

# MAKALU BASE CAMP TO KHUMBU



Mount Makalu as seen from near Base Camp



# HIGHLIGHTS

- This trek follows the crux section of The Great Himalaya Trail (“GHT”) for further information please see our Blog entry <http://themountaincompany.blogspot.com/2010/02/great-himalaya-trail.html>
- A truly adventurous expedition passing through a remote and wild region of the Himalayas from Makalu BC over three high passes (Sherpani, West & Amphulaptsa) into the Khumbu region near Everest.
- The trail takes you from the steamy lowlands of Tumlingtar near the Arun River through one of the least frequented areas of Nepal via Shipton La (4,216m) to Makalu Base Camp.
- This expedition will be led by Roland Hunter in April 2011, he climbed to the summit of Mt Makalu 2009 (without supplemental oxygen or Sherpa support) so know this area very well and the logistical challenges involved in trekking to Makalu Base Camp.
- The itinerary has been designed to include sufficient time for acclimatisation to the altitude in order to increase your chances of completing the traverse.
- There are superb views of the fifth highest mountain in the world Mt. Makalu at 8,462m often known as “Great Black One”, Baruntse at 7,129m and Chamlang at 7,319m.
- This trek is known as the most difficult in the Himalaya.



# REASONS TO CHOOSE THE MOUNTAIN COMPANY FOR MAKALU BC TO KHUMBU.

- Our itinerary has been carefully designed to ensure sufficient acclimatisation as well as including spare days to maximise your chance of successfully arriving to the Khumbu.
- Mountain Hardwear Trango 3.1 tents are used for all of our camping treks in Nepal. These are three person domed tents with plenty of space for two people sharing plus gear.
- We bring a satellite phone for logistical, safety and personal use.
- We provide each porter with windproof jacket & trousers, walking boots and shelter as per IPPG Guidelines.
- There will be a range of tasty meals for breakfast, lunch and supper. We also bring along a supply of chocolate bars, Pringles, biscuit and nuts.
- We bring a comprehensive first aid kit from UK (Life Systems Mountain Leader) plus high altitude medicine, antibiotics and other medicines.
- Pre trip support will be given by Roland via email, phone or face to face meetings. In the past members have arranged to meet up prior to the trek.
- We would be happy to arrange an extension if you would like to visit Everest Base Camp, this would take an extra three to four days.



# MAKALU BASE CAMP TO KHUMBU

Total number of days	31 days
Grade & days trekking	Strenuous (Mountaineering), 25 trekking days
Accommodation	3 nights hotel, 27 nights camping
2011 price ex Kathmandu	£2,495 (US\$3,995)
Minimum group size	6
Dates	April 22 <sup>nd</sup> to May 22 <sup>nd</sup> 2011



## **THE FOLLOWING IS INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TRIP**

- Internal flight to/from Kathmandu and Tumlingtar.
- All transfers including airport collections.
- Twin share room at Hotel Tibet in Kathmandu.
- Breakfast only at Hotel Tibet in Kathmandu, all meals included while on trek.
- Twin share tents while on trek using our three person Mountain Hardwear Trango 3.1s.
- All trekking arrangements including permits and fees, tents, TMC guide, porters and cook.
- Complimentary Makalu trekking map.
- Financial protection insurance with International Passenger Protection.

## **THE FOLLOWING SINGLE SUPPLEMENT IS AVAILABLE:**

Single room supplement	US\$TBD
Single tent supplement	US\$TBD

Please note that if you are a single person booking on one of our trips you do not have to pay the single room supplement, this is only payable if you specifically request to have a room or tent to yourself. You will not have to pay this for this option if you happen to end up with a single room or tent due to odd numbers on the trip.

## **THE FOLLOWING IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TRIP**

- International flight to/from Kathmandu (London from £515).
- Travel & trekking insurance.
- Nepal visa for 90 days at US\$100



- Lunch and evening meals in Kathmandu.
- Personal clothing & equipment, please see the Appendix for suggested kit list.
- Tips (guidance on amounts included in Nepal pre departure information).
- Other items not listed in “What is included”.

## YOUR COMPLETE FINANCIAL PROTECTION

In accordance with "The Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992" all passengers booking with The Mountain Company are fully protected for the initial deposit and subsequently the balance of all monies paid to us, including repatriation if required, arising from cancellation or curtailment of your travel arrangements due to the insolvency of The Mountain Company.

This Insurance has been arranged by International Passenger Protection Limited and underwritten by Insurers who are members of the Association of British Insurers. A certificate detailing this cover will be given to each passenger as evidence of cover.



## PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

Participants should be aware trekking, mountaineering and travelling in a developing country are activities that involve a risk of personal injury or death. As a condition of booking you must accept these risks and be responsible for your own actions and involvement.

Adventure travel requires an open and flexible attitude. You may experience extreme conditions, unpredictable weather and last minute changes to the itinerary beyond our control. Lack of acclimatisation to high altitudes could also be a risk



factor. Our itineraries allow optimum time for acclimatising although it is possible that some individuals might be slow acclimatisers.

The majority of our trips visit remote areas where you are away from normal emergency services and medical facilities. In case of a serious injury requiring hospitalisation, it has to be accepted by you, evacuation could take up to several days and may impede your ensuing recovery. Helicopters are the most usual means of evacuation, however they are not always available or they may be hindered by poor weather and flying conditions.

## **INTRODUCTION**

An expedition from Makalu Base Camp to Everest via Sherpani Pass, West Col and Amphu Lapsa.

This is a truly adventurous expedition passing through a remote and wild region of the Himalayas with superb views of Makalu, Everest, Lhotse, Chamlang and Kanchenjunga. It is very important to be sufficiently acclimatised before making the crossing of the Sherpani Pass is 6,135m. There are logistical challenges in supplying an expedition to such a remote area of the Himalaya and this is only possible by bringing a strong and experienced Sherpa team along with a western leader.

The trail takes you from the steamy lowlands near Tumlingtar on the Arun River over the Shipton La into the remote and beautiful Barun river valley before arriving at Makalu Base Camp. From here we cross Sherpani Pass over to Baruntse Base Camp, then cross West Col to Panch Pokhari followed by the Amphu Lapsa into the Khumbu. Mountaineering experience is required to safely complete this journey as there will be fixed rope on the passes and group rope travel on the glaciers.



## DETAILED ITINERARY

It is our intention to keep to the day by day itinerary detailed below, although there might be some flexibility due to local conditions or other factors beyond our control. If this is the case the trek leader will do everything possible to work out the changes to the itinerary in order to minimise your inconvenience.

### **Day 1. Arrive Kathmandu and join the tour at the hotel.**

You will be met on arrival at Kathmandu airport and driven back to the hotel. Please provide travel plans on booking and we will arrange the pick up and transfer. A full expedition briefing will be given in the afternoon.

### **Day 2. Fly to Tumlingtar and trek to Khandbari (1,020m)- 3 to 4 hours walking.**

After the flight to Tumlingtar, we start the trek walking through bamboo and pipal trees to the busy market town of Khandbari home to Chhetris, Newars, Tamangs and a few Sherpas.

### **Day 3. Trek to Chichila (1,840m)- 5 to 6 hours walking.**

The trail today goes uphill through terraced fields to Manebhanjyang and then further up through forest. We will probably have lunch at Bhotebas and then continue to a pass at 1,900m where we might get our first views of Makalu. We contour for an hour or so before reaching our camp at the small village of Chichila.

### **Day 4. Trek to Num (1,500m)- 5 to 6 hours walking.**

Leaving Chichila we walk through rhododendron forests and bamboo. For the rest of the day we follow the ridge with views of Makalu. After lunch we reach the small Sherpa village of Mure and then descend to Num for our overnight camp.

### **Day 5. Trek to Sedua (1,540m)- 5 to 6 hours walking.**

Today we descend through the dense jungle of the Arun Valley to 650m where we cross a large suspension bridge over the Arun river. We have a steep climb on the other side up to the village of Sedua.

### **Day 6. Trek to Tashigaon (2,070m)- 4 to 5 hours walking.**

We continue climbing out of the valley, through dense forests of rhododendron, birch and bamboo and more terraced fields to the Sherpa village of Tashigaon.



**Day 7. Trek to Khongma (3,560m)- 7 hours walking.**

There is a steady climb through forest, and after a while, it starts to open out with more rhododendrons. We camp further along the ridge to Khongma where there is a teahouse lodge with tent terraces.

**Day 8. Rest & acclimatisation day.**

A rest day for acclimatising before crossing the Shipton La tomorrow.

**Day 9. Trek to Debotay (3,650m) via Shipton La (4,216m)- 6 to 7 hours walking.**

Today we cross the Shipton La at 4,216m where there are superb views of Chamlang and Makalu. Near the pass we walk through heathland and lakes before dropping down into the forest near our camp at Debotay.

**Day 10. Trek to Yangle Kharka (3,600m)- 4 to 5 hours walking.**

After leaving Yangle Kharka the trail traverses along the steep sides of the Barun Valley. Our camp is near a yak herders hut at Yangle Kharka.

**Day 11. Trek to Merek (4,100m)- 4 to 5 hours walking.**

After crossing the Barun River on a rickety bridge we then climb steeply to Ripock Kharka. As we head towards the lower Barun Glacier we get views of Pyramid Peak and Chamlang.

**Day 12. Trek to Mera (4,500m)- 2 to 3 hours walking.**

Today is a shorter day in order to have time to acclimatise to the altitude and the walk up to Makalu Base Camp tomorrow.

**Day 13. Trek to Makalu Base Camp (5,000m).**

Makalu Base Camp is in located in a grassy area with a view of the south face of Makalu. We have the rest of the day to explore around the area.

**Day 14. Acclimatisation day.**

**Day 15. Trek to Hilary Base Camp (5,400m).**

**Day 16. Acclimatisation day.**

**Day 17. Trek to High Camp before Sherpani Pass (5,700m).**



**Day 18. Acclimatisation day.**

**Day 19. Cross Sherpani Pass at 6,135m and to Baruntse Base Camp (5,400m).**

**Day 20. Cross West Col at 6,143m.**

**Day 21. Trek to Panch Pokhari (5,400m).**

**Day 22. Trek to High Camp before Amphu Laptsa.**

**Day 23. Cross Amphu Laptsa at 5,850m.**

**Day 24. Trek to Chukkung (4,730m).**

**Day 25. Trek to Deboche (3,770m).**

**Day 26. Trek to Namche Bazaar (3,440m).**

**Day 27. Rest day in Namche Bazaar (3,440m).**

**Day 28. Trek to Lukla (2,840m).**

**Day 29. Fly to Kathmandu.**

**Day 30. Sightseeing in Kathmandu.**

**Day 31. Fly back home.**

Transfer from hotel to Kathmandu airport for your flight back home.



# ETHICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Mountain Company is committed to adopting a responsible attitude to the areas we visit. We are guests of the communities visited and with some thought and care we can ensure that everyone benefits from the experience.

We work closely with the International Porter Protection Group ([www.ippg.net](http://www.ippg.net)) who we support as a Camp 1 sponsor- we abide by their 5 guidelines for porter protection.

We also work with other organisations such as Climate Care ([www.climatecare.org](http://www.climatecare.org)), Tourism Concern ([www.tourismconcern.org.uk](http://www.tourismconcern.org.uk)), Friends of Conservation ([www.foc-uk.com](http://www.foc-uk.com)) and Kathmandu Environmental Education Project ([www.keepnepal.org](http://www.keepnepal.org)).

We have developed a Responsible Tourism policy which aims to ensure that The Mountain Company and its clients act in a way that is socially, environmentally and culturally sound; please refer to Appendix III in this Trip Dossier.

The Mountain Company has joined the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Know Before You Go campaign. The aim is to make sure travellers are properly prepared before travelling overseas. The best way to get the FCO latest advice is to visit their website at: [www.fco.gov.uk/travel](http://www.fco.gov.uk/travel).

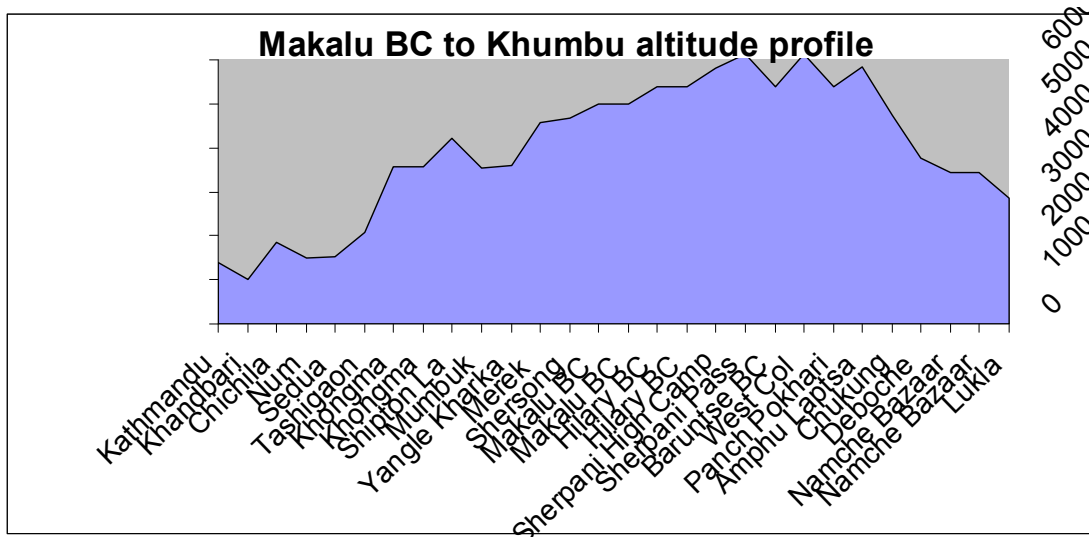




# PRACTICAL INFORMATION

## ALTITUDE AND ACCLIMATISATION

Our Makalu Base Camp to Khumbu itinerary has been designed for gradual acclimatisation to take place, take a look at the altitude profile for the itinerary below:



There are ways of helping the acclimatisation process, as described below:

- Walk slowly: there is plenty of time included in the itinerary so there is no need to rush, go at your own pace and enjoy the incredible views!
- Drink lots of water: it is easier for your body to acclimatise when hydrated so drink water and avoid coffee, tea and alcohol.
- Consider taking diamox (acetazolamide): before using this drug we recommend consulting a doctor and thoroughly researching the pros and cons.



For further information we suggest you take a look at the following websites:

Base Camp MD website:

<http://www.BaseCampmd.com/expguide/highalt.shtml>

High Altitude medicine website:

<http://www.high-altitude-medicine.com>

Medex Travel at High Altitude:

<http://www.medex.org.uk/v26%20booklet.pdf>

BMC website:

<http://www.thebmc.co.uk/Feature.aspx?id=1746>

## COMMUNICATIONS

We bring a Thuraya satellite phone for logistical, safety and personal use. Personal calls charged at £3 per minute and £2 to send and receive SMS text.

## ACCOMMODATION IN KATHMANDU

In Kathmandu we use Hotel Tibet (three star). The hotel is located close to the British Embassy near to the centre of Kathmandu. It is within walking distance of the Royal Palace and the tourist hub of Thamel.

## A TYPICAL DAY ON TREK

The day starts with an early morning mug of tea brought to your tent by one of the cook's helpers. Before heading over to the mess tent for breakfast it is best to pack your overnight gear into your duffel bag. During breakfast the tents will be packed away and, after the porters have arranged their loads, they will set off on the trail in the cool of the morning.

After breakfast, probably between 7am and 8am, we start walking. The pace of the trek is leisurely with plenty of time to enjoy the scenery, take photos and explore the



local villages. Lunch will be around 11am at a spot by the side of the trail and is prepared for us by the cooks.

There is more walking after lunch and normally you will get into camp by mid afternoon with the tents already put up by the local staff. In the evening a three course meal is served in the mess tent around 7pm. After supper the leader will discuss the plan for the next day with the group. People might stay in the mess tent chatting about the day's events for a while before retiring to their tent for the night.

## **FOOD**

In Kathmandu there is a wide range of excellent restaurants to try out, some of the more popular ones are: K Too Steak House, Everest Steak House, Rumdoodles, Fire and Ice, La Dolce Vita, Mike's Breakfast and New Orleans. Breakfast is provided each morning by the hotel.

While on the trek, the cook will provide good quality food in sufficient quantities. For breakfast you are likely to get porridge or cereal, toast or chapattis, omelettes and a range of hot drinks. For our camping treks in Nepal we provide fresh coffee from our Bialetti Moka coffee machine. On arrival to camp in the afternoon you will be given tea and biscuits and a three course meal will follow later in the evening.

## **CLIMATE**

The traditional trekking season in Nepal is late September to May, with October and November generally recognised as having the best weather. Spring is also a popular time of year with warmer weather and the advantage of seeing spring flowers and rhododendrons in bloom.

This trek will have a wide range of temperatures depending on the altitude and the time of day. In the mountains between 1,000m and 3,500m the nights will be cool, normally around 5°C, and during the day temperatures sometimes rise to 25°C. At higher altitudes temperatures range from about 15°C to -20°C.



## CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

A list of suggested clothing and equipment for the Makalu Base Camp to Khumbu trek has been included in Appendix below. This is a comprehensive list and experienced trekkers will often take only a selection of these items based on what has worked in the past. It is worth pointing out that you will need a sleeping bag for this trip.

If you do not have the clothing and equipment contained in this list then a good option might be to rent from the UK. Trek Hire is a company that rents out high quality items at competitive prices which would save you the expense of buying. The link to their website is <http://www.trekhireuk.com/>

Alternatively if you are going to buy then please contact the office for the Cotswold Outdoor promo code that entitles you, as a client of The Mountain Company, to a 15% discount in their stores and online.

Each trekker should bring one backpack for items required during the day. Your day backpack will contain items such as warm clothes, jacket, camera, water bottles, personal first aid kit and snacks.

The rest of your personal equipment packed in a duffel bag or backpack will be carried by a porter. **The maximum weight allowance is 15kgs.** Please ensure that your bag is marked clearly on the outside for easy identification

## VISA REQUIREMENTS

All foreigners require a visa for entry into Nepal. It is your responsibility to obtain the entry visa. You can get from a Nepalese embassy overseas or on arrival in Nepal. Most people will obtain their visa on arrival to Kathmandu airport.

You will need one passport photo and the following fees dependent:

*15 days USD\$25 or equivalent convertible currency*

*30 days USD\$40 or equivalent convertible currency*

*90 days USD\$100 or equivalent convertible currency*



## VACCINATIONS AND MEDICAL

You should obtain professional advice from a travel clinic or your local GP about which vaccinations to have before you arrive in Nepal. A dental check-up is a good idea as there will be no dental facilities while on the trek.

We bring a comprehensive first aid kit from UK (Life Systems Mountain Leader) plus high altitude medicine, antibiotics and other medicines.

## FLIGHTS

We recommend Max Travel (ATOL bonded license# 4705) for booking international flights and other travel arrangements. Please take a look at their website at <http://www.maxtravel.co.uk/> or give them a call on 020 7095 0920.

There are a number of good online agents that we also recommend, they are:

Kayak: *an excellent flight cost comparison website* <http://www.kayak.co.uk/>

Traveljungle: *another good flight cost comparison website*  
<http://www.traveljungle.co.uk/>

Cheap Tickets: this site quotes airfares in USD\$ & often is very competitive when translated back to GBP£ <http://www.cheaptickets.com/>

Southall Travel: very competitive prices for India, Pakistan and Nepal both online and telephone support <http://www.southalltravel.co.uk/>

## INSURANCE

Travel insurance for any Mountain Company itinerary is a condition of booking a holiday. At the very least you should have emergency medical and repatriation insurance which must include the cost of mountain rescue. Cancellation insurance is strongly recommended as all deposits paid to The Mountain Company are non-refundable.



To get an online quote for your personal travel and trekking insurance (UK residents only), take a look at Snowcard's website at [http://www.snowcard.co.uk/pages/d\\_select1.asp?referrer\\_id=MC](http://www.snowcard.co.uk/pages/d_select1.asp?referrer_id=MC)



Please note that The Mountain Company do not act as an agent of Snowcard Insurance and any policy bought via this web link is effected directly with Snowcard Insurance Services Limited.

## **CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS**

For those of you who are visiting Nepal for the first time we have provided some cultural information to help you fit in and feel at ease:

- The dress code is important for both men and women. Men and women should wear trousers rather than shorts while trekking.
- There are many hot springs, rivers and lakes where it is pleasant to take a dip, it is fine for men to go bare-chested while bathing but they should not go nude. Women should try and be as modest as possible in these situations.
- Hindus are concerned about the ritual pollution of food when it is touched by someone outside their caste or religion. Therefore, do not touch any cooked foods on display and when drinking from a container used by others avoid touching your lips to it. Do not eat food with your left hand and make sure you only give or receive food with your right hand.
- Shoes are considered degrading so keep them on the ground and remove them before putting your feet on anything. If you enter a Nepali house follow the example of your host in deciding whether to remove your shoes but on entering a temple or monastery you should definitely remove them.



- You will pass Buddhist mani walls, chortens, and stupas along the trek and to follow local traditions you should pass them on your right.
- When visiting a monastery or gumpa it is customary to give a donation for its upkeep.

## SUGGESTED READING

Please take a look at The Mountain Company's bookstore for a wide selection of books and maps to Nepal, the link is at: <http://astore.amazon.co.uk/themountainco-21>

Makalu In Simple Harmony by Hermann and Dietlinde Warth

The Highest Peak yet conquered by an entire team by J Franco

No Place for Men by Peter Mulgrew

Nothing ventured nothing gained by Edmund Hilary

### **Altitude and acclimatisation information and advice**

Going higher Oxygen, man and mountains by Charles Houston, MD

The High Altitude Medicine Handbook by Pollard and Murdugh

Medicine for mountaineering by James Wilkerson, MD

## MAPS

Makalu Base Camp High Route by Nepa Maps Scale: 1:80,000 **This map will be included in your welcome pack when you arrive in Nepal.**



# APPENDIX

## SUGGESTED CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT LIST

### Footwear:

- Plastic mountaineering boots.
- Walking boots. A pair of water repellent boots with ankle support.
- Gaiters. A pair used to keep boots dry if walking through deep snow or on wet ground.
- Wool and liner socks.
- Trainers/sneakers or sandals. Can be used in camp/lodge in the evenings.

### Climbing equipment:

- Climbing harness with 1m sling, 3 screw gate carabiners, belay plate and 3m of 5mm static cord for prussiks.
- Crampons (10 or 12 point general mountaineering type are the best).
- Mountaineering ice axe.

### Clothing:

- Waterproof jacket and trousers (goretex or similar).
- Trekking trousers.
- Long sleeve shirts (not cotton).
- Micro fleece.
- Mid to heavyweight fleece.
- Sleeveless or body warmer type fleece.
- Thermals or base layer for top & bottom (merino wool or synthetic).



- Fleece pants.
- Medium weight down jacket.

**Handwear:**

- Fleece gloves.
- Warm mittens and/or gloves.

**Headwear:**

- Wool or fleece hat.
- Sun hat.
- Bandana or scarf.
- Headtorch. Bring extra batteries.
- Sunglasses.

**Personal Equipment:**

- Sleeping bag.
- Sleeping mat (eg. Thermarest).
- Backpack large enough to carry water bottles, camera, lunch and extra clothing.
- Stuff sacks for keeping your gear dry and organised.
- Two water bottles (Nalgene wide mouth bottles are the best).
- Sunscreen and lipsalve with a high SPF.
- Insect repellent.
- Water purification tablets (Pristine, Biox Acqua or Acqa Mira).
- Favourite snack food.
- Books, ipod and cards etc.
- Trekking poles.
- Camera with spare batteries and memory cards.



- Insurance certificate.
- Earplugs (optional).
- Baby wipes (optional).
- Hand sanitizer (optional).

### **Travelling:**

- Duffle bag or large backpack for your personal gear on the trek (carried by a porter). Bring a small combination padlock to secure the bag.
- Travel clothes. You will need casual clothing for air travel days and time spent in Kathmandu.
- Toiletry bag include toilet paper, soap, towel, toothbrush, etc.

### **Personal first aid kit:**

Note: we provide a comprehensive group first aid kit but please bring personal medications and other items you might use regularly such as:

- Any personal medications.
- Malaria prophylactic tablets.
- Blister treatment (Compeed patches are the best).
- Rehydration powder eg Dioralyte.
- Analgesics (paracetamol, ibuprofen and aspirin).
- Plasters and zinc oxide tape.
- Throat lozenges.
- Diamox (helps with acclimatisation).