



Ama Dablam Expedition Nepal



October 13 - November 14, 2010

\$9,200

land costs, including all meals

Difficulty Level: Advanced- Must be able to climb rock, ice, and mixed terrain, often with an alpine pack on your back. You should be comfortable with camp craft in high-altitude camps and be able to perform at a high level for multiple days in a row at altitude.



No mountain in the world captures alpine climbers' imaginations like 22,525 foot Ama Dablam. It stands alone in the Solu Khumbu (Everest) valley, towering almost 10,000 feet over the famous Sherpa villages of Thyangboche and Pangboche. With no easy route to its summit, climbing Ama Dablam is reserved for dedicated alpinists, who have built skills and experience in much more than simply high altitude walking. The successful climber will also have solid multi-pitch climbing experience on rock and ice, and be comfortable climbing with a pack on and taking care of themselves in very high alpine camps.

This expedition is in many ways the culmination of Alpenglow Expeditions' teaching system and mission. On Ama Dablam our expectation is that each climber takes real responsibility for the success of themselves and their teammates. Team-members will assist in setting camps, carrying loads, setting and cleaning the fixed lines, and cooking and melting snow in high camps. Summiting the peak will be a success you have truly earned, and can be, if you choose, an ideal stepping stone to more independent expeditions on big Himalayan peaks.

On our expedition we will climb the route of the mountain's first ascent, the Southwest Ridge, which offers every type of climbing.

From Base Camp to Camp 1, we will climb up a long moderate morainal ridge, giving excellent views of our entire route. From Camp 1 up is always incredibly exposed and interesting.

From Camp 1 to 2 we encounter the route's crux rock climbing sections. There are interesting technical traverses combined with countless easy fifth class moves and some short harder pitches of up to 5.8 climbing. On all of this climbing, you will be truly climbing each move, using fixed ropes only to protect yourself. This is not a route of jug-hauling!

Camp 2 to 3 offers the route's most challenging ice climbing, with sustained pitches of steep ice and mixed terrain. The final section into Camp 3 is the famed mushroom ridge, a mostly horizontal traverse across cornices tenuously stuck to a knife-edge ridge.

From Camp 3 to the summit, the route lessens slightly in technical difficulty, climbing straight-forward 50-70 degree ice and snow around the hanging glacier (the Dablam) and up the summit face.

An expedition to Ama Dablam will test all of your mountaineering skills, and a summit is one to be very proud of. Climbing this peak also provides a taste of true Himalayan expedition life. You will be supported by one of the best Sherpa staff in the Khumbu. After an 8 day trek through the villages of the Everest Valley, we will have a full Puja blessing ceremony, and then settle into life in a very comfortable basecamp, complete with cook, heated dining tent, individual sleeping tents, and even a shower! We have found that these amenities are essential in having a well-rested and strong team of climbers during our summit push. Beware of operators who offer Ama Dablam climbs with less support!

Our Ama Dablam expedition will be led by Alpenglow's owner, Adrian Ballinger. Adrian has been climbing in Nepal for the past decade, and has led 11 expeditions to Himalayan peaks (including 3 successful summits of Ama Dablam). His knowledge of Sherpa culture as well as the mountains, combined with his passion for teaching the skills of mountaineering to others, guarantees that your experience will be one to remember. Our maximum climber to guide/sherpa ratio will be 1:1, so if the group size dictates, Adrian will be joined by other experienced Himalayan guides. This maximizes your safety and your opportunity to climb Ama Dablam successfully!

We combine our western guides' experience with the local expertise of one of Nepal's best logistics operators, and the services of our good friend and local guide, Dawa Sherpa. Dawa grew up in the Solu Khumbu, and has been guiding trekking and climbing groups in Nepal since he was a boy. His management of our local staff, knowledge of the Solu Khumbu, and friendly personality will be essential in ensuring that you stay healthy, strong, and able to enjoy each component of this experience.

Ama Dablam Expedition Itinerary

Day 1	Leave your home for Nepal. Depending on airline, you might fly east or west around the world. (Wednesday)
Day 2	Another day of flying. Enjoy the super-attentive service of the long haul airlines.
Day 3	Arrive in Kathmandu, Nepal. We transfer to our hotel, and begin the process of getting over jetlag. (Friday)
Day 4	Today we explore some of Kathmandu's famous sites. These include Swyambunath (the Monkey Temple) and Pashupati (Nepal's largest Hindu temple), along with the old city's original central square, Durbar.
Day 5	One of the most beautiful mountain flights in the world takes us from Kathmandu to Lukla (9,000 feet), the town where we begin our trek to base camp. After organizing our yaks and porters we will make the short hike to the town of Phakding (8,000 feet).
Day 6	Today we trek to Namche Bazaar. The walk begins with a couple of exciting suspension bridges before climbing steeply up a dusty 2,000 foot hill into Namche (11,300 feet).
Day 7	For acclimatization purposes we spend a second night in Namche Bazaar. After a relaxing morning we will hike to Syangboche for lunch, where we will have our first stunning views of Ama Dablam.
Day 8	Trek to Thyangboche, home to the largest Buddhist community in the Solu Khumbu. We will arrive early in the afternoon so that we have time to explore the monastery and see the monks in prayer. (12,670 feet)

Day 9	Trek to Pangboche. In Pangboche we visit the lama and hold our team's puja (blessing) ceremony. Once finished we continue hiking to Pheriche.
Day 10	In the morning we take a short hike to Chukkung (15,700 feet), the highest settlement in the valley.
Day 11	Climb Chukkung Ri. This 17,600 foot peak is not glaciated, but provides an excellent way for us to gain additional acclimatization, as well as stunning views of the Lhotse face and the huge glaciers filling the Amphu valley. In the afternoon we return to Chukkung.
Day 12	Today we trek to Ama Dablam base camp. We choose a backcountry route away from the tourist trail, traveling through tiny yak herder settlements and over countless moraines as we circle around the base of Ama Dablam. Base camp sits in a beautiful grassy area at 14,500 feet.
Day 13	Rest day in base camp. We will spend the day organizing equipment, eating, and visiting other teams from around the world who are in camp.
Day 14	Acclimatization hike to interim camp (17,000 feet). Return to base camp in the evening.
Day 15	Return to interim camp to sleep.
Day 16	Climb to camp 1 (18,500 feet), cache gear, and return to base camp.
Day 17	Rest day in base camp. We also spend part of the day reviewing fixed rope technique.
Day 18	Climb to Camp 1 (18,500 feet).
Day 19	Today we get our first taste of the technical climbing. We will clip into the fixed ropes and climb to Camp 2 (19,500 feet), dropping a small load there. The climbing is incredible, with short steps of 5.6-5.8 climbing interspersed with countless fourth to easy fifth class moves. Return to Camp 1 to sleep.
Day 20	Descend to base camp to rest, eat, and prepare for our summit bid.
Day 21	Another rest day. We will have earned it!

Day 22	Climb to Camp 1.
Day 23	Rest day if needed in Camp 1.
Day 24	Climb to Camp 3 (or Camp 2 if necessary). The climb from Camp 2 to Camp 3 is mostly ice and mixed climbing, and includes some of the toughest pitches of the whole climb. Immediately before reaching Camp 3 we cross the mushroom ridge, a series of cornices and ice sculptures glued precipitously onto a knife-edge rock ridge. It is a section of climbing you will never forget! Sleep in Camp 3 (21,000 feet)
Day 25	Summit Day! The climb from Camp 3 to the summit is actually technically easier than anything prior to it. However, we will be dealing with extremely high altitude and cold temperatures. Generally we do not leave camp until the sun has reached us, making things warm enough to climb the steep ice and snow to the summit (22,525 feet). The views are staggering; we will be able to see six 8,000 meter peaks, including Everest, Lhotse, and Makalu! Depending on the team's strength, we will descend to Camp 3 or all the way to Camp 1.
Day 26	Descend to base camp to celebrate our climb!
Day 27	An extra day to be used as needed on our climb.
Day 28	Leave Base Camp, and trek a long day to Namche Bazaar.
Day 29	Trek from Namche Bazaar to Lukkla
Day 30	Fly from Lukkla to Kathmandu.
Day 31	This is a contingency day reserved for bad weather when we are trying to fly from Lukkla to Kathmandu. If we had no problems, we spend the day spoiling ourselves in Kathmandu.
Day 32	After a final team breakfast, leave Kathmandu for home. (Saturday)
Day 33	Arrive in the USA. (Sunday)

[Please note the above schedule is only one possible scenario. A mountain like Ama Dablam requires flexibility, and every year our climb is very different.]



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