

# FAR HORIZON PHOTO TOURS

## NEPAL PHOTO TREK ITINERARY FROM WHICH TO DEVIATE

Below is our intended itinerary for your Fall 2019 Nepal Photo Trek. While this is our initial itinerary, please understand that certain events may be out of our control, most importantly of which is the weather flying into and out of Lukla. We have padded in extra time for this and will adjust as needed. Also, we may change the itinerary once on the trek due to weather and the group's overall strength and condition. Beauty abounds in the Himalayas and even if we deviate, we will be sure to find plenty of photographic subjects.

A note for the itinerary: When on the trek, the name in parenthesis at the end of the day is simply the town name for that night. We have included rough estimates of our mileage/km for each day and the "normal" trekking time without stops for lunch, which we take. We will likely be slower than the norm and don't let this bug you, as we are there to take our time and 'see' more than the average trekker.

**Oct 2 – Day 1** Guests arrive in Kathmandu. Met at airport and taken to our Thamel Arrival Hotel. Day spent at your leisure. Welcome Dinner in the evening. Early to bed tonight to help with jetlag.

**Oct 3 – Day 2** This is an early day, rising around 4am for a walk to [Swayambhunath](#), on a small hill overlooking the city. Sunrise from this location can be magical as long as you don't look the throngs of monkeys that live there in the eye. The walk is about 30-45 minutes and it is a wonderful way to see the city while it is calm, then watch it wake up. We'll visit some of the other sites around Swayambhunath, like Buddha Park and the local markets at the base of the hill. We'll reserve the middle of this day, when the light is garish, for last minute shopping and a little free time (and maybe a nap if the jetlag is still on you) but then we will visit sites such as [Rani Pokhari](#) and [Basantapur Durbar Square](#) before sunset and dinner.

**Oct 4 – Day 3 – Trek Day 1 (7.7miles/ 12.3km/3.5 hours)** We'll be up early again to head to the domestic airport and our flight to Lukla (luke-luh)(9,353 ft / 2,850 m), weather willing. The flight is about 45 minutes from takeoff to landing and from there we'll have no more roads for a dozen days. A note that load limits are 15kg for checked bag and 5kg for carry-on (and about \$1USD for each kg over that, usually. This information will be updated and sent to you about a month before you leave your home). Once in Lukla we'll stop for a snack and then head on down the trail. Our goal for the day is Phakding (pack-ding), a small place just outside the [Sagarmatha National Park](#) entrance. Views are up the valley and of the forested hills, which will be our last trees for a while. (Phakding – 9,317 ft / 2,839 m)

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**Oct 5 – Day 4 – Trek Day 2 (2.9 miles/4.7km/5 hours)** This is an uphill day. We'll be huffing but we'll also see Mt. Everest, weather willing (that's a common phrase ☺), for the first time, wayyyy off. Namche Bazaar is a bustling town and your last chance to hit an ATM or get things you might have forgot, but at a higher price than in Kathmandu. There is also wifi for a fee in most of the town. In the afternoon we'll head up the hill behind the town to get some sunset shots and to help acclimatize, before settling in for the night. (Namche Bazaar – 11,260 ft / 3,432 m)

**Oct 6 – Day 5 – Trek Day 3 (Likely about 7 miles/11.2km/4.5 hours)** – Sleep in! Today we'll likely head toward Thame (ta-may) (12,450ft/3,794m). It's a nice valley walk and will give us some needed acclimatization for safety's sake. The other option is to head to Khumjung, but we'll be going there tomorrow anyway. Return to our same teahouse in Namche. (Namche Bazaar – 11,260 ft / 3,432 m)

**Oct 7 – Day 6 – Trek Day 4 (2 miles/3.3km/3 hours with snack at Everest View Hotel)** Sleep in! Maybe. This far down in the valley sunrise shots are okay, but not amazing because the hills are so high. So sleeping in is an option, but won't be further along in the trip ☺. Today we'll be bounding over a small hill and taking a break at the Everest View Hotel for a snack and the views (weather willing). Then it is on to Khumjung (coom-jung), our local guide Kami's hometown. We'll start seeing higher peaks today and Khumjung is one of my favorite places to take night photos. The full moon is on the 13<sup>th</sup>, which brings an awesome etherealness to the mountains. (Khumjung – 12,410 ft / 3,782 m)

**Oct 8 – Day 7 – Trek Day 5 (5 miles/7km/5.5 hours)** Up and down this day goes to Dole (doh-lay). Bask in the open spaces with the backside of Tobuche (21309 ft / 6495 m), to our East. This day feels great on the legs and brings new views down into the river valley and up to the peaks. (Dole – 13,314 ft / 4,058 m)

**Oct 9 – Day 8 – Trek Day 6 (3.5 miles/5.7km/3.5 hours)** The same expanding views abound until we top a small ridge and spy Machermo (muh-chair-mo) below. We'll take an acclimatization walk in the afternoon up the valley behind the town to explore. There are few trails and it's often fun to wander and find subjects. There is also a medical clinic in this town that gives informational talks on mountain safety, often worth the time for those new to the Himalayas. (Machermo – 14,413 ft / 4,393 m)

**Oct 10 – Day 9 – Trek Day 7 (5.3 miles/8.5km/3.5 hours)** We'll get some beautiful glacial lake action (as well as a nice waterfall or two) as we head further up-valley. We'll also be alongside the [Ngozumpa glacier](#), the longest in the Himalayas. While it is over a ridge from the trail we take, we can explore as desired. As far as photogenic glaciers go, it's kinda ugly but still impressive. For the adventurous, we can take an evening walk (1.7 miles/2.8km/50 minutes, one way) up to the fourth of the sacred lakes along this chain (we stop at the third) for some sunset shots. It should be remarkable (weather willing) with views to Mt. Everest and more peaks than you can remember. We can do this tomorrow night as well. (Gokyo (go-keyyo)– 15,616 ft / 4,759 m)

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**Oct 11 – Day 10 – Trek Day 8 (1.1 miles/ 1/8km/1.5 hours, one way, which is uphill)** It might not seem like much but this morning is a butt kicker. We want to catch a beautiful, weather willing, sunrise and need to be up to the top of Gokyo Ri (a ri is essentially a ridge) well before that time (5:55AM). It's uphill for sure and it will be our highest point for the trek at 17,575 ft / 5,357 m. It's a magical place and is the view you see on the cover of the book that was sent to you. After capturing our desired shot it's time to go back down to Gokyo and get some breakfast. We'll spend the rest of the day climbing over the small hill to the glacier and seeing what we can see there, as well as views up to Cho Oyu on the Tibetan border. As mentioned, this afternoon might be a good time to head up to the fourth or fifth lake, even if we did it the day before, as the weather changes. (Gokyo – 15,616 ft / 4,759 m)

**Oct 12 – Day 11 – Trek Day 9 (8.5 miles/13.7km/6 hours)** We won't sugarcoat it, this is a long day. But not as hard as it seems. For one thing, we have been acclimatizing and our lungs are a lot better at grasping passing oxygen molecules from the thinner air. And our legs and backs are hardened to the trail. Oh, and most of this is downhill. We'll cross over the [Ngozumpa glacier](#) and head back down the valley on the opposite side for new views. Another great spot for night photos. (Thore (tore-a) – 14,361 ft / 4,377 m)

**Oct 13 – Day 12 – Trek Day 10 (3.3 miles/5.4km/5.5 hours)** [Ama Dablam](#) (22,493 ft / 6,856 m) will be joining us for a good portion of the trek on this day. Most of this day is spent side-hilling down along the valley to reach Pangboche (pang-bow-chay). Here we will have a chance to visit a monastery or two (we will have visited a number of them before this point as well, but we can't always guarantee they will be open). (Pangboche – 13,148 ft / 4,007 m)

**Oct 14 – Day 13 – Trek Day 11 (6.3 miles/10.1km/3.5 hours)** Who is ready to hotfoot it back to a 'normal' shower?. Tengboche (tang-bow-chay) is a favorite of ours as it is perched on a high spot with unique views. We will take our time in the morning to get shots of ground we won't cover again and by the end of the day we'll be walking amongst trees, but not a lot of them. There is a beautiful monastery here with [a long and destructive history](#). (Tengboche - 12,656 ft / 3,857 m)

**Oct 15 – Day 14 – Trek Day 12 (6 miles/9.7km/4 hours)** Downhill we go (then a little up) and then down again to Namche Bazaar. On a different trail than we took uphill, the views are still new as we say goodbye to the truly tall peaks. More forest and rivers. If our legs are strong, we can carry on down hill to Monjo (mon-jo) to make our last trekking day an easy one. (Namche Bazaar – 11,260 ft / 3,432 m or Monjo 9219 ft/ 2810 m)

**Oct 16 – Day 15 – Trek Day 13 (10.5 miles/17km/5 hours or less if we stay in Monjo)** More downhill! Wahoo! Ignore the mileage, your body is more than used to the 'thick' air at this altitude and you'll be smiling at all the new trekkers huffing their way uphill, much as you were 12 days ago. (Lukla - 9,353 ft / 2,850 m)

**Oct 17 – Day 16 –** We'll fly back to Kathmandu today with a last chance for shopping but first we will visit nearby [Boudhanath Stupa](#). We want to leave this day unplanned to check everyone's pulse and fill it, or leave it empty, to people's desires. It's our habit to go, go, go and soak it all up, but we want to be conscience of everyone's energy levels (at all times). Tonight we will have a farewell dinner. (Kathmandu – 4,600 ft / 1,400 m –)

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**Oct 18 – Day 17 – Flights home.** ☹ We will take care of transporting you to the airport where we will say our goodbyes at the door (Only ticketed passengers allowed inside). (Airplane – 39,000 ft / 11,887 m)

Or, we can extend your adventures in Nepal with guided trips to [Chitwan National Park](#), [Lumbini](#) (home of the the birthplace of Buddha), the lakeside town of [Pokhara](#) and more. We can even arrange a tour of nearby Bhutan, only a one hour flight away. Just email us for more information.

It's an active and exciting itinerary that we absolutely love. The sheer volume of jaw-dropping peaks in all directions seems to never stop. Not only that, their personality changes with the light, weather and angle all in a day's trekking. While some trek times above might seem long (5-6 hours at times) remember we are only carrying daypacks and taking plenty of stops to rest (what your guide will call "photo-ops" ;). We usually arrive at each location in the early afternoon and sunset is around 5:30pm.

Safety is also important during the trek. If any guests are showing signs of Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) they have options to descend for a day (with a guide) in order to let their body adjust. This is also why we have acclimatization hikes planned. Our goal is to keep the group together and keep everyone healthy and safe, while realizing we have some room to adjust for individual guests who might feel the altitude effects more than others.