring, many avalanches can be seen racing down to the valley.

The route traverses alpine meadows and yak herders camps, passes a serene green lake to a camp site on a large meadow with great views towards the Khangsung Valley. 5 hours of hiking. Camp at 14,500 ft.

Day 12: Pethang

Today we will be hiking into the Kangshung Valley: We reach the ridge over the valley in about half an hour. From here we have splendid views of Everest, Lhotse, Lhotse Shar, Tshersto, Phetangste, Chomolonzo and Makalu, among a myriad of other peaks.

The trail descends rather steeply down to the Kama River. We cross the river, and get to the trail that leads into the Kangshung Valley, a wide valley drained by the Kangshung stream, which receding glaciers have left behind. The valley is covered by a thick growth of willow, rhododendron, juniper and other shrubs. Camp is made at the meadow called Pethang (14,200 ft.) about an hour walk (gently uphill) from the stream crossing.

Day 13: Pethang Ringmo

From Pethang, the trail to Pethang Ringmo goes to the end of the meadows and then climbs steeply up on to the large landslide coming from the north.

Two hours may be needed to cross this rockslide and care should be taken to make sure that we won't get hit by falling rocks from above. Views of Makalu and the incredible upheaval caused by the Chomolonzo glaciers are amazing. After the rockslide, the trail traverses round the mountainside to reach a beautiful lake locally called Okpa in less than an hour. From here we continue up the meadows of the lateral moraine with Everest, Lhoste, Tsere in view to reach our camp on the grassy rolls of Pethang Ringmo in another hour and half. Altitude 16000 ft.

Day 14: Everest East Base Camp

Today we go for a day-hike up the Kangshung Valley alongside the glacier to Everest East Base Camp (17000 ft).

The gradual hike along the plateau formed by the lateral moraine takes about 4 hours and views from this amphitheatre formed by some of the highest mountains on earth is amazing.

At the head of the valley, blocking the skyline is the massif formed by Everest, Lhotse, Lhotse Shar and their neighboring, smaller peaks.

Across the glacier from the trails are Chomolonzo, Makalu, Pethangse and many others. Those looking for a more strenuous day can continue to hike up the valley to a 19000 ft. peak, from where one can survey the mountain range for even more spectacular views.

Hike back to camp for overnight.

Day 15: Raabka Chu

An early morning start will see us retracing our steps down the valley back along the Kangshung glacier, opposite the Chomolonzo Glacier, and Pethang (where we camped on the way up) to the stream crossing called Raabka Chu meadow river.

The camp on the grassy meadow across the river is a very pleasant place to spend the afternoon. Another way to this camp site from Pethang Ringmo is to take a side trip to Guru Ringpoche's cave at the Tse Chu Lake. The trail climbs high above the Opka meadows, crosses Lamtsho (16200 ft) then descends steeply to the lake. Here we visit the cave temple of Guru Rimpoche. The way out of here descends steeply down to the Pethang camp site, from where we retrace our steps to the Kama river camp. This side trip will take about 6/7 hrs.

Day 16: Tso Lake Tshurigma Camp

We will start the day with a steep climb for about an hour to a shelf above the river. Then another hour of relatively flat country to a small meadow called Pangboche, (some groups camp here) where lunch can be had. From here the trail climbs over alpine slopes rather steeply for about 1^{1/2} hours to a small but beautiful lake at the base of Langma La. Views towards Makalu and Everest.

Day 17: Troshay meadow camp

The trail to the Langma La pass from our campsite near the first small lake at Tsho Tshurigma passes another bigger clear aquamarine lake, before it climbs steeply over rocky ground to reach the pass in just over two hours.

Views of Makalu become more and more impressive as we climb upwards. Everest and all the other attendant peaks are also visible all the way to the pass. Once at the Langma La we will bid our farewell to the Kangshung valley and the impressive panorama of some of the highest mountains of the world, and plunge steeply down rocky moraines and glaciated valleys.

We will reach camp on a grassy meadow beside a clear stream called Troshay in about 4 hours from the pass.

Day 18: Kharta

Our final day of trekking: From our camp we follow the stream down the Kharta Tsangpo valley along a well-defined trail. First we pass through grassy hillsides used for grazing animals and soon we come to a small rock bridge crossing. The first village is passed with its barley and potato fields ringed by willows and birch. After about 2 hours, we reach the diversion on the trail from where many days ago we climbed to the Shao La.

After crossing the river below Yulba Village we will soon reach our riverside camp site from where we started our trek to the Kangshung Glacier. The circuit of this fascinating trek will thus be complete. Overnight camp at Kharta.

Day 19: Tingri

After breakfast, we will leave our last camp and head to Tingri by jeep. We will have ample time to explore Tingri and its monastery.

Day 20: Tingri - Zangmu

Our time in Tibet is nearly over; we will start heading back to Nepal and Kathmandu by road. Overnight stay in the border town of Zangmu

Day 21: Zangmu - Kathmandu

The jeep will bring us back to Kathmandu today. Free time in the afternoon, and a well deserved dinner at Kilroy's after some hard days trekking / travelling.

Day 22: Kathmandu

Rest day in Kathmandu to do some final shopping, relaxing and sight-seeing. Good-buy dinner in Kathmandu.

Day 23: Departure day

Transfer of all guests to Tribhuvan International Airport for flights home.