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Ama Dablam with Island Peak Climbing - 25 Days

AMA DABLAM

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Ama Dablam.jpeg

Ama Dablam, standing at 6,812 meters (22,349 feet), is one of the most iconic and visually striking peaks in the Himalayas. Located in Nepal's Khumbu region, near Everest, its name translates to "Mother's Necklace," derived from the hanging glacier resembling a traditional Sherpa pendant. The mountain is renowned for its steep, technical climbing routes, attracting experienced mountaineers seeking a challenging yet rewarding ascent.

The standard climbing route follows the Southwest Ridge, which involves exposed rock, ice, and mixed terrain, requiring advanced alpine skills. Climbers must navigate fixed ropes, steep snow slopes, and dramatic overhangs, making it more technically demanding than many 8,000-meter peaks. Despite its relatively lower altitude, Ama Dablam's difficulty and objective hazards demand careful acclimatization and preparation.

Ama Dablam is often considered a stepping stone for climbers aiming for higher Himalayan peaks like Everest or Lhotse. The climb typically takes 3-4 weeks, including acclimatization rotations. The breathtaking views of Everest, Lhotse, and Makalu from the summit add to its allure, making it a favorite among adventure seekers.

Due to its technical nature, climbers must have prior high-altitude experience, including proficiency in ice and rock climbing. The best seasons for climbing are pre-monsoon (April-May) and post-monsoon (October-November). Despite its challenges, Ama Dablam remains a coveted climb, blending aesthetic beauty with thrilling mountaineering.

ISLAND PEAK (IMJA TSE)

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Island Peak Slider

Island Peak, also known as Imja Tse (6,189m / 20,305ft), is a popular trekking peak in Nepal's Everest region. Its name originates from its striking appearance, resembling an island in a sea of ice when viewed from Dingboche. First summited in 1953 as part of an Everest reconnaissance expedition, it has since become a favorite for climbers seeking an introduction to high-altitude mountaineering.

The climb involves a mix of glacier travel, steep snow slopes, and a final headwall requiring fixed ropes, making it ideal for those new to technical climbing. The standard route begins at Chhukung, ascending through the Imja Valley before tackling the glacier and summit ridge. While not as demanding as Ama Dablam, Island Peak still requires basic ice axe and crampon skills.

Many climbers attempt Island Peak after trekking to Everest Base Camp, using the journey for acclimatization. The summit offers spectacular views of giants like Lhotse, Nuptse, and Makalu, rewarding climbers with a true Himalayan experience. Due to its accessibility and moderate difficulty, it is often a first 6,000-meter peak for aspiring mountaineers.

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The best climbing seasons are spring (April-May) and autumn (October-November), with stable weather and clear skies. While less technical than Ama Dablam, proper acclimatization, fitness, and guidance from experienced guides are essential for a safe and successful ascent. Island Peak remains a fantastic introduction to Himalayan climbing.

TRIP OVERVIEW

Combining an Ama Dablam expedition with Island Peak climbing offers a unique and progressive Himalayan mountaineering experience, blending technical challenges with high-altitude acclimatization. This dual expedition is ideal for climbers seeking to test their skills on one of Nepal's most iconic peaks (Ama Dablam) while also summiting a classic trekking peak (Island Peak) for additional acclimatization and confidence-building. The journey typically begins in Lukla, followed by a trek through the Khumbu Valley, allowing gradual altitude adjustment while soaking in breathtaking views of Everest, Lhotse, and other Himalayan giants.

The Island Peak (6,189m) climb usually serves as an acclimatization and training phase before tackling Ama Dablam. Climbers ascend through Chhukung and the Imja Valley, navigating glacier terrain and a steep snow headwall—a perfect introduction to basic mountaineering techniques like fixed-line ascents and crampon work. Summiting Island Peak not only boosts acclimatization but also provides a psychological advantage, preparing climbers for the more demanding challenges of Ama Dablam. Many teams schedule this climb before moving toward Ama Dablam Base Camp (4,570m).

The Ama Dablam (6,812m) expedition is significantly more technical, requiring advanced alpine climbing skills. The standard Southwest Ridge route involves exposed rock sections, steep ice walls, and dramatic ridge traverses, often demanding fixed ropes and careful belaying. Climbers must be proficient in mixed climbing, crevasse rescue, and high-altitude endurance. The ascent is typically broken into multiple rotations, with camps established at 5,400m (Camp 1), 5,800m (Camp 2), and 6,200m (Camp 3) before the final push to the summit. The climb's technical nature makes prior experience on peaks like Island Peak highly beneficial.

Michal Bartosik

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Logistically, this combined expedition requires 3-5 weeks, depending on weather and acclimatization schedules. The best seasons are spring (April-May) and autumn (October-November), when conditions are most stable. A guided approach is highly recommended, as professional teams provide critical support—route fixing, weather forecasting, medical backup, and high-altitude logistics. Climbers should have prior experience with ice axes, crampons, and glacier travel, with Ama Dablam being best suited for those who have already summited 6,000 m+ peaks.

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Thus, the Ama Dablam and Island Peak combination offers a complete Himalayan adventure, balancing the thrill of a technical ascent with the satisfaction of climbing two iconic peaks. The journey not only enhances mountaineering skills but also immerses climbers in the stunning landscapes of the Everest region. For those seeking a step up from trekking peaks but not yet ready for 8,000m giants, this expedition provides the perfect challenge, blending beauty, difficulty, and achievement in one unforgettable experience.

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PRICE INCLUDES

Transportation

- All the ground transfers (hotel and airport transfers, sightseeing) via private vehicle
- Kathmandu - Lukla - Kathmandu via domestic flight

Accommodation and Food

- Four nights in Kathmandu in a 3-star category hotel (Twin Sharing)
  Fifteen nights in the best available local lodge/ teahouse during the trek (Twin Sharing)
- Five nights (Including Contingency Day at Ama Dablam Camp II) at a tented camp during the climb (Above Base Camp)
- All standard meals [Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner] throughout the trek and climb
- Available seasonal fruits throughout the trek/climb
- Breakfast in Kathmandu
- Farewell Dinner in Kathmandu

Staff

- A Government-licensed English-speaking trekking guide, including wages, meals, insurance, lodging, transportation, flight, and other necessary gear.
- For more than six trekkers, one assistant guide includes wages, meals, insurance, lodging, transportation, flight, and other necessary gear.
- A porter for two trekkers/climbers, including wages, meals, insurance, lodging, transportation, flight, and other necessary gear & equipment.
- A climbing guide (each climber will get a guide) during the climbing, including his accommodation, transportation, food, salary, transportation, and insurance.

Permits and Taxes

- Sagarmatha National Park Entry Permit
- Khumbu Pasang Lhamu Rural Municipality Entry Permit
- Island Peak Climbing Permit
- Ama Dablam Expedition Climbing Permit
- All other government, local taxes, and official expenses

Additional

- A Gore-Tex (100% Waterproof) Duffle bag to keep your personal belongings to be carried by the porter
- Assistance in arranging rescue operations in case of complicated health conditions (funded by travel insurance),
- A Complete map covering the entire Ama Dablam and Isaland Peak, t-shirt.

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- Outward Adventure Appreciation Certificate after the successful trek
- A First Aid Medicine bag in each group (carried by the trekking/climbing leader)

PRICE EXCLUDES

- International Flight Cost
- Nepal Entry Visa Fees
- Extra baggage check-in during the flight (Kathmandu-Lukla-Kathmandu) if more than 15 KG, 01 USD per KG extra, can be paid directly to the airline.
- Extra night accommodation in Kathmandu due to early arrival or late departure, or early return from the climb Personal expenses such as alcoholic drinks, shopping, snacks, boiled bottled water, hot (Tea/ Coffee) and cold drinks, hot shower, alcohol, Wi-Fi, telephone call, battery recharge fee, extra porters, etc
- Additional costs suffered due to causes beyond our control, such as natural disasters, weather conditions, itinerary modifications due to safety concerns, emergency evacuation, changes in government policies, strikes, and so forth.
- Summit Bonus for the Sherpa Guide ($700) after the successful ascent.
- Tips for guides and porters (Tips are appreciated)

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ITINERARY IN DETAIL

Day 1: Arrival in Kathmandu (1338m/4390ft)

Welcome to Nepal!

Upon your arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport, one of the representatives from Outward Adventure Treks and Expedition will greet you with a warm smile and assist you with the transfer to your hotel. Kathmandu, a vibrant city in the Himalayas, blends ancient culture and modern energy. After checking in, you'll have time to relax and freshen up from your journey.

In the evening, we will gather for a welcome briefing, during which your guide will provide an overview of the adventure ahead. This is the perfect opportunity to ask questions, discuss the itinerary in detail, and ensure all your gear is in order. We'll also verify your permits and make any last-minute adjustments to the plan.

To set the tone for your expedition, we recommend a quiet evening exploring the nearby **Thamel** district, where you can enjoy your first taste of Nepali cuisine or simply rest at the hotel. A good night's sleep will prepare you for the exciting days ahead.

Day 2: Free Day in Kathmandu: Sightseeing and Trip Preparation

After breakfast, we embark on a guided tour of Kathmandu's UNESCO World Heritage Sites, immersing you in Nepal's rich cultural heritage. The morning begins with a visit to Swayambhunath Stupa, also known as the Monkey Temple, perched atop a hill with panoramic views of the valley. Next, we explore the sacred Pashupatinath Temple, a revered Hindu pilgrimage site along the Bagmati River, where you may witness traditional rituals.

The afternoon is dedicated to finalizing trek preparations. We'll help you double-check your gear, ensuring you have all the necessary equipment for high-altitude climbing. If anything is missing, our team will assist you in renting or purchasing it from trusted suppliers in Thamel. Additionally, we'll process any remaining permits required for the trek.

The evening is yours to enjoy at leisure. You may choose to stroll through the bustling streets of Thamel, sampling local delicacies like **momo** (dumplings) or **dal bhat** (traditional Nepali meal). Alternatively, you can relax at the hotel, organizing your backpack for the early flight to Lukla the next morning.

Day 3: Fly Kathmandu to Lukla (2,860 m/9,384 ft) and trek to Phakding (2,610m/8,562ft): 9 km/3-4 hours

An exhilarating start to the adventure awaits as we take a scenic morning flight to Lukla, one of the most thrilling airstrips in the world. The 35-minute flight offers breathtaking views of the Himalayas, including glimpses of Everest. Upon landing in Lukla, we'll meet our Sherpa crew, organize our gear, and begin the trek with a gentle descent towards Phakding.

The trail follows the Dudh Koshi River, passing through lush forests, traditional Sherpa villages, and suspension bridges

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adorned with prayer flags. This first day of trekking is relatively short (3–4 hours), allowing for a smooth adjustment to the altitude. Along the way, we'll stop for lunch at a local teahouse, enjoying warm hospitality and hearty meals.

By mid-afternoon, we'll arrive in Phakding, a charming village nestled along the riverbank. After settling into our teahouse, you'll have time to explore the area, visit a nearby monastery, or simply relax with a cup of tea. In the evening, we'll gather for a briefing on the next day's trek to Namche Bazaar, ensuring everyone is prepared for the ascent.

Day 4: Trek Phakding (2,610m/8,562ft) to Namche Bazaar (3,440 m/11,283 ft): 12 km/5-6 hours

Today's trek brings us deeper into the heart of the Khumbu region as we make our way toward the bustling Sherpa capital of Namche Bazaar. The trail winds along the Dudh Koshi River, crossing several suspension bridges adorned with colorful prayer flags fluttering in the mountain breeze. The most thrilling crossing is the Hillary Suspension Bridge, a high span that offers spectacular views of the valley below.

After a lunch break in Monjo, we enter Sagarmatha National Park, where our permits will be checked. From here, the climb becomes steeper as we ascend through pine forests toward Namche. This is where many trekkers first feel the effects of altitude, so we'll take it slow and steady. As we near Namche, if the weather is clear, we may catch our first breathtaking glimpse of Everest's summit peeking above the Lhotse-Nuptse ridge.

Upon arrival in Namche, we'll settle into our cozy teahouse and enjoy a well-earned rest. This vibrant trading hub is filled with shops, bakeries, and even a few cafes where you can treat yourself to a fresh pastry or a cup of coffee. In the evening, we'll discuss the next day's acclimatization hike and share tips on managing the increasing altitude.

Day 5: Acclimatization Day in Namche Bazaar (3,440 m/11,283 ft) – Hike to Everest View Hotel

Acclimatization is crucial for a successful expedition, and today we take an essential rest day with an active hike to a higher elevation. After breakfast, we'll climb to the famous Everest View Hotel, one of the highest-placed hotels in the world. The trail offers magnificent panoramas of **Ama Dablam**, **Thamserku**, and, of course, **Mount Everest** itself.

We'll stop at the hotel for tea while soaking in the incredible mountain scenery. On our descent, we'll visit the Sherpa Culture Museum and the Everest Photo Gallery, where we can learn more about the history of Himalayan climbing and Sherpa traditions. Returning to Namche by early afternoon, you'll have free time to explore the market, stock up on any last-minute supplies, or simply relax.

In the evening, we'll gather for a briefing on the next leg of our journey to **Tengboche**. Our guide will also check in with everyone to ensure no one is experiencing any concerning altitude symptoms. A hearty dinner and good rest will prepare us for tomorrow's beautiful trek through rhododendron forests.

Day 6: Trek from Namche Bazaar (3,440 m/11,283 ft) to Tengboche (3860m/12660ft), Duration: 5-6 hours

Leaving Namche, we follow a scenic trail with jaw-dropping views of Everest, Lhotse, and Ama Dablam. The path descends to the river before climbing again toward Tengboche, home to the region's most famous monastery. Along the

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way, we may spot Himalayan wildlife like musk deer or colorful pheasants darting through the trees.

After crossing the Dudh Koshi River, we begin a steady ascent through fragrant pine and rhododendron forests. The climb to Tengboche is challenging but rewarding—upon arrival, we'll be greeted by the sight of the majestic Tengboche Monastery against the backdrop of Ama Dablam's towering peak. If we're lucky, we may witness monks chanting during evening prayers.

We'll spend the night in a teahouse near the monastery, where the peaceful atmosphere and stunning mountain vistas create a perfect setting for reflection. As the sun sets, the peaks glow in alpenglow, offering one of the most unforgettable scenes of the entire trek.

Day 7: Trek from Tengboche (3860m/12660ft) to Dingboche (4410m/14464ft), Duration: 5 hours

The morning begins with a magical sunrise over Ama Dablam, its icy flanks glowing pink in the dawn light. After breakfast, we descend through a beautiful forest of birch and rhododendron, crossing the Imja Khola on a sturdy suspension bridge. The trail then opens into wide alpine valleys, where yaks graze on the high pastures and the air grows noticeably thinner.

As we climb higher, the landscape becomes more rugged and dramatic. The towering south face of Lhotse dominates the skyline, while Island Peak makes its first appearance in the distance. We'll stop for lunch in the small village of Pangboche, home to the oldest monastery in the Khumbu region, where we might receive a blessing from the resident lama for our upcoming climbs.

The final ascent to Dingboche is steady but rewarding, with the village appearing like an oasis in this high mountain desert. Stone-walled fields protect barley crops from the wind, and the afternoon sun casts long shadows across the valley. Upon arrival, we'll settle into our teahouse and enjoy a warm drink while watching the light fade on the impressive north face of Ama Dablam.

Day 8: Acclimatization Day at Dingboche (4,360m / 14,290ft): Hike to Nagarjun Hill

Today's acclimatization hike takes us up Nagarjun Hill, offering 360-degree views that make every step worthwhile. We start with a gentle climb through yak pastures, following ancient moraine ridges left by retreating glaciers. The trail becomes steeper as we ascend, but frequent stops allow us to catch our breath and admire the expanding panorama.

From the summit, we're treated to an unparalleled vista - the entire Imja Valley stretches below us, with Island Peak directly ahead and the massive bulk of Makalu visible to the east. This is where we truly begin to feel the altitude, with each breath requiring more conscious effort. Our guide will explain the importance of proper hydration and pacing as we prepare for even higher elevations.

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Returning to Dingboche by early afternoon, we'll have time to rest and recover. Some may choose to visit the local bakery for fresh apple pie, a surprising luxury at this altitude. In the evening, we'll review our gear for the upcoming climb and discuss the route to Chhukung, where our Island Peak adventure truly begins.

Day 9: Trek from Dingboche (4,360m / 14,290ft) to Chhukung (4735m / 15,535ft) 3 Hours

The trail to Chhukung leads us deeper into the high mountain wilderness, following the Imja Valley with its dramatic glacial scenery. We pass through Bibre, the last permanent settlement before base camp, where the stone houses seem to grow organically from the rocky landscape. The air is crisp and thin, carrying the sound of distant avalanches rumbling from the surrounding peaks.

As we approach Chhukung, the massive south face of Lhotse towers above us, its icy features clearly visible. The village itself sits in a spectacular amphitheater of mountains, with Island Peak's distinctive summit beckoning just a few kilometers away. We'll check into our lodge and immediately begin preparing for tomorrow's move to base camp.

In the afternoon, those feeling strong can take a short hike to Chhukung Ri for additional acclimatization and breathtaking views. As the sun sets, the temperature drops quickly, and we gather in the dining room to review our climbing plan over steaming cups of ginger tea. The excitement is palpable - after days of trekking, we're finally about to begin our ascent of Island Peak.

Day 10: Trek from Chhukung (4735m / 15,535ft) to Island Peak Base Camp (5,200m / 17,050ft)

The short but steep hike to base camp takes us through a lunar-like landscape of moraines and glacial debris. Our Sherpa team goes ahead with the heavy equipment, setting up camp in a protected hollow beneath Island Peak's imposing north face. As we arrive, we're greeted with hot drinks and shown to our tents, which will be home for the next two nights.

After lunch, we conduct a thorough gear check and receive instruction on fixed line techniques and crampon use. Our climbing Sherpas demonstrate proper ice axe handling and self-arrest positions in the nearby snowfields. The afternoon is spent organizing personal equipment and mentally preparing for the challenging summit day ahead.

As darkness falls, the temperature plummets, and we retreat to the dining tent for a hearty high-altitude meal. The conversation turns serious as we discuss the summit attempt - our 1am wake-up call, the importance of pacing, and recognizing altitude symptoms. We turn in early, listening to the occasional rumble of avalanches echoing across the valley, knowing that in just a few hours, our biggest challenge will begin.

Day 11: Summit Island Peak (6,189 m/20,305 ft) and return to Chhukung (4735m / 15,535ft)

The crunch of crampons on frozen snow echoes in the darkness as our headlamps carve narrow beams through the cold night air. After a hurried breakfast of porridge and tea, we begin the long, winding ascent up the rocky moraine. The initial slope is deceptively gentle, but the altitude makes every step laborious. As dawn breaks over the Himalayas, we reach the crampon point where we rope up and prepare for the glacier crossing.

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The most technical section awaits – a steep snow and ice wall requiring careful front-pointing with crampons while clipped into fixed lines. Our Sherpa guides move with effortless grace, patiently coaching us through each challenging move. The final summit ridge is exposed but spectacular, with the entire Khumbu region unfolding beneath our feet. At the top, we're rewarded with breathtaking views of Lhotse's massive south face and Makalu's towering pyramid in the distance.

Descending carefully through softening snow, we return to base camp by early afternoon, exhausted but exhilarated. After packing our gear, we make the short trek back to Chhukung, where hot showers and celebratory drinks await. That evening, we share stories of the climb while examining photos of our achievement – the first major milestone of our Himalayan adventure complete.

Day 12: Contingency Day in Case of Bad Weather Conditions

This buffer day serves as insurance against unpredictable mountain weather. If we've already summited, it transforms into a well-earned rest day in Chhukung. Many choose to visit the small research station studying high-altitude ecosystems, or simply relax with a book in the lodge's sunny courtyard.

For those needing this day for their summit attempt, the team wakes before dawn once more to make another bid for the top. The Sherpas carefully assess weather conditions and team health before giving the go-ahead. Meanwhile, those resting in Chhukung keep an eye on the mountain, watching for tiny specks of climbers moving slowly up the icy slopes.

By evening, regardless of how this day was spent, we regroup to prepare for the next phase of our journey. Equipment is sorted, with some trekking gear being sent back to Kathmandu while technical climbing equipment is prepared for the more challenging Ama Dablam ascent. The mood shifts noticeably as we transition from trekking peak climbers to expedition mountaineers.

Day 13: Trek from Chhukung (4,730m /15,518ft) to Ama Dablam Base Camp (4,600m/15,100 ft)

Leaving Chhukung, we descend through the Imja Valley before branching off onto the less-traveled trail toward Ama Dablam. The mountain appears and disappears teasingly as we navigate rocky moraines and cross icy streams. Base camp sits in a spectacular amphitheater directly beneath Ama Dablam's iconic hanging glacier, its seracs glistening in the sunlight.

The sprawling base camp is a buzzing community of international expeditions. After claiming our site, we meet our dedicated climbing Sherpas who will be with us through the entire ascent. The afternoon is spent organizing gear, attending the mandatory safety briefing, and getting our first close-up look at the route we'll be climbing.

As night falls, the temperature drops sharply and climbers retreat to their tents. The sound of avalanches rumbling down Ama Dablam's flanks serves as a constant reminder of the mountain's power. We sleep restlessly, minds racing with anticipation of the challenging days ahead on this world-class climbing objective.

Day 14: Rest Day and Worshipping Ceremony at Ama Dablam Base Camp (4,570m/14,994ft)

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The resonant drone of Tibetan horns and rhythmic chanting of monks fills base camp as we gather for the sacred puja ceremony. The Sherpas construct a stone altar adorned with prayer flags, offerings of rice, and juniper branches. We each receive blessed kata scarves for protection during our climb. The ceremony culminates with all team members and Sherpas sharing tsampa (roasted barley flour) and chang (local beer) in celebration.

The rest of the day is spent making final preparations. We conduct thorough equipment checks, sorting gear into loads for the higher camps. Some team members practice fixed line techniques on nearby rock outcrops while others study the route through binoculars. The atmosphere is a mix of focused preparation and nervous excitement as we mentally prepare for tomorrow's move to Camp 1.

As evening approaches, the team gathers for a special dinner featuring fresh meat and vegetables brought up from lower villages. Our head guide reviews the plan for establishing Camp 1, emphasizing the importance of pacing on this technically demanding section. We retire early, knowing this is our last night at relative comfort before the serious climbing begins.

Day 15: Ama Dablam Base Camp (4,600m/15,100 ft) to Camp I (5,700m/18,700ft)

The crunch of gravel underfoot marks our departure from base camp as we begin the long traverse across the lateral moraine. After two hours of scrambling over boulders, we reach the fixed lines marking the start of the technical climbing. The route winds dramatically up the Southwest Ridge, with increasingly exposed positions offering heart-stopping views down the mountain's sheer faces.

The famous "Yellow Tower" presents our first major challenge – a steep 20-meter rock pitch requiring careful footwork and trust in the fixed ropes. Above this, we navigate a series of narrow ledges affectionately called the "Mushroom Ridge" due to their distinctive shape. The final push to Camp 1 feels endless in the thin air, but arriving at the small tents perched precariously on the ridge makes it all worthwhile.

As the sun sets, we huddle in the cramped tent, melting snow for water and forcing down high-calorie freeze-dried meals. The wind howls outside, rocking the tent as we try to rest. At this altitude, sleep comes fitfully despite our exhaustion. We drift off thinking about tomorrow's push to Camp 2, knowing the most technical climbing still lies ahead.

Day 16: Climb Camp I (5,700m/18,700ft) Camp II (6,000m/19,685ft)

Dawn reveals our spectacular position – suspended between earth and sky with the entire Khumbu Valley spread out beneath us. The route to Camp 2 is the most technically demanding section of the climb, featuring steep mixed terrain of rock, ice and snow. We move carefully across the exposed Grey Tower, front-pointing up ice-filled cracks while clipped into the fixed lines.

The crux comes at the famous "Dablam" – the namesake hanging glacier looming ominously above us. Moving quickly through this section, we're acutely aware of the objective danger from icefall. Past this point, the route relents slightly as we traverse snow slopes to reach Camp 2, the highest and most spectacular of our campsites.

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The small tent platform has been carefully prepared by our Sherpa team, who have already stocked it with oxygen, fuel and supplies. As we settle in for the night, the view is nothing short of spectacular – the lights of Namche Bazaar twinkling far below, with Everest and Lhotse glowing in the moonlight. Despite the altitude-induced headaches, there's a palpable sense of anticipation knowing summit day is just hours away.

Day 17: Summit Back to Camp II (6,000m/19,685ft)

The piercing beep of the summit day alarms shatters the cold silence at 1 am. We force down warm liquids and high-energy snacks while preparing our gear by headlamp. The initial climb up the snow slope above Camp 2 is brutally steep, with each step requiring maximum effort in the thin air. As dawn breaks, we reach the famous "Red Tower," its crimson rock glowing in the morning light.

The route becomes increasingly exposed as we navigate the knife-edge summit ridge. Fixed lines provide security as we balance along the corniced edge, with drops of nearly 2,000 meters on either side. The final snow slope to the summit seems to go on forever, but suddenly we're there, standing atop one of the world's most beautiful mountains.

The summit is surprisingly small, just enough room for a few climbers at a time. We take turns posing for photos with the distinctive summit cross, careful not to trip over the numerous prayer flags snapping in the wind. The 360-degree view is unparalleled – from Everest and Lhotse to the east, all the way to Cho Oyu and the Tibetan plateau to the north.

Descending carefully, we rappel down the steepest sections, reaching Camp 2 by early afternoon, where our Sherpas have hot drinks waiting. The mood is jubilant but exhausted as we recount the day's challenges and triumphs. That night, despite our fatigue, few slept well – our bodies still buzzing with adrenaline from the day's incredible achievement.

Day 18: Contingency Day in Case of Bad Weather Conditions

These crucial buffer days account for the unpredictable nature of high-altitude climbing. If we've already summited, they are used to return and rest days at base camp – a welcome chance to recover and celebrate. Team members swap stories with other expeditions while enjoying the simple pleasures of fresh food and relative warmth.

For teams needing these days for their summit bid, the tension is palpable as they wait for weather windows. Our meteorologist provides detailed forecasts while Sherpas monitor conditions on the mountain. When the go-ahead comes, the team moves with practiced efficiency – this is what all the preparation has been for.

Regardless of how these days are used, by their end we're all ready to begin our descent. The mountain has given us what we came for – some in the form of summit success, others in lessons about limits and perseverance. As we pack our gear, we take long last looks at Ama Dablam's iconic silhouette, knowing we've been forever changed by our time on its flanks.

Day 19: Contingency Day in Case of Bad Weather Conditions

These crucial buffer days account for the unpredictable nature of high-altitude climbing. If we've already summited, they are used as return and rest days at base camp – a welcome chance to recover and celebrate. Team members swap

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For teams needing these days for their summit bid, the tension is palpable as they wait for weather windows. Our meteorologist provides detailed forecasts while Sherpas monitor conditions on the mountain. When the go-ahead comes, the team moves with practiced efficiency – this is what all the preparation has been for.

Regardless of how these days are used, by their end we're all ready to begin our descent. The mountain has given us what we came for – some in the form of summit success, others in lessons about limits and perseverance. As we pack our gear, we take long last looks at Ama Dablam's iconic silhouette, knowing we've been forever changed by our time on its flanks.

Day 20: Descend Ama Dablam Camp II (6,000m/19,685ft) to Base Camp (4,600m/15,100 ft)

The descent from high camp is bittersweet – equal parts relief at going downhill and sadness at leaving the heights we've worked so hard to reach. We rappel down the technical sections with newfound confidence, moving much faster than during our ascent. The fixed lines that seemed so intimidating on the way up now feel like old friends.

Arriving at base camp feels like returning to civilization after weeks in another world. The entire staff gathers to congratulate us, presenting sweet tea and fresh fruit – luxuries we've been dreaming about at altitude. That evening, we hold a celebration dinner with all the Sherpas and kitchen staff, sharing stories and expressing our deep gratitude for their support.

As the traditional farewell songs begin, many team members find themselves unexpectedly emotional. The bonds formed through shared hardship and triumph are unlike any other. We go to bed that night with full stomachs and full hearts, ready for the long trek back to the world below.

Day 21: Trek Ama Dablam Base Camp (4,600m/15,100 ft) to Namche Bazaar (3,440 m/11,283 ft)

Leaving base camp feels like waking from a dream as we rejoin the main Everest trail. The lush vegetation and thicker air are immediately noticeable as we descend through rhododendron forests. In Pangboche, we stop to visit the ancient monastery, offering thanks for our safe passage.

The final climb up to Namche is tougher than many expect, but the promise of hot showers and cold beer keeps us moving. Arriving in Namche feels like returning to a metropolis after weeks in the wilderness. The team scatters to various bakeries and gear shops, indulging in creature comforts we've been fantasizing about for weeks.

That evening, we gather one last time as a full team for a celebration dinner at Namche's finest restaurant. Toasts are made, business cards exchanged, and plans hatched for future adventures. The knowledge that our incredible journey is nearing its end lends a special poignancy to the evening's festivities.

Day 22: Trek Namche Bazaar (3,440 m/11,283 ft) to Lukla (2,860 m/9,384 ft)

The final trekking day is a long but mostly downhill march through familiar terrain. We pass through villages where we

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stopped on our way up, noticing how much stronger we've become. The suspension bridges that once seemed daunting now feel routine, though we still pause to appreciate their engineering.

Arriving in Lukla brings our circular journey to a satisfying close. We check into the same lodges where we began our adventure weeks before, though we're decidedly dirtier and more weathered now. The evening is spent packing duffels, settling tips for the Sherpa team, and enjoying one last night of teahouse camaraderie.

As we prepare to return to Kathmandu, there's time for reflection on all we've experienced – the physical challenges, the cultural encounters, the breathtaking landscapes, and most importantly, the people who shared this extraordinary journey with us. The mountains have given us far more than just summit certificates – they've given us memories and friendships that will last a lifetime.

Day 23: Fly Lukla (2,860 m/9,384 ft) to Kathmandu (1,338m/4,390ft

The early morning flight to Kathmandu is both exhilarating and terrifying as the tiny plane leaps off Lukla's steep runway. Within minutes, we're soaring over ridges we spent days traversing, gaining a new appreciation for the distances we covered on foot. The Himalayan peaks stand sharp against the morning sky, bidding us farewell.

Back in Kathmandu, the sensory overload is immediate – the noise, the smells, the crowds all feel overwhelming after weeks in the mountains. We check into our comfortable hotel, where long-awaited hot showers and clean clothes await. The afternoon is free for souvenir shopping in Thamel or simply relaxing by the pool.

Day 24: Rest Day at Kathmandu (1,338m/4,390ft)

This well-earned rest day allows for personal exploration of Kathmandu's countless treasures. Some team members visit the ancient city of Bhaktapur or the monkey temple at Swayambhunath, while others prioritize spa treatments and laundry services.

Our agency hosts a late afternoon debriefing session where we review the expedition and provide feedback. This is also when we receive our official summit certificates and any leftover equipment. The evening is free for last-minute shopping or individual farewell dinners with new friends.

As we pack our bags for home, our minds are already processing the enormity of what we've accomplished. Two major Himalayan peaks climbed, countless challenges overcome, and memories made that will last long after the gear is put away and the tan lines fade.

In the evening, we gather for our final celebration dinner at one of Kathmandu's finest restaurants. Awards are presented, slideshows shared, and contact information exchanged. Laughter and stories flow freely as we relive our adventure one last time before going our separate ways.

Day 25: International Flight (Final Departure)

Our team provides transfers to the airport according to flight schedules, offering final farewells and handshakes. As you

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check in for your international flight, there's time for one last look at the distant Himalayan peaks from the airport viewing gallery.

The journey home begins, but the mountains remain – in our photos, our stories, and most importantly, in our hearts. You're no longer just a traveler; you've become part of the long tradition of Himalayan adventurers. As the plane lifts off, you might already find yourself dreaming about which peak to climb next...

Have a Safe Journey.

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FAQ

1. What is the Ama Dablam with Island Peak Climbing expedition?

The Ama Dablam with Island Peak Climbing is a combined Himalayan mountaineering adventure that includes summiting Island Peak (6,189m/20,305ft) and Ama Dablam (6,812m/22,349ft) in one expedition. Island Peak is typically climbed first to build acclimatization, technical skills, and confidence before attempting the more demanding Ama Dablam ascent.

2. How difficult is the Ama Dablam and Island Peak climbing expedition?

This is a high-altitude technical climbing expedition requiring strong physical fitness, endurance, acclimatization, and prior mountaineering experience. Island Peak involves glacier travel, crampons, ice-axe use, and fixed ropes, while Ama Dablam requires more advanced skills on steep rock, ice, mixed terrain, and exposed sections of the Southwest Ridge.

3. What are the highest elevations reached during the Ama Dablam and Island Peak climb?

The expedition reaches 6,189 meters (20,305 feet) on Island Peak and 6,812 meters (22,349 feet) on Ama Dablam. The itinerary also includes high-altitude camps, including Ama Dablam Camps I and II, as part of the acclimatization and summit strategy.

4. Why climb Island Peak before Ama Dablam?

Climbing Island Peak before Ama Dablam provides an opportunity to gain additional high-altitude experience and practice essential mountaineering techniques such as glacier travel, crampon movement, fixed-line climbing, and ice-axe use. It can also help climbers become better acclimatized before progressing to the more technical Ama Dablam ascent.

5. What is the best season for Ama Dablam and Island Peak climbing?

The recommended climbing seasons are generally spring (April–May) and autumn (October–November), when the page identifies more favorable and stable conditions for high-altitude climbing. Weather can still change rapidly in the Himalayas, so the expedition itinerary includes contingency days for unfavorable conditions.