Trek Curator
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Gokyo Valley Trek - 13 Days

The Gokyo Valley Trek is a high-altitude route in Nepal's Khumbu region, running parallel to the standard Everest Base Camp Trek along the Dudh Koshi river basin. It leads directly to the Gokyo Lakes, the highest freshwater lake system in the world, situated between 4,700 and 5,000 meters above sea level inside Sagarmatha National Park (UNESCO).

Designed for trekkers seeking a quieter alternative to classic Everest routes, this 13-day itinerary delivers broad panoramic views of four 8,000-meter peaks: Mt. Everest (8,848.86m), Mt. Lhotse (8,516m), Mt. Makalu (8,485m), and Mt. Cho Oyu (8,188m). The journey combines Sherpa cultural encounters, foot travel alongside the massive Ngozumpa Glacier, and a non-technical summit climb of Gokyo Ri (5,357m).

Gokyo Valley Trek Route Overview

The trek begins with a 35-minute alpine flight from Kathmandu (or Ramechhap during peak seasonal air-traffic diversions) to Lukla. Check real-time Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN) Flight Updates for Lukla airport weather rules. From Lukla, the trail heads north along the Dudh Koshi River, passing through pine forests, suspension bridges, and Sherpa villages before reaching Namche Bazaar.

Beyond Namche, the path diverges from the primary Everest Base Camp trail, ascending through rhododendron and birch forests toward Dole and Machhermo. Following the lateral moraine of the Ngozumpa Glacier, the trail reaches the main Gokyo settlement on the shores of the Third Lake (Dudh Pokhari).

Gokyo Valley Trek Highlights

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- The Six Sacred Lakes: Explore the turquoise, glacier-fed lakes of the high Gokyo Basin.
- Gokyo Ri Summit (5,357m): Reach a vantage point offering a wider view of the Himalayan range than Kala Patthar.
- Ngozumpa Glacier: Walk alongside the longest glacier in the Nepalese Himalayas.
- Authentic Sherpa Culture: Visit mountain communities in Namche Bazaar, Dole, Machhermo, and Gokyo.
- Uncrowded Trails: Enjoy a quieter, pristine alternative to the main Everest Base Camp highway.

Why Choose Trek Curator

- Local Expertise: Guided by licensed leaders with over 10 years of high-altitude mountain experience.
- Safety Protocols: Equipped with daily pulse-oximeter monitoring, satellite communication options, and medical kits.
- End-to-End Logistics: Domestic flights, Sagarmatha National Park permits, teahouse bookings, and fair-wage porter management handled in-house.
- Flexible Travel: Transparent booking terms, clear policies, and adaptable pacing options

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PRICE INCLUDES

- Airport transfers
- Round-trip Kathmandu-Lukla flights with taxes
- Accommodation in Kathmandu and teahouses on trek
- Three meals daily during trekking
- Licensed English-speaking guide and assistant guides
- Porters (one per two trekkers, max 15kg per person)
- All required permits
- First aid kit carried by the guide
- Trekking map and duffel bag
- 24/7 emergency support and evacuation coordination

PRICE EXCLUDES

- Nepal visa fees
- International flights to/from Nepal
- Meals in Kathmandu, except breakfast
- Personal expenses (hot showers, charging, snacks, Wi-Fi)
- Tips for the guide and porter
- Personal trekking gear (rentals available)
- Travel and rescue insurance

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- Personal medicines and first aid supplies
- Extra accommodation or meals due to delays or changes
- Helicopter evacuation costs (unless covered by insurance)

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DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival in Kathmandu (1,400m)

Land at Tribhuvan International Airport (KTM). Transfer to your hotel for rest. Meet your lead guide in the evening for a comprehensive trip briefing and gear check.

Accommodation: 3-Star Hotel in Kathmandu

Day 2: Flight to Lukla (2,840m) & Trek to Phakding (2,610m)

Early departure for Lukla (either a direct 35-min flight from Kathmandu or a drive to Ramechhap for a 20-min flight). Meet your porter team in Lukla and descend into the Dudh Koshi Valley toward Phakding.

Distance: 8 km / 5 miles | Walking Time: 3 hours

Day 3: Trek Phakding to Namche Bazaar (3,440m)

Follow the Dudh Koshi River, crossing high suspension bridges hung with prayer flags, including the iconic Hillary Suspension Bridge. Climb steadily through pine forests to reach Namche Bazaar, the Sherpa hub of the Khumbu region.

Distance: 11 km / 6.8 miles | Walking Time: 5–6 hours

Day 4: Acclimatization Day in Namche Bazaar (3,440m)

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Take an active acclimatization hike up to the Everest View Hotel (3,880m) for your first clear sights of Mt. Everest, Lhotse, and Ama Dablam. Return to Namche to visit the local Sherpa Culture Museum and outdoor market.

Activity: 3–4 hours hiking

Day 5: Trek Namche Bazaar to Dole (4,110m)

Branch off the main Everest Base Camp trail at Sanasa. Ascend through quiet birch and rhododendron forests with views of Kantega and Cho Oyu, reaching Dole by afternoon.

Distance: 11 km / 6.8 miles | Walking Time: 6 hours

Day 6: Trek Dole to Machhermo (4,470m)

Climb scenic ridge trails high above the valley floor, passing summer yak pastures. Arrive at Machhermo, situated below mountain cliffs.

Distance: 7 km / 4.3 miles | Walking Time: 5–6 hours

Day 7: Trek Machhermo to Gokyo Village (4,790m)

Ascend stone steps along the terminal moraine of the massive Ngozumpa Glacier. Pass the First Lake (Longponga) and Second Lake (Taboche Tsho) before arriving at Gokyo Village, resting on the shore of the Third Lake (Dudh Pokhari).

Distance: 7 km / 4.3 miles | Walking Time: 6–7 hours

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Day 8: Sunrise Climb to Gokyo Ri (5,357m) & Gokyo Lakes

Begin an early morning climb up Gokyo Ri (5,357m) for a 360-degree sunrise view over Mt. Everest, Lhotse, Makalu, and Cho Oyu. Descend to the village for breakfast. Rest during the afternoon or take a side walk to the Fourth and Fifth Lakes.

Distance: 4 km round-trip | Walking Time: 5–6 hours

Day 9: Trek Gokyo to Dole (4,110m)

Retrace your steps down the valley alongside the Ngozumpa Glacier moraine, descending past Machhermo back to Dole.

Distance: 14 km / 8.6 miles | Walking Time: 5–6 hours

Day 10: Trek Dole to Namche Bazaar (3,440m)

Descend through the rhododendron forests to Phortse Tenga, climb back to Sanasa, and follow the easy trail into Namche Bazaar.

Distance: 11 km / 6.8 miles | Walking Time: 5–6 hours

Day 11: Trek Namche Bazaar to Lukla (2,840m)

Descend the steep valley trail alongside the Dudh Koshi River, crossing back over the suspension bridges to reach Lukla for a farewell dinner with your crew.

Distance: 19 km / 11.8 miles | Walking Time: 6–7 hours

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Day 12: Flight Lukla to Kathmandu (1,400m)

Take an early flight back to Kathmandu (or via Ramechhap transfer). Transfer to your hotel and spend the rest of the day relaxing or exploring Thamel.

Accommodation: 3-Star Hotel in Kathmandu

Day 13: Final Departure

Enjoy breakfast at your hotel before transferring to Tribhuvan International Airport three hours prior to your international flight home.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How does the Gokyo Trek compare to Everest Base Camp?

Both treks reach similar peak elevations (Gokyo Ri at 5,357m vs. Kala Patthar at 5,545m) and require comparable endurance. However, Gokyo offers quieter trails, fewer crowds in teahouses, and pristine glacial lakes compared to the busier EBC route.

2. Can you see Everest clearly from Gokyo?

Yes. The summit of Gokyo Ri (5,357m) provides a clear panoramic view of Mt. Everest alongside Lhotse, Makalu, and Cho Oyu. Many trekkers rate this 360-degree panorama higher than the view from Kala Patthar because it offers a wider view of the entire Himalayan chain.

3. What happens if Lukla flights are delayed by weather?

Mountain weather in Lukla can change quickly. Our 13-day schedule accounts for buffer windows. In cases of prolonged flight grounding, helicopter upgrades can be arranged at an additional cost.

4. Are hot showers available on the trail?

Yes. Gas-heated or solar-heated showers are available at most teahouses along the route for $3 to $5 USD per shower.

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