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Island Peak and Ama Dablam Expedition

Our expedition is planned to climb in the post-monsoon season. Sandy has guided Island peak several times and Ama Dablam four times summiting with clients each time. Island Peak is (6335 m) and is one of Nepal's easier Trekking peaks, it is climbed using two camps, base camp and high camp. The technical difficulties are low, although usually fixed rope is required on the final summit section to the exposed summit. After Island peak we return down the trail taking a restful walk, staying at Pangboche village prior to then taking the short steep walk up to Ama Dablam base camp where our second Sherpa team will have base camp established and the mountain partly fixed.

After several rest days we will then attempt the mountain, perhaps by first carrying our personal high altitude gear to Camp 1 and returning to base camp for a rest day. If everyone is feeling well we will then try for our summit attempt. We have planned adequate days spare so that we can ensure that everyone is well rested after Island Peak and feeling ready for the main objective. We climb by the South West Ride route which was initially climbed by M Ward (UK) Bishop (US) and Gill (NZ). The leader of the expedition was Sir Edmund Hillary and they were acclimatising for their Everest attempt! Ama Dablam is set in the heart of the Khumbu, Nepal, the SW face involves some steep climbing and exposed mixed climbing utilising fixed ropes and the whole route offers some of the finest views in the Himalaya including five 8000m peaks. Ama Dablam loosely translates to "mothers charm box" as the two ridges are similar to mothers outstretched arms and the big serac is known as Dablam in Sherpa" which is a charm box worn around Sherapani's neck holding precious Buddhist charms. Our route takes the south west ridge and is regarded as the "normal route" on the mountain.

Fitness and recommended previous experience:

The climb is technical and participants should be comfortable climbing on steep ground with exposure on sharp ridges and the exposed feeling of being at height. We fix the route with rope and good anchors. Some experience of jumaring is definitely beneficial. It's suggested that the ability to climb UK hard severe in summer rock climbing and Scottish winter grades of 11/111 with Alpine experience of AD routes. Jumaring techniques can be practised at Base Camp and put to the test on Island Peak; further practice is possible on huge boulders near Ama Dablam base camp. The climbing days between the high mountain camps: (Camp 1, Camp 2 and Camp 3) to the summit are from 4 to 8 hours for an average fit acclimatised

mountaineer, so good fitness training such as rowing machines, cross trainers, swimming and running, plus the ability to cope on some good long hill days in the British hills should help you reach the fitness level required. One should always keep in mind that climbing at altitude is extremely demanding and with all the other influences of third world travel, long flights, changes in time zones, variations in diet and the infamous traveller's tummy, one would never say that any trip to Asia and especially expedition climbing is easy!

The Approach Trek to Base Camp:

The trekking day normally commences about 6.00 am when you are politely woken up by our Sirdar catering team. We will be staying in lodges, so breakfast may be prepared by the lodge staff and normally it's a good idea to pre-order your breakfast. Your porter loads have to be packed and ready for the porters as they have to depart early to reach the next over night lodge. We have breakfast and then commence our walk normally carrying just a light pack with the necessary clothing and water bottle and snack food for the day. We also carry cameras and small light personal items such as I-pods etc... Beverages such as tea and soft drinks and snacks can be bought from the many tea shops on route. Usually with in four to six hours we arrive at our next Lodge and there you can often obtain a shower and relax with a drink until the evening meal is prepared. Darkness comes quite early and as there is not huge amounts of electricity or heating, people tend to go to bed early and before you know it your body clock adjusts and a 6.00 am start will seem relatively normal!

Base Camp and above: Living in tents at Base camp (4450m), you are normally woken up by the kitchen boys who bring bed tea and biscuits. If we can, we almost always wait for the sun to shine on the tents, then we get up for breakfast which is quite substantial. We have a combination of "rest" days and carrying gear days, climbing or acclimatisation days above base camp. When we are at base camp there is always lots of drinks and food available to ensure that we eat well and re-hydrate to ensure the best possible acclimatisation. At altitude you need to drink copious amount of liquids, water with juices added for taste is probably as good a drink as any. Ama Dablam base Camp is at 4450meters so after climbing Island Peak we should all feel very good there. But even although this will be the case it remains vital that we all take care and drink lots of fluids to ensue that we continue to acclimatise well.

Ama Dablam Base Camp to Camp 1: Camp 1 (5700m) is situated close to the foot of the SW ridge. It's quite a long walk from Base camp. It will take at least 5-6 hours at first. Sometimes people pitch and intermediate camp half way, but as we will have climbed Island Peak this should not be required as we will already be acclimatised. The walk is straight forward apart from some boulder hopping and some smooth granite slabs before the camp. Normally this walk can be done in stout

approach shoes or light walking boots. Good view open up and you can expect to see Cho Oyu (8210m), Numbur (6859m) and Taweche (6397m)

Camp 1 to Camp 2 (5950m): The climbing starts almost as soon as we leave our tents at Camp 1. It's quite straight forward at first but you will need to clip into the fixed ropes which lead you over a simple traverse on loose scree which soon turns to bigger more stable boulders and eventually quite sound rock which gives nice climbing protected by jumars on the fixed ropes. Just below the Camp 2 site we come to a steep Yellow Tower. This is the technical crux of the whole route. It's steep but enjoyable with the fixed ropes to help you along and usually the guides and Sherpas will offer to haul your sac! The whole day take three to five hours. Camp two is very exposed, snow for water melting can be hard to get, so great care must be taken with sterilisation and not to go too close to the cliff edges and fall when camping here. It high winds it can be a rather uncomfortable place to be, so many expeditions skip camp 2 and push all the way through to Camp 2.

Camp 2 to Camp 3(6400m): Soon after camp 2 we begin to gain height, it's hard work but not too technical. Reaching the Grey Tower provides the next challenging obstacle and there is some potential of rock fall here and persons jumaring have to be even more careful not to disturb rocks to avoid them falling on those below. Easier snow and ice lead to the "Mushroom ridge" where the SW ridge joins the of the Dablam of the main summit snow and ice fields. The ground is not technical but the exposure is spectacular and care is required. This brings us to a broad snow shelf Camp 3.

Camp 3 to Summit (6856m): Camp 3 is high, exposed and quite cold. Its west facing so the sun does not reach camp early and normally we are up and away around 7.30 am, long before the sun reaches camp at around 0930am. It's important we do this as it's quite a hard climb on the fixed ropes above the camp and the snow higher up can deteriorate quite quickly once the sun strikes. The fixed ropes take us up the steep slope around some ice bulges, never over technical but often ice polished, and in these conditions you will be glad to have sharp crampon points. This brings us onto steep summit slopes which led to the spectacular summit and one does not want to stray too far from the fixed ropes the views are amazing, Everest. Lhotse and Nuptse, is right there! The descent is by the same route and we try to get as far down the mountain as possible and hopefully back to camp 1 for late evening.

Weather conditions: The pre-winter and post -monsoon conditions from October to December are usually very fair, dry and relatively stable and this is the best season to attempt the mountain. Day time temperatures are pleasantly warm in the valleys (20 -30C). High on Ama Dablam it can be cold and windy especially with the wind chill and the early start at Camp 3. Night time temperatures sink to -25C. You should ensure you have a warm sleeping bag, Down Jacket and good mitts. Summit

days can be calm or windy, if it windy again it can be quite cold, so Boots which are good for 4000meter mountains are often not quite warm enough for Ama Dablam. Also our guides tend to have zipped lightweight insulated trousers with full leg zips that can be zipped on as warm over trousers if it gets a bit cold. Patagonia "Puff Ball" pants are really ace, "Mountain Equipment" also produce similar. As does Hagflos and Mountain Hardware.

Itinerary:

Subject to slight change

- Day 1. Transfer from Kathmandu Airport to Hotel. Group meet up for welcome brief. (HOTEL)
- Day 2. Kathmandu- sightseeing and pre expedition packing. (Hotel)
- Day 3. Internal Flight to Lukla (2800m), trek to Phakting (2610m)
- Day 4 Phakting to Namche Bazaar (3400m)
- Day 5 Rest/Acclimatisation day at Namche
- Day 6 Namche Bazaar to Tengboche
- Day 7 Tengboche to Dingboche
- Day 8 . Acclimatisation Day
- Day 9 Dingboche to Chukung
- Day10 Chukung to Island Peak Base Camp
- Day 11 Rest and equipment sort out day
- Day 12. Rest day and then short walk up to high camp
- Day 13 Summit (6335m) attempt and back to Base camp and perhaps down to Chukung
- Day 14 Down to Pangboche
- Day 15 Walk up to Ama Dablam Base Camp (4450m)
- Day 16-25 Rest and prep day at Base Camp
- Day 26 Base Camp to Namche
- Day 27 Namche to Lukla
- Day 28 Flight to Kathmandu
- Day 29 Kathmandu
- Day 30 International departure flights

Included in our price is: Airport transfer, four hotel nights in Kathmandu with bed and breakfast. Internal Flights Kathmandu to Lukla return, Full porter and Sherpa service from Lukla for the duration of the expedition back to Lukla. Lodge and camping accommodation, tents and all main meals on the trek and during the expedition. Fixed Ropes and anchors, Guides and Sherpas. Climbing and Trekking Permit, and National park entrance fees. Emergency medical Oxygen and Gamov Bag, Full porter and local staff insurance cover and equipment issue. Solar electricity and Sat. phone at base camp.

Not Included in our price is: Your personal international flights. Your lunches and evening meals in Kathmandu. Your own personal clothing and climbing equipment. Your own emergency mountain rescue, travel, repatriation, medical and cancellation insurance, your entry visa into Nepal. Personal drinks, phone and laundry bills. Tips for local staff and Sherpas.

Island Peak and Ama Dablam Expedition Equipment list:

(Please use as a guide line only)

Head:

Lightweight hard hat
Wool hat/Balaclava
Sun Hat
Neck pullover
Sun Creams and Lip salves
Goggles and sunglasses (High UV protection)

Upper Body:

Vests, T-shirts and zip Turtle neck long sleeved shirts (Breathable fabrics are best)
Fleece mid layer Jacket or soft shell jackets
Breathable outer shell shower proof jacket with hood
Puff Ball Type Jacket/Pullover
Mid-Weight down Jacket

Hands:

Wind stopper light fleece or wool gloves
Climbing/Ski type gloves (Bring two pair)

Down Mittens (PHD make good ones which are more technical)

Lower Body and Legs:

Light weight Long Johns

Power stretch trouser (thicker long johns or fleece trouser)

Breathable Outer shell trouser (Full length zips are good)

Puff-Ball type padded trouser

Socks

Trekking shoe or light walking boot

Climbing Boot, Scarpa Phantom 8000m, La Sportiva Mons etc or a good warm climbing boot (B3) that will take crampons

Gaiters

Equipment:

Travel Hold all.

Rucksack: If you wish take 2 (day pack for the trekking and 40-50 litre for the climb! Lightweight)

Ice axe (General type climbing axe, mid length shaft useful for mountaineering. Keep it light-weight)

Climbing harness: Nappy style Patagonia Alpine/ Dmm/ Wild Country are good, keep them as lightweight as possible)

Minimum of three screw gate Karabiners

Jumar and slings or 4-5 meter length of UIAA "1" rope 8.9-10.5mm Diameter: (we will show you how make it into a cows tail system for use with jumar on fixed ropes)

Figure of Eight descender (Best for fixed ropes as one can pass the knots through it!)

12 point Crampons (must fit your boots)

Trekking poles (if you usually use these for walking)

Good quality Sleeping Bag (Down: to -25)

Insulated Mat and or Thermarest mat

Water Bottle and tablets (Iodine based seem to be the best) for water sterilisation

Small Head Torch with batteries and bulbs

Camera and film/memory and charged batteries/Chargers etc

Small personal first aid kit, for Blisters and third-world travel (refer to: Travel notes for Nepal)

Wash kit

Towel

Books /I pod/ sowing/repair kit (small)