

PIONEER EXPEDITIONS

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Do something extraordinary

Mera Peak • Nepal • 22 Days • £1750

Mera peak is considered one of the major and popular trekking peaks in Nepal. The Peak itself rises to the south of Everest. The ascent of the peak is technically straightforward, however, the heavy snow and the maze of crevasses can make the way longer to the summit. Besides the charm of climbing Mera Peak, the trek to its base camp from Lukla is rewarding for experiencing little-visited and as yet unspoilt regions of Nepal with densely forested hill sides. There are several approaches to the base camp besides the easy and normal route which is mentioned below. The routes crossing Amphu Labtsa (5,780m) and the Mingbo La (5,871m) provide some the most adventurous trekking with spectacular scenery through remote glaciated valleys and passes.

North Face Glacier from the Mera La. The base camp can be set up at 5,300m near Mera La on the Hongu side in the moraine below the ice. From here a high camp is set at 5,800m near a rocky outcrop on the Mera Glacier. The high camp proves to be one to the most glorious viewpoints in Nepal offering the panoramic views of Kanchanjunga, Chamlang, Makalu and Baruntse sweeping around from the east and Amadablam, Cho Oyu and Kangtega to the west. The giant faces of Everest, Lhotse and Nuptse appear in the north. There are three main summits which are climbable without much difficulty. The south summit (6,065m) is the most accessible with the Northern Summit (6,476m), the highest, which can be reached by skirting the Central Summit (6,461m) to the north and following snow ridge to its top. Climbing the middle summit requires ascent up on steep snow and is more technical. Mera North is straight-forward to climb.

Alternative Routes

Mingbo La pass to Everest Base Camp: Return through the upper Hongu valley and over Mingbo La pass into the Imja valley on the Everest Base Camp route. From here a visit can be made to Everest Base camp and return to Lukla. This is a very high altitude trek through glaciated valleys with possibilities of being stranded in adverse weather condition. Only strong, well equipped, groups should attempt this route.

Amphu Labtsa pass to Everest Base Camp: Return trek through the upper Hongu valley and then over the high pass of Amphu Labtsa to come out at Chukung in the upper Imja river valley near Island Peak. From here a visit can be made to Everest Base camp and return to Lukla. This is a very high altitude trek through glaciated valleys with possibilities of being stranded in adverse weather condition. Only strong, well equipped, groups should attempt this route.



Itinerary

Day 1: Transfer to Hotel. Pre-expedition briefing in evening.

Day 2: Guided tour of Kathmandu getting last minute supplies.

Day 3: Fly to Lukla, trek to Chutunga. We will have an early breakfast and head off to the airport for our flight to Lukla. This flight will take about 40 minutes as we travel over ranges and river valleys towards the highest peaks in the Himalaya. Lukla is a small Sherpa town that is the starting point for some of the most famous climbs and treks in Nepal. We will spend the rest of the morning relaxing and acclimatizing at 2,800 m (9184ft). After lunch, will start our trek up to Chutunga, where we will camp for the night. Our walk will take us NE through the fields and forests surrounding Lukla. We will make our way up through yak grazing grounds to the small teahouse settlement of Chutunga (3,100m, 10,170ft).

Day 4: Acclimatization Day at Chutunga. Acclimatization is an important component of high-altitude climbing. This will be the first of 2 scheduled rest days as we let our bodies get accustomed to the thinner, high altitude air. After breakfast we will head up towards Zetra La, exploring the rhododendron forests and meadows above Chutunga. Keep a lookout for the elusive Impeyan, a brightly colored Himalayan pheasant that keeps to the forests for cover. We will make our way back down for lunch and spend the rest of the day relaxing and enjoying the views of the surrounding peaks and passes.



Day 5: Cross Zetra La to Thule Karka. Today we cross Zetra La (Pass, 4,600m, 15,088ft). We will slowly make our way up and stop for lunch just above the tree line, about 500 m below the pass. Above here the terrain is steep and rocky. From the pass we will get great views of surrounding peaks, such as Kwangde to the east and even Cho Oyu to the north. We will slowly make our way across the rocky flats and passes, gradually descending to Thule Karka at 4,400 m (14,432ft, 'Thule Karka' means big meadow in Nepali). Camping at high elevation will allow us to acclimatize so our later ascent of Mera Peak will be easier. If you have time to explore the craggy terrain around Thule Karka, you may spot a Himalayan mink hiding out in the weathering rock debris.

Day 6: Thule Karka to Tashing Dingma. This will be one of our longest walking days, mostly downhill. We will traverse several flats and spurs until we gain our first view of Mera Peak. From here we will drop down into the isolated Hinku Valley. Aside from mountaineers, the Hinku Valley is sparsely populated and very pristine. We will ascend a steep section of trail until we enter the forest, where we will stop for lunch. Eventually we will drop down into the humid, bamboo forests, before turning north up along the west side of the Hinku River towards Mera Peak. We will slowly ascend to Tashing Dingma (4,350m), where we will camp.

Day 7: Tashing Dingma to Tangnag. Today we will have amazing mountain views as we continue north up the Hinku Valley. The trail gently climbs along the west bank of the Hinku River. Spectacular mountains, such as Kusum Kangari to the west and Mera Peak to the east, will be in view throughout the morning. We will make our way up onto the meadows on the western side of the Hinku Valley as we climb above the tree line. Here we will stop for lunch. Throughout the afternoon, we will traverse meadows and hill slopes, dotted with grazing yaks, until we reach the settlement of Tangnag (4,350m, 14,268ft). If it's been a snowy season, the sound of avalanches will soon be familiar. We are approaching the heart of the high Himalaya.

Day 8: Tangnag to Khare. Today we will climb above 5,000 m (16,400ft) for the first time. Our hike up to Khare (5,100m, 16,728ft) is short, but we will take it slowly, with frequent stops to soak up the incredible surroundings. The trail heads eastward out of Tangnag, along the lateral moraine of the Dig Glacier. We will pause to climb up the moraine for a view of the pristine Sabai Tso glacial lake. A drop in lake level, caused by a recent rupture of the natural dam that held the lake, is clearly visible. We will arrive at Khare in the early afternoon and have lunch. From Khare, the beautiful north face of Mera Peak is in plain view and Mera glacier spills steeply down into the valley.

Day 9: Acclimatization Day at Khare. Our staff will maintain our base camp at Khare. In the morning we will head up about 200 m to the foot of Mera glacier, where we practice rope work and use of crampons and ice axe. We will return to Khare for lunch. We'll spend the afternoon resting for the upcoming climb.

Day 10: Khare to Mera La. Today we will travel a short distance, slowly ascending up onto Mera glacier. The climb is initially steep, but flattens out as we reach the crest of the glacier. We will traverse a long flat on top of the glacier as we make our way to the pass, called Mera La (5,400m, 17,710ft). From here, the views are stunning. Crevasse fields gently stretch out in front of the pass and we are literally enclosed by a ring of jagged peaks and blue-green glaciers. The remaining route up to the summit of Mera Peak is clearly visible. We will have lunch at Mera La and spend the afternoon relaxing and staying warm.

Day 11: Acclimatization and Climbing Clinic.

Day 12: Mera La to High Camp. We have a short, steep climb up to High camp, but we will take it very slowly so that we allow for the altitude gain. At 5,800 m (19,025ft), high camp is nestled behind a large rock outcrop. We will arrive here by lunch and spend the afternoon relaxing and further acclimatizing. Bill O'Conner in the book 'Trekking Peaks of Nepal' describes high camp as "one of the most glorious viewpoints in Nepal, with a panorama that takes in Kanchenjunga, Chamlang, Makalu and Baruntse

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sweeping round from the east, whilst due north Everest peers over...the massive unclimbed South Face of Lhotse and Nuptse. Sitting on that rock outcrop, listening to the wind and looking out across untracked glaciers remains a highlight of my Mera expedition."

Day 13: Ascend Mera Peak, Return to Base Camp at Khare. We will depart high camp before dawn. The climb up to the higher northern summit is straight forward, but will take 6-7 hours. The reward is one of the world's most spectacular mountain views, including Everest and Lhotse just to the north, Cho Oyu to the northwest, and Kanchenjunga and Makalu to the east. We will then make our way down to Mera La for lunch and to Khare to camp for the night.

Day 14: Spare Day. We allow a spare day in case of bad weather.

Day 15 – 19: We retrace our footsteps back via Thagnak, Thasing Dingma and all the way back to Lukla.

Day 20: Fly Lukla to Kathmandu

Day 21: Free time in Kathmandu

Day 22: Depart for next destination

DATES

Please email us for details of departures. We are also able to organize private expeditions for those that want familiar people to join them or if scheduled departures or itineraries don't suit. The price listed is based on a minimum of 2 people. Depending on the number of people in your group, private expeditions can be cheaper than scheduled departures so ask us if you would like to organize something special for yourself.

EXPEDITION GRADE – Alpine

Extremely demanding treks sometimes in very remote areas on rough terrain and perhaps including (in Nepal) one or more of the so called 'trekking peaks' - maximum altitude, Mt. Mera at 6,461m/21,192ft. Participants should have at least a basic knowledge of use of crampons and ice axes, though first time climbers may be accepted on some of the so called 'easy' routes on these peaks. Medical certificates are required prior to acceptance on any climbing treks.



EXPEDITION INCLUSIONS

- Arrival & Departure transfers on both domestic and international flights
- 4 Star Hotel Accommodation in Kathmandu on a twin share bed- and- breakfast basis for the nights as listed in itinerary.
- Full board meals on tented camping expedition or Teahouse trek.
- Accommodation on tented camp or Teahouses as listed in itinerary.
- Welcome dinner with ethno-cultural program as listed in the itinerary.
- Half day guided city tour as listed in itinerary.
- All Domestic flights and airport tax as listed in the itinerary as applicable.
- Private transportation to and from the starting and ending points of the trek.
- Peak Climbing Permit Royalty and other government tax.
- Climbing Clinic Course at base camp
- Personal and Group Climbing gear including climbing rope, ice axe, zoomer, harness, figure of eight, carabineer etc
- All camping equipment - 2-person member tent, dinning tent, kitchen tent, staff & porter tent, toilet tent with commode, dining table with backrest chair
- Free use of quality trekking gear - sleeping bag, fleece inner liner, insulated mat, down jacket, duffel bag etc during the trip.
- Portable Altitude Chamber (PAC) / Gamow Bag (A life saving device in case of Acute Mountain Sickness) along with the comprehensive First Aid Kit.
- Professional local trekking group leader well trained in Wilderness First Aid
- Well-experienced Climbing guide with all his allowance and expenses.
- Trekking Cook, guides and other support staff.
- Porters to carry all personal gear and group equipment.
- Insurance of all staff including porters.
- Warm clothing and other required trekking gear for porters like Cortex jacket & trousers, trekking shoes / boots, sleeping bag / blanket, woolen hat, woolen gloves, woolen socks, sun glasses etc.
- Peak climbing certificate to the successful climbers.
- Comprehensive pre-departure information and trip dossiers.
- Trekking permit, national park / conservation entry fees.

EXPEDITION EXCLUSIONS

- Personal insurance
- Personal Climbing Gear (Climbing boots and crampons needed)
- Bottled drink (these are personally purchased)
- Meals in Kathmandu
- Visa for Nepal

NEPAL EXPEDITIONS

All of the treks are run in partnership with No Roads



GENERAL INFORMATION

Supporting Local Communities

We support a primary school in the Gorkha District and we also distribute free first aid and medicines 2 times a year in the village where the school is located. We also adhere to guidelines that protect the porter's interests such as insuring them from injury.

Pre-Departure Information

Once your expedition is confirmed we will send you detailed Pre Departure Information which includes a list of recommended clothing and personal equipment, along with many other relevant information to help you prepare for your trip. Prior to the trip departure from Kathmandu, you will attend a detailed trip briefing and orientation meeting to make sure that you are well prepared for your river trip and trek. These trips are led by No Roads.

Flights

Have you made your air reservation yet? Please note that space on flights in and out of Nepal is very tight, especially during the tourist seasons. Therefore, we would like to suggest that you work on your for your air seats. We can help you with dates for treks, raft trips and other services that you need so that you can make your decision.

All domestic flights in Nepal are operated using small planes seating 15 to 20 people. There are only a few flights to each destination every day. During the busy trekking/tourist season these flights get full very fast. To improve your chances of getting on these flights it is best to confirm your trips as early as possible. The sooner we get trip confirmation, the better your chances.

Nepal Tourist Visa

Nepal Visa is readily available on arrival at the International Airport in Kathmandu (or any other land entry points to Nepal). Single Entry Visa: US\$30 per visa (valid for 60 days)

Multiple Entry Visa: US\$80 per visa (valid for 150 days). Please bring exact change if possible.

2 passport photos will be required. (Nepal Visas are also available in all Nepalese Embassies and Consulates located in several countries and cities around the world.)

Information and Support

If you have any comments, questions or want more information, please let us know. We are here to support you with all information to help you prepare for your travels to the Himalayas.

What are the trekking peaks?

The "Trekking Peaks" of Nepal gives hobby-climbers an opportunity to tackle a high Himalayan peak without having to organize a major expedition. Although these peaks are lower than their more famous cousins - the 8000 meter peaks - many of the climbs are no less demanding and adventurous in nature. These Trekking Peak climbing trips offer a chance to climb a Himalayan summit and, a taste of being in the 'white wilderness,' without burning a big home in your pocket! The Trekking Peak climbing trips we offer are run in the popular trekking areas with relatively easy access to the mountains. Most of these trips can be completed within a short period of time. For instance Naya Khang in the Langtang valley can be completed in less than twenty days with plenty of time allocated for acclimatization. If you have an urge to trek in some of the most beautiful places in Nepal, interact and make friends with the local people without having to sleep in a cold and lonely tent, Lodge Trekking is just the thing for you. Make sure you are with No Roads Expeditions and we will make sure that you have a memorable time without having to spend a small fortune.

Whereas on the Pisang & Chulu trip, you can 'bag' two summits in under one month with an itinerary that also takes you on the famous Annapurna Circuit trek. In the Everest region the popular peaks are Mera Peak in the remote Hinku Valley, Island Peak, Khongm-tse, and Lobuche peaks near the Everest Base Camp area. Though most of these climbs require little or no previous mountaineering experience, it is



essential that participants are in excellent physical condition and have some outdoor background.

Knowledge of use of ice-axe, crampons and ropes will come in handy.

Before the actual climb begins we will teach you the basics of handling ropes and other climbing devices including safety considerations. All our climbing treks are guided by trained guides who are registered with the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA). Each of our climbing guides are local lads who are intimately familiar with the mountains and routes they guide on. Join one of our Trekking Peak climbing treks to experience the pains and joys of climbing in the high Himalayas - a privilege that once was reserved only for the fabled 'expedition climbers.

Meera Peak Controversy

There is some speculation about where the "Real" Mera Peak is. A couple of internet web sites are claiming that climbers are being duped into thinking they are climbing Mera Peak when in fact they are climbing what they refer to as the "False" Mera Peak.

Let us be quite plain and simple here. There is no such thing as a "False" Mera Peak. It does not exist and these claims are simply trying to spoil everyone's achievement and an attempt to weasel through a NMA loophole concerning Mera Peak. Let us explain.

- The original trekking peak list made up in 1977-78 did not have locations, but the height of Mera Peak matched that of what is said to be "False" Mera.

- There was also a map made by the NMA that went with the original list (very few people have seen this, including us). "False" Mera was **The Peak. This means the said "False" Mera is the original Mera trekking peak after all.**

- The new height, 6654 meters, appeared on the list in the early eighties, we do not yet know when the locations were added, but the list with locations we have was printed in 1993. This version of the list makes "Real" Mera aka Peak 41 the trekking peak. Peak 41 is 6654m.

- The peak was inadvertently changed when the list was "improved", but nobody noticed!

The most likely scenario is this: "False" Mera is the peak that was originally called Mera and should therefore not be referred to as "False" Mera. Jimmy Roberts, the "father of trekking", who made the first ascent of Mera in 1953 with Sen Tenzing, was involved with drawing up the trekking peak list. This means there can not be a mistake in identifying Mera Peak (False Mera) as the real, original trekking peak.

To make the list more precise new height figures and (later?) locations were added.

Unfortunately for this purpose the NMA used data from *Classification of the Himalaya* drawn up (Nepal peaks) by Nepalese scholars Dr. Harka Gurung and Dr. Ram Krishna Shrestha and later published in 1985 in American Alpine Journal Vol. 27, issue 59, pg. 109-141 as a compilation by H. Adams Carter. On this list there is no (False) Mera, it is totally missing, and "Mera" is given as an alternate name for Peak 41.

The reason for this mistake on that list is not known yet.

Nobody noticed at that time that the peak had changed as False Mera was already firmly established as a trekking peak. Only the new, obviously incorrect height making Mera the highest trekking peak was questioned, but nobody had the mind to check the lat-long figures that also appeared on the TP-list.

This same mistake in naming Mera was carried on to the new topographic map. This is natural, why would cartographers question an official and undisputed *Classification of the Himalaya*?

We feel this explanation is quite plausible and explains why the mistake was not discovered earlier.

The peak mentioned on the internet (wrongly referred to as the Real Mera Peak) is actually Peak 41. This peak has not yet been climbed, as it is not a trekkable peak, it is a technical climb. It is not the height of the mountain that determines its name, it is the lat and long that determine it and therefore you will be climbing the Real Mera peak 6476m. Peak 41 is for professional climbers and is not a trekkable peak. The 6654m referred to in our and nearly everyone else's itinerary is the height specified on the permit you will get when you climb Mera and until the NMA rules on it, the height of the mountain you will be climbing is 6654m.

None of this should take anything away from what you are undertaking. Mera Peak is a serious mountain. While not in the same league, I am sure that Hillary wasn't any less proud of his achievement on Everest even though some speculated that Mallory reached the summit decades earlier.