



Expeditions

Cho Oyu 8201m



EXPEDITION OVERVIEW

Adventure Peaks has had excellent success on Cho Oyu in 2013 with all team members reaching the summit giving 100% success compared to our normal average of 80% success rate.

Adventure Peaks has been organizing expeditions to Tibet (Everest North Ridge and Cho Oyu) for over 12 years making us the most experienced and valued British company operating in Tibet and we are able to attract good International teams. There are those who scaremonger about Tibet giving indications that permits or visas won't be available, this is a total nonsense. We are aware of the delicate visa process for entering the area and have been successfully sending teams twice yearly without issue for over a decade!

Cho Oyu is the sixth highest mountain in the world and, even though it is regarded as a technically straightforward 8000m peak, its altitude is a serious undertaking and requires careful preparation and a high level of fitness.

It is said that Cho Oyu means 'Goddess of Turquoise', as its stark shadows appear this colour in the light of the setting sun when viewed from Tibet. This mountain is a vast bulk of sweeping snow slopes and clean glaciated lines; a most noble and impressive first 8000m peak. The elegant North West face of Cho Oyu brings us up fairly easy angled 30 degree snow slopes. There is one steep serac barrier to negotiate at 6800m. Where necessary, fixed lines will be placed to aid us on steeper sections.

The expedition is a professionally-led expedition. This means you will have a strong leader who has experience of climbing at high altitude together with the support of our experienced Sherpa team. You should have suitable experience to enable you move between camps and on fixed lines as part of a group without being independently guided in the traditional sense

Participation Statement

Adventure Peaks recognises that climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.

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ITINERARY

Adventure Travel – Accuracy of Itinerary

Although it is our intention to operate this itinerary as printed, it may be necessary to make some changes as a result of flight schedules, climatic conditions, limitations of infrastructure or other operational factors. As a consequence, the order or location of overnight stops and the duration of the day may vary from those outlined. You should be aware that some events are beyond our control and we would ask for your patience

KEY to inclusions (H-hotel, C-Camping, B-breakfast, L-lunch, D-dinner/evening meal)

Day 1: International flights.

Day 2: Arrive Kathmandu, transfer to hotel, close to the famous, bustling Thamel district of Kathmandu and within walking distance of the monkey temple. A place with lovely gardens where one can relax. (H,B).

Day 3: Free day enjoying the ‘bombardment of the senses’ that is Kathmandu whilst Tibetan Visas are finalised. (H,B).

Day 4: We leave Kathmandu early in the morning for our approach drive to the Friendship Bridge at Zhangmu, our entry point into Tibet. Our Liaison Officer and Interpreter, who will remain with us for the duration of the expedition, will meet us here. It would be possible to drive directly to base camp at 4900 metres within one day however this would be unwise, placing expedition members at a higher risk of the symptoms of altitude sickness. We prefer the more gradual approach that will allow us to move more directly up the mountain on arrival and provide the opportunity to see more of Tibet. Overnight will be spent in a ‘Hotel’ in Zhangmu; sometimes it may be necessary to hire local porters to portage a blockage due to landslides! (H,B,L,D).

Day 5-6: Drive to Nyalam in four wheel drive land cruisers. The next two days will be spent on the surrounding hills taking gentle acclimatisation walks up to 4500 metres. Climbing high and sleeping low in this way is essential in the early parts of the expedition. (H,B,L,D).

Day 7-8: Drive to Tingri across the great Tibetan plateau and the famous Lalung La pass (5050m), a superb viewpoint festooned with Buddhist prayer flags. Depending on how people are feeling we may stay in Tingri one or two nights, as the acclimatisation walks can be completed from Tingri or Chinese Base Camp. (H,B,L,D).

Day 9-11: Drive to Chinese Base Camp 4900m with good views of Everest en route (Normally only 40 minutes from Tingri). Our liaison officer and interpreter will remain here for the duration of the expedition, occasionally visiting our base camp. If only one night was spent in Tingri, then we will take our acclimatisation walk from here, where we can reach a height of 5600m. We will also have one rest day before starting our trek to ABC. Our Yaks should arrive in the evening or early the next morning. (C,B,L,D).

Day 12: Today we start moving along with our Yaks to intermediate camp en-route towards the base of Cho Oyu. The walk to intermediate camp normally takes about four hours, initially flat but slowly rising to 5150m just above the terminal moraine of the Gyabrag Glacier. (C,B,L,D).

Day 13: The rewards of our earlier acclimatisation gained during the approach walks should allow us to progress directly up to ABC today at 5700m. The walk takes about 7 hours.. (C,B,L,D).

Day 14: Rest day. (C,B,L,D).

Day 15: Acclimatisation walk to Lake Camp at 6000m. This day will allow the team to explore the route out across the glacier from ABC to the beginning of the scree slope, which is the start of our climb on Cho Oyu. (C,B,L,D)

Day 16-19: We should now be able to start work to establish camp 1 at 6400m along with our Sherpas. Your loads will consist of personal equipment as the Sherpas will carry the main group equipment such as tents and cooking equipment etc. The climb takes 4-6 hours and offers a fairly stiff climb over scree slopes at above 6000m. This section will feel easier as the expedition progresses (C,B,L,D).

Day 20-23: The journey up to camp 2 at 7100m involves climbing a steep 60 metre ice wall at around 6800m. With fixed lines this is a relatively straightforward task but it is likely to make your lungs work a little harder! Normally the journey takes 6-8 hours. (C,B,L,D).

Day 24-25: Rest day at ABC. (C,B,L,D).

Day 26-29: We ascend to Camp 2, this time to spend a night or two above 7000 metres. It is also possible to climb up to Camp 3 at 7500m. After this, members may wish to spend a number of days at base camp resting and building strength prior to making their summit bid. (C,B,L,D).

Day 30-32: Rest Day. (C,B,L,D).

Day 33-39: Summit Days it takes 8-10 hours to reach the summit. Initially we ascend up easy snow and rock to the summit plateau at which point it is only altitude, weather and fitness that will stop you reaching the sixth highest summit. The views across the summit plateau will include the other Himalayan giants: Everest, Lhotse, Nuptse, Menlugste and the beautiful Ama Dablam. If we are successful in climbing the mountain early then we will leave base camp early. (C,B,L,D).

Day 40-41: Return to Kathmandu. (In Tibet H,B,L,D)

Day 42: At leisure in Kathmandu. (H,B).

Day 43: Fly home. (H,B).

Previous Experience/Fitness

You should have completed a number of glaciated climbs that include previous high altitude experience to at least 6500-7000m and be technically competent to Alpine PD+ (Scottish grade I/II) and be able to rappel/abseil with a pack on. Training courses are available through Adventure Peaks 'Winter Mountaineering', 'Snow & Ice Climbing' and 'Alpine courses'. Summit success and enjoyment will require a high level of aerobic and mountain fitness. Although Cho Oyu is described as a straightforward climb, any 8000m peak is extremely demanding both physically and mentally. Team members should have suitable experience to enable them to move between camps and on fixed lines as part of a group without being independently guided.

Our Leaders

Our 8000m expedition leaders are professionals who come with a wealth of experience both in mountaineering and also in leading teams and making calculated judgements.

Sherpa Team

We do not compromise on our support staff, unlike some we only use Nepali staff in Tibet. Our regular team of climbing Sherpa knows the mountain well (we've been operating in Tibet now almost every year for the past twelve years) and are very loyal to us. Our standard Sherpa to climber ratio is at least 1:2 some clients upgrade to 1:1. They are supported by an equally good team of cooks who have been well provided for in terms of facilities and training to maintain high levels of hygiene and care.

Leader and Sherpa Support options

Standard package (most common) British Group Leader and Sherpa support on a 1:2 ratio who will place all group equipment (tents, stoves, food and oxygen) and accompany you and another team member on summit day. Standard price as per Web at time of booking, early booking reduction available see Web.

Upgrade to 1:1 Sherpa – British Group Leader and your personal Sherpa who will climb with you between camps, assist in carrying your sleeping bag and other small items of personal gear, melt water and carry your spare oxygen on summit day. Standard price plus £4,200

Upgrade 1:1 British Leader and Sherpa – the ultimate support for the client who prefers to have the additional support of a personal British leader and Sherpa at all times. Standard price plus £15,000

Base Camp & Resources

We have established a comfortable and spacious well-resourced base camp set up over the years allowing you to relax and build up strength whilst not high on the mountain.

- Facilities include carpeted Mess tent, high backed chairs, heaters, DVD player & flat screen TV.
- Personal sleeping tents
- Good communication facilities that include satellite telephones, e-mail and broad band access via a BGAN and VHF base Radio sets
- Charging facilities for your electronic devices

- Hot Showers on demand

On the mountain we use high quality tents (Terra Nova, Mountain Hardware, Marmot) on the basis of 2 people to a 3 person tent, highly efficient reactor stoves and quality high altitude food rations. We don't compromise on equipment like some teams it is supplied in sufficient quantity to allow our full team to make a summit bid at the same time. We don't need to allocate summit slots to different team members!

Oxygen:

We have developed quality systems to our oxygen supplies to ensure the very best available before and during the expedition. We don't act as guinea pigs for new developments; we wait until year two before updating our equipment to avoid the potential for technical issues. Currently we use Summit Oxygen Masks and Regulators, Summit Oxygen cylinders (the only cylinders to hold a CE approved quality stamp). We provide 20% extra oxygen for emergency use. All equipment is professionally serviced each season. In Base Camp all cylinders are rechecked in conjunction with our clients to ensure no leakage has occurred and all clients are allocated their own personal mask and regulator (no sharing) for the expedition allowing them to train and become familiar with their system from a very early stage.

Oxygen Cost - The following prices are inclusive of mask, regulator and uplift to top camp and NOT just the cylinders.

- 2 * 4 litre Cylinders £1,000
- 3 * 4 litre Cylinders £1200
- Each extra 4ltr bottle £400

Medical Cover

All our expedition leaders are trained in first aid and have a good knowledge of high altitude problems. The expedition will be equipped with:

- A well-stocked medical kit to deal with mountaineering ailments
- A portable hyperbaric chamber (Gamow bag)
- Stretcher
- Emergency oxygen,

Altitude

You should already be familiar with the effects of altitude from your previous experience. However if you are new to mountaineering at extreme altitude you may still have concerns about the effects. Don't worry, our itinerary allows sufficient time to acclimatise. The best way to avoid symptoms is to do everything slowly, walk at a steady pace and drink plenty of fluid. Should you be the exception, we can allow you to stay an extra night at a lower level and follow on with one of our local guides.

Weather Forecasts

We pay directly to a weather forecasting service to provide our team with regular weather reports to our communications equipment in base camp and our leaders are able to obtain direct updates after leaving BC on the actual summit bid. All weather reports are also monitored and recorded by our expedition's logistics staff in the UK

to provide additional support and advice. Less established companies can rarely match this level of support.

Pre Expedition Support

We have a dedicated team of experienced staff available seven days per week throughout the year to answer questions and address concerns. During expeditions we have our office team and a 24hour emergency contact service available to family and friends in addition to our Web news that provides regular updates of our expeditions. For those able to attend we offer our unique monthly training weekends in the UK to enable clients to meet and training together under our expert guidance and to gain ongoing advice.

Journey through Tibet to BC

For the journey into Base Camp it is essential that you keep any views about 'Free Tibet' quiet in public places and especially at check points and border crossings, likewise any political sensitive t-shirts! Failure to do so could result in entry being refused or a substantial delay. The hotels we use are determined by the Chinese authorities and Tibet Mountaineering Authority not by Adventure Peaks. They are very basic and we recommend the use of a sleeping bag and liner. Food is also basic and very traditional, you are likely to learn how to use chop sticks, but this is all part of why we travel. Once at BC we are in full control of our eating and sleeping arrangements. Bottled water is available throughout the journey to base camp.

IMPORTANT – The small print

Please note, if for any reason you need to return to Kathmandu separate from the whole group, there will be costs incurred which you will need to pay. These might include jeep transfer costs, leaving the border without the group, transfer from the border to Kathmandu, extra nights accommodation and/or cost to change flight. All additional payments would need to be paid for whilst in-country (card payments accepted). In this situation you should claim back any cost through your insurance policy.

Change of International flights

We allow several extra days in the itinerary for bad weather. If you do summit or come back early you may incur extra charges to change your flights. Adventure Peaks can obtain flights for you (at cost, plus small admin. charge) but if getting your own flights, make sure they are alterable and refundable, and only obtain them once the trip is viable.

Insurance

Insurance which covers mountain rescue, helicopter evacuation and medical expenses is **essential**. You should note there are no official mountain rescue services in Tibet and that any evacuation in the event of a serious medical emergency to the nearest hospital will be by land cruiser. We will require a copy of your insurance prior to departure. Cancellation insurance is recommended from the time of booking.

Financial Security

Adventure Peaks is ATOL bonded giving you financial security and peace of mind



Tips and Summit Bonus

Tipping is generally expected and part of everyday life. You should allow in the region of \$250 for general tips and \$500 as a summit bonus.

Helpful Hints

Just in case your main luggage goes missing en route, it is a good idea to wear your boots on the plane. Most other things can be replaced but boots are more difficult.

Equipment

A detailed equipment list is provided on booking. Specialist can be hired or purchased with 15% discount from our shop.

Baggage

For your own comfort, travel light. For such a long trip it's amazing how quickly the weight adds up. Some items can be left at the hotel for your return. A kit bag is provided but items should also be packed in plastic bags.

Visa and Permits

UK citizens and most EU nationals can get the Nepal Visas on arrival, All other nationals should check with their local embassy. We obtain your Tibetan visa on arrival in Nepal. Passports must be valid for at least six months after the end date of the trip.