

Elbrus - Expedition Information Pack

Pre-Expedition Preparation:

In this document you will find detailed information on fitness & training, the necessary equipment, tourist visas, travel insurance, medical advice, temperatures & climate, altitude considerations, spending money and tips. Please review this information in full and prepare yourself for this fantastic adventure! We have also included information about Russia, an FAQ and the expedition itinerary with details on what's included and excluded.

Fitness & Training:

Our new itinerary on the north side of Elbrus is an extremely tough challenge with an average of five hours of trekking per day, except on the summit day which involves roughly 16 to 20 hours of trekking. Although this is not a technical climb, it does require the use of crampons and an ice axe. Previous experience in winter conditions and at high altitude (>5000m) is recommended. We will provide training in how to move on snow and ice during the first three days of hiking. It is your responsibility to contact us if you have any concerns regarding your level of fitness, health or ability to complete the trek. We strongly recommend that you read the expedition itinerary in full before signing up to this challenge.

Everybody is different, so we cannot recommend a specific pre-expedition fitness programme, but we would be more than happy to speak to you about your fitness and training. The following tips may help you prepare.

This expedition is not for the faint hearted and your training should be taken seriously. In order to attain the fitness levels you will need to partake in this expedition, completing long hikes in Ireland for several days in a row should present no problems for you. Here is a guideline you can follow to get you started; with a 20kg rucksack you should be able to complete the following routes from start to finish in the below time frames with no issues.

Walk	Route	Time
Carrauntoohill (Kerry)	Caher (Coomloughra) Route	6 hrs
Croagh Patrick (Mayo)	Main Route	3/4 hrs
Galtymore (Tipperary)	Black Road Route	4/5 hrs
Lugnaquilla (Wicklow)	Camara Hill Route	4/5 hrs
Spink (Wicklow)	Looped Walk Route	3/4 hrs

Please do not attempt these walks alone. You or someone in your party should have walking experience and the necessary navigational skills. If you would like to hire a guide to take you on one of these walks please contact us to be put in touch with a qualified mountain leader.

Although hillwalking is best, please remember any type of cardiovascular training will help you prepare for this expedition. Focus your training on building endurance fitness by completing long, slow and low intensity training sessions rather than fast and short sessions. Build the distance and duration of your training sessions slowly as overtraining often leads to injury. In the three months prior to departure try to include two long training days in a row to replicate walking for continuous days on the expedition.

If you have any old injuries, weak joints, soft tissue injuries or any other issues which affect your mobility we suggest you address these issues now. It goes without saying that if you are experiencing discomfort or pain during short training sessions the problem has the potential to become more serious when exercising for long durations on continuous days. Please visit your physiotherapist in an effort to address the issue and strengthen the weakened area. If you have low muscle mass in your legs we suggest that you add strength training to your schedule. Muscle mass protects our joints and this is very important especially on long descents.

If you are buying any new equipment for this expedition such as a rucksack, boots, base layers etc., be sure to use it before departure. All gear should be well broken in to avoid blisters and chafing!

The itinerary has been designed with correct acclimatisation in mind with no big jumps in elevation. While on the expedition, you will be encouraged to take it easy, eat well and stay very hydrated. Very hydrated means drinking between three and five litres of water per day depending on how much you sweat. Drinking three or more litres in a day is much harder than it sounds. We would recommend people practice drinking a large amount of water. Try drinking from a 500ml water bottle and see how many times you can refill it in a day. In our experience, it is those who cannot stay well hydrated that run into problems at altitude. Although your ability to withstand high altitudes is not directly related to your physical fitness levels, a good level of fitness will certainly assist in your general stamina.

It is not uncommon for people to encounter stomach problems on expeditions. This is due to a number of reasons such as poor hygiene, change in diet, a low immune system and poorly prepared food. We do everything we can to make sure food and water is safe for you to consume. It is very important that you wash your hands before eating and after going to the toilet. We recommend people eat as healthily as possible and take a multivitamin supplement and probiotics for one month prior to departure and during the expedition. This will help you adjust to changes in your diet and keep you healthy throughout the expedition.

Earth's Edge Pre-Departure Weekends:

We hold pre-departure weekends prior to all expeditions. Attending your Pre-Departure weekend is compulsory as they form a key part in preparing you for your upcoming adventure! You will meet an expedition leader, expedition doctor and your fellow adventurers! An experienced expedition leader will be giving a full expedition brief, leading two training hikes and sharing expert advice on all aspects of the expedition. These events are also a lot of fun and they take place in Glendalough, Co. Wicklow, which is a stunning location!

Equipment:

The following is what we recommend you take, and is a guideline of what to bring on this expedition. You are responsible for having the necessary personal equipment you need for this trek. When you sign up to an Earth's Edge expedition you are entitled to a loyalty card with our equipment partner; Great Outdoors. Great Outdoors have an excellent range of expedition equipment, very knowledgeable staff and are 100% Irish owned. The loyalty card entitles you to a 15% discount until the day your expedition departs and 10% discount thereafter.

EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST	
Synthetic mountaineering boots. (This item may be available to rent upon request.) -Examples of suitable boots; La Sportiva G2SM, Scarpa Phantom 6000 or similar. -Examples of unsuitable boots; La Sportiva Nepal Extreme, Scarpa Mont Blanc, Meindl Island Pro or similar.	
Gaiters if your boots do not have a built-in gaiter. Rental boots typically do not come with built-in gaiters.	
12 point crampons (This item is available to rent upon request).	
Walking ice axe (60 – 70cm): The ideal length of the ice axe depends on your height. Under 1.7m use 60cm, Between 1.7 & 1.9m use 65cm and over 1.9m use a 70cm tool. (This item may be available to rent upon request.)	
Sling (approx size 120cm x 10mm) x 2. (These are not available for rent.)	
Climbing harness & two screw gate carabiners. (This item may be available to rent upon request.)	
Trekking boots. If you are buying new boots for this trip please ensure they are well broken in before departure. Few things will make you more miserable during the trek than blisters.	
Runners or sandals (to wear in transit & at lower altitude when not trekking).	
Mid-weight hiking socks x 3. At least three pairs, some people choose to bring a pair of socks for each day of trekking.	
Heavyweight hiking socks x 2.	
Lightweight liner socks (for summit night).	

Underwear, we recommend you bring enough so you are comfortable at all times. Synthetic rather than cotton underwear is advisable.	
Shorts x 1.	
Lightweight trousers x 1.	
Softshell trousers x 1.	
Synthetic/wool/silk long johns x 2 (for night time use and summit night).	
Waterproof trousers (N.B. make sure the trousers have zips to the knee at least).	
Long sleeve base layers x 2 (silk, wool, or synthetic).	
Short sleeve base layer x 2 (as above).	
Mid-weight fleece, down or soft shell jackets x 2.	
A down jacket. It must be heavy weight with a hood (at least 750 grams in weight).	
Waterproof jacket.	
A fleece hat to wear in the mornings and evenings.	
A buff.	
Category 3 or 4 sunglasses.	
Category 3 or 4 ski goggles.	
A sun hat with a wide brim to cover the face and neck.	
A pair of lightweight wool or synthetic liner gloves.	
A pair of heavy mountaineering gloves.	
A pair of heavy down mitts.	
Walking poles.	
Rucksack (65-80 litres): You will use this when carrying loads between basecamp and Camp 1 with an estimated maximum weight of 20kgs.	
Duffel bag (100-150 litres) to carry your equipment to basecamp. We recommend you use something strong and sturdy, as this bag will be carried by the support team.	
Dry bags. To organise and water proof your equipment inside your bags.	
Water bottles: Three wide mouth 1 litre water bottles. If you wish to bring a water bladder to use at lower elevations you can but it will not work at high altitude so you need bottles.	
Water bottle insulators for each of your bottles.	
A 500ml thermos flask.	
A warm sleeping bag (comfort rating of -10°C or lower).	
A sleeping bag liner (This helps to keep your sleeping bag clean and adds an extra season).	
Swimsuit (needed if you get the opportunity to visit a Russian Sauna).	
Spare laces.	
Suncream at least factor 30.	
SPF lip balm.	
Insect repellent, deet based products are best.	
Hand sanitiser. You need to have enough supplies for the duration of your expedition.	
Toiletries, N.B as little as possible, if you are travelling with friends try to share toiletries. * Wet wipes and a nail brush are very useful.	
Toilet roll.	
Personal first aid kit. You need to have enough supplies for the duration of your expedition. We recommend you carry the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehydration salts • Plasters • Compeed • Paracetamol • Imodium • Motilium • Throat lozenges • Nasal spray • Decongestant such as Sudafed 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Antibiotics suitable to treat traveller's diarrhoea <i>Azithromycin or something with similar coverage would be the most suitable antibiotic, please consult your doctor for up-to-date advice. The expedition medic will have a full medical kit to deal with issues of a more serious nature.</i> 	
<p>Personal medication. Please carry any medication you are currently taking on a regular basis such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asthma inhalers Nutritional supplements Blood pressure tablets <p>If you suffer or have suffered from any skin condition, bring appropriate creams such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canesten Zovirax Anusol Hydrocortisone 1% 	
Small towel for washing.	
Personal snacks; although sufficient food is supplied throughout the trek you need to bring your own supply of high energy snacks for the expedition. Bring snacks you enjoy eating such as sweets, energy bars & chocolate.	
Headtorch with spare batteries.	
A spare set of clothes to wear after you finish the expedition.	
A photocopy of your travel insurance and passport.	
Vaccination booklet (if required).	
OPTIONAL ITEMS	
Diamox (tablet form not capsules); if you have decided to take it. For more information about Diamox its uses and side effects please refer to the information on AMS and Diamox in this document.	
We ensure that all drinking water provided to you is treated correctly but you may still wish to bring your own personal supply of tablets/drops for water purification such as iodine or chlorine. Powdered fruit juice can be used to disguise the taste of the purification.	
Power Adaptor – Plug C or F is used in Russia.	
Thermarest.	
Ear plugs.	
For glasses/contact wearers we advise bringing both glasses & contact lenses. Daily disposable lenses rather than monthlies are highly recommended.	
A camera.	
A book and/or writing paper.	
Hand warmer sachets.	

Tourist Visas:

All participants are required to have a tourist visa to enter Russia. You must have at least two free pages in your passport and ensure that your passport is valid for at least six months after you return to Ireland. Six weeks prior to departure we will send you the required letter of invitation and voucher to obtain a visa. You will then need to follow the instructions of the Russian Embassy of your country to obtain a visa. For the Russian Embassy in Dublin [click here](#). Please allow at least 20 working days for your visa to process. It is your responsibility to ensure that you make the application in good time.

Travel Insurance:

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have sufficient personal travel insurance for this expedition. Your policy must provide cover for; a) medical injury or sickness b) trekking up to 5,700 metres (c) helicopter evacuation in an emergency situation, and d) repatriation to country of residence. You must declare any pre-existing medical conditions to your insurers and ensure you receive written confirmation that any pre-existing medical conditions are fully insured. We advise you to obtain travel insurance as soon as you book, that will cover you for unforeseeable circumstances such as illness or injury that might result in you not being able to

take part in your expedition. We recommend Campbell Irvine for your travel insurance requirements as their policies cover a, b, c & d as above and include cancellation cover. To contact Campbell Irvine call [+44 844 826 2722](tel:+448448262722) or go to their website www.campbellirvinedirect.com/earthsedge.

Vaccinations & Prophylaxis:

We are not qualified to answer all your questions about travel health directly. We recommend consulting your GP or The Travel Health Clinic (www.travelhealth.ie) for the most up to date medical advice. When you sign up for this event we will email you specific advice supplied to us by The Travel Health Clinic which details what is required for this destination.

Medical:

Before departure you will be required to complete an extensive medical questionnaire. It is for your own safety that we require you to disclose as much detail about your medical history as possible. The information you supply is treated with the strictest confidence. We will do our best to accommodate everyone on this expedition, but we do reserve the right to refuse participation if we feel your safety or that of the group may be compromised. All participants on Earth's Edge expeditions are required to have a medical form completed by their own doctor. We recommend you do this at the same time you see your doctor for travel vaccines (if required). These measures are put in place for the safety of all participants on the trek.

Temperatures & Climate:

Temperatures on the expedition may vary from 0 to 30 degrees during the day and -20 to 10 degrees at night. It's best to be prepared for lower temperatures due to wind chill or the weather turning bad. Usually the days are hot and the nights are cold. You should be ready for inclement weather at all times as the weather can change rather quickly at high altitude. For accurate weather information please review these two websites;

Mountain Forecasts: www.mountain-forecast.com/

Norwegian Meteorological Institute: <http://www.yr.no/>

Altitude Considerations:

The human body is quite capable of adapting to a very wide range of barometric pressures and there is plenty of oxygen even at the highest point of this expedition. However, the process of adaptation or acclimatisation does take time and the most important rule is to gain height slowly. Keeping well hydrated is also a huge factor in avoiding AMS (Acute Mountain Sickness). AMS is brought on by lower oxygen levels at higher altitudes. Symptoms include breathlessness, headache, poor sleep, nausea & dizziness. AMS is treated simply by not ascending to higher elevations or in more severe cases descending to lower elevations, where in most cases the symptoms are quickly relieved. This itinerary has been designed to minimise the chances of you getting altitude sickness. Our guides are highly experienced in these matters and will be able to give you good advice to help minimise any temporary discomfort that you might experience. If you have suffered serious problems at altitude before, you should seek the advice of your doctor or a specialist. Please note it is common for most people to experience mild headaches on the summit day of this expedition. Always keep your guide informed on how you are feeling.

Diamox:

Diamox (Acetazolamide) is a carbonic anhydrase inhibitor. In simple terms Diamox causes the kidneys to excrete more bicarbonate which causes the blood to become more acidic. Acidifying the blood stimulates ventilation, which increases the amount of oxygen in the blood which reduces the chances of getting AMS. We recommend all participants especially those who have had AMS in the past, to take Diamox prophylactically (as a preventative), starting on the first day of trekking. Current guidelines suggest 125 mg twice per day (in tablet form not capsules). You should try taking Diamox for two days at some stage prior to departing Ireland to ensure you don't suffer any of the more serious side effects. Numbness and tingly fingers and toes are common but in some cases users can suffer from nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea. If you experience any of the latter three side effects, we would advise against using Diamox. Always consult and follow the advice of your own doctor about Diamox or any other medication.

Summit Day Policy:

Our goal on this expedition is for the entire group to reach the summit and return safely. Due to the difficulty of the summit day on this mountain and the importance of maintaining a good guide to guest ratio, it is essential we attempt the summit with a strong team. Any guests who are deemed by our expedition leader as not fit enough to reach and return from the summit safely, will not be allowed to attempt the summit. This ensures we have a strong team for summit and that those guests who are fit enough are given the best opportunity to attempt it.

Spending Money & Tips:

We recommend that you carry €300 with you to Russia in mixed notes. You can exchange EURO or US Dollars into Roubles in Moscow airport, Mineralny Vody airport or at the bank in Pyatigorsk. There are ATM machines in Pyatigorsk so do carry your credit card as a backup. Unfortunately, in Pyatigorsk the hotels and bars only accept cash. We recommend you tip if you are happy with the service, the recommended tip for Elbrus is €70. Please give your tip to the Expedition Leader and he/she will distribute the tip evenly among all local staff. The recommended spending amount above includes the tip for the local staff.

Note: There may be additional costs on the expedition which are outside the control of Earth's Edge which you would need to pay for locally. For example if there was a change to the itinerary due to weather and the group summited the mountain a day early, we would then return to Pyatigorsk a day early too. This would result in us needing an extra night in the hotel in Pyatigorsk which would cost in the region of €30 per person.

About Russia:

We advise all participants to educate themselves on local laws and customs before travelling to Russia. Up to date travel advice can be found on the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) website. We recommend taking travel advice from the FCO rather than the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) as they are better resourced. Significantly, both the FCO and DFA strongly advise against travel to the Elbrus Region. If you decide to participate in an Elbrus expedition you must educate yourself about the risks involved and understand that you are travelling against FCO and DFA advice. *Please note that we have not experienced any issues in this regard since we started leading Elbrus expeditions in 2012.

For more information on security in Russia [click here](#) for the FCO and [here](#) for the DFA.

Area:	17,075,400 sq. km
Population:	143,975,923 (2015 est.)
Official Languages:	Russian
Religion:	Russian Orthodox (75%), Muslim (5%) Christianity (2%), Other (2%) & no religious affiliation (16%)
Local Time:	GMT +3.00
Local Currency:	Rouble (RUB).
Currency for Exchange:	EURO, USD & GBP.
Where to Exchange:	In banks found in all major towns.
ATMs:	ATMs are found in all major towns.
Credit Cards:	Are generally accepted.

Up-to-date information concerning global exchange rates can be obtained at www.xe.com

Elbrus Expedition Summary & Itinerary:

Standing at an impressive 5642m (18,481'), Elbrus is Europe's highest mountain and one of the 'Seven Summits'. Elbrus is located in the Caucasus Mountains which separate Europe and Asia stretching almost 1000km from the Black sea to the Caspian Sea. This beautiful mountain range has some fantastic scenery with vast mountain views, alpine meadows and dense forest. Our 14 day itinerary allows plenty of time for acclimatisation and flexibility in the event of bad weather. Weather plays a huge part in a successful summit attempt with high winds, blizzards, thunderstorms and thick mists common even in summer. Elbrus is covered in snow 365 days of the year and crampons and ice axes are required to reach the summit. However the route is not technical and we provide all the necessary training on the expedition. Climbing the mountain from the North side is much more beautiful and less crowded than the classic south side. However the summit day is much tougher and it is essential that participants have previous experience on mountains above 5,000m. As well as camping throughout the itinerary the summit day involves a 1,900m ascent which can take over 16 hours.

Please note the following itinerary is very much subject to change based on weather conditions and the health and fitness of all expedition members. Our itinerary allows a fantastic opportunity to summit Elbrus without using any lifts or snowcats, however you should be aware there is no guarantee in reaching the summit. The nature of high altitude peaks such as this one mean that sometimes we don't get a window of good weather which allows us to attempt the summit.

Day 1: Fly Dublin to Moscow.

Depart Dublin on a one stop flight to Moscow. Arrive in Moscow in the evening. Transfer from the airport to the hotel in Moscow. Relax in the hotel for the evening. Overnight hotel.

Day 2: Fly Moscow to Mineralny Vody and drive to Pyatigorsk, 3 hrs.

After breakfast transfer to the airport for the two hour flight to Mineralny Vody. From Mineralny Vody we drive for less than an hour to reach Pyatigorsk. Pyatigorsk is popular with Russian tourists who come to visit the town's famous health spas. Relax in the hotel or explore the town in the afternoon. Today the expedition leader will check all participants' equipment and advise you on rental equipment. Overnight hotel. Altitude 500m.

Day 3: Pyatigorsk to Emmanuel Meadows, 4 hrs.

Today we take the four hour drive to our basecamp on the Emmanuel meadows (2,200m). The 100km journey starts on sealed road the moves to gravel and we even cross a river just before basecamp. It's a scenic drive through rural countryside and on clear days we get great views of Elbrus. In the afternoon we can go for a short walk to explore the beautiful meadow with wild flowers. Overnight camp.

Day 4: Carry to Camp 1, 9 hrs.

Today we carry equipment to camp 1 (3,763m). On this expedition you are required to carry food and some equipment to Camp 1. We may encounter some patches of snow near camp 1 but typically the route is on grass and rock. Once we have dropped our equipment we will return to basecamp for the night. Overnight camp.

Day 5: Move to Camp 1, 7 hrs

Today we retrace our steps and move to Camp 1. Overnight camp.

Day 6: Rest & Skills Day.

We take a rest day today and practise our snow and ice skills. In the mid-morning we go for a short walk to practice walking in crampons, using an ice axe, basic rope work and moving at altitude. Overnight camp.

Day 7: Acclimatisation hike to Lentz Rocks, 6 hrs.

Today we walk to the Lentz rocks (4,650m) gaining significant altitude. We focus on keeping a slow and steady pace to help our acclimatisation. It's a straight forward route and if the weather is good we will have lunch at the rocks and take in the surrounding views before descending back to the camp 1 for dinner. Overnight camp.

Day 8: Rest Day.

We take a day to rest bodies ahead of summit day tomorrow. Overnight camp.

Day 9: Summit Day! 16 to 20 hrs.

Climbing Elbrus from the North side is very tough. With a 1,900m elevation gain one needs strong physical and mental strength to reach the summit and return to camp 1. We will start in the very early morning by retracing our steps to the Lentz rocks. Usually we enjoy a break at the rocks for food and a hot drink as the sunrises. Once moving again we pass through an area of rocky outcrops and then start to traverse to the west towards the saddle. The saddle separates the Eastern (5,621m) and Western (5,642) summits of Elbrus. We take another break at the saddle and then ascend up the Western summit. Parts of this ascent are quite steep and there is some fixed rope for a short section. This section takes roughly 90 minutes and all the hard work is well worth it as on a clear day the panoramic views from the summit are second to none. We spend a short while at the summit (5,642m) for photos before descending all the way back to Camp 1. Overnight camp.

Day 10: Spare Summit Attempt.

A spare day in the case of bad weather on Day 9.

Day 11: Camp 1 to Emmanuel Meadows, 4 hrs.

Today we descend back to our base camp in the Emmanuel meadows (2,200m). Overnight camp.

Day 12: Emmanuel Meadows to Pyatigorsk, 4 hrs.

In the morning, we drive to Pyatigorsk. Your afternoon is free to visit the health spas or go shopping. In the evening, we go for dinner to celebrate the end of our expedition. Overnight hotel.

Day 13: Pyatigorsk to Moscow, 3hrs.

In the morning, we drive back to Mineralny Vody for the flight back to Moscow. Overnight hotel.

Day 14: Moscow to Dublin.

Transfer to the airport after breakfast. Depart Moscow on a one stop flight to Dublin. Arrive back in Dublin in the late evening.

Note: In the case of bad weather some teams decide to move to the South side of the mountain and attempt the summit from there. The ascent from the south side requires a shorter weather window and can be a good option provided we can source vehicles for the journey around to Terskol. If there is a change to the itinerary of this nature you will need to pay your share of these costs.

Expedition Costs:

€399 non-refundable deposit at the time of booking & €3,300 balance payment two months before departure - Total €3,699. Read our [best price guarantee](#).

*If you wish to pay for your trek in instalments, contact us for more information.

*Prices were set on September 26th, 2018.

EXPEDITION COSTS INCLUDE:

- International flights from Dublin to Moscow, return economy class.
- Internal flights in Russia.
- Experienced Irish expedition leader accompanying you from Dublin airport.
- Experienced Irish expedition doctor accompanying you from Dublin airport.
- Earth's Edge Pre-Departure Weekends.
- Local guides, permits and park fees.
- All accommodation based on twin sharing in hotels in Moscow and Pyatigorsk and camping elsewhere.
- All meals and drinking water are included except in Moscow and Pyatigorsk where accommodation is based on B&B.
- A celebratory dinner at the end of the expedition.
- All transport throughout the expedition.
- All group gear consisting of first aid kits, communications equipment and cooking equipment etc.
- An Earth's Edge bandana for all participants.

EXPEDITION COSTS EXCLUDE:

- Personal travel insurance.
- Transfers to and from Dublin Airport.
- Medical vaccinations.
- Tourist visas.
- Personal equipment.
- Personal spending and tips.
- Expenses of a personal nature like laundry, phone calls, alcohol, excess baggage charges and any costs arising out of unforeseen circumstances such as bad weather, landslides, road conditions and any other circumstances beyond our control.
- Optional sightseeing in Moscow and Pyatigorsk.

SHARE YOUR JOURNEY AND WIN A €300 ADVENTURE PACK:

On each expedition, one person will win an Earth's Edge Down jacket, Gore-Tex jacket and an environmentally friendly Keep-Cup. How do you win? Share your journey from start to finish on your Instagram. We want to see your gym sessions, your training hikes, your gear prep, and of course your photos of your amazing adventure with us! Simply let us know your Instagram handle, tag us in your post, and use our hashtag #EarthsEdge. There's no limit on how many posts you can do, and if you win we could feature your photos on our Instagram or Website! ***On average, we have 12 people on our expeditions, so you have a 1 in 12 chance of winning! Get snapping! We will select a winner approximately four weeks after each expedition!***

Expedition FAQs:

What is the accommodation like on this expedition?

In Moscow and in Pyatigorsk we will be staying in hotels. All rooms are clean and comfortable. While on the mountain we will be camping in two person tents. Our prices are based on two people sharing. It is generally possible to arrange single rooms on Earth's Edge expeditions. Contact us to request a single room.

What is the food like on this expedition?

Food plays a huge part in the success of our expeditions. A cook accompanies all expeditions to prepare nutritious, tasty food. All fresh produce is washed using clean water and all perishable items are kept cool. We provide balanced meals which keep participants energised throughout the expedition. We like to cook local seasonal dishes but we also cook western dishes.

Can Earth's Edge cater for my dietary restriction?

We will try our best to cater for those with dietary restrictions. If you have a dietary restriction, please state this on your medical declaration form which you will complete prior to your expedition. We will organise for you to have a suitable meal on your flight where meals are supplied by the airline. It is not possible for us to source specialist gluten or dairy free products locally. We will endeavour to provide suitable alternative carbohydrates, for example potatoes or rice rather than bread. If you want to have specialist food like gluten free bread and pasta or lactose free milk you will need to bring them with you on the expedition.

How many people can take part in this expedition?

This expedition will have an average of 8 participants.

Who is leading this expedition?

An Earth's Edge expedition leader accompanies all expeditions. Our leaders are highly experienced and skilled in expedition leadership and wilderness first aid. Local English-speaking guides work with our expedition leaders to run the expedition. Our local guides are highly experienced and very familiar with the expedition route, local history, cultures and customs of the region.

Will I get a chance to meet any of my other team members before departure?

Yes, we pre-departure weekends about two months before every expedition. If you cannot attend the particular weekend that is scheduled for your expedition, then you are welcome to attend another training weekend. An experienced Earth's Edge expedition leader and expedition doctor will meet the group to answer questions about the trek. Most people at this stage will have questions about their equipment and will be given advice on the best way to pack for the trip. This is also a great opportunity for participants to meet one another before setting off. Around this time, you will receive a pre-departure document which will include lots of important information such as what time you need to meet at the airport and emergency contact information that you can pass on to your next of kin. Please note where differences exist between this info pack and the pre-departure document the pre-departure document supersedes.

Can participants extend their stay after the expedition?

Extensions are possible but subject to availability, contact us ASAP if you wish to extend your trip. For extension requests made at least four months before departure there is a change fee of €100 plus fare difference. For requests made between two and four months before departure there is a change fee of €150 plus fare difference. It is not possible to make an extension request within two months of departure.

What back-up support is there on this expedition?

Along with the Earth's Edge expedition leader we use local guides, cooks, and support staff of the highest standard. We employ local staff based on their qualifications, experience and references. Our expedition leaders and local guides are trained in wilderness first-aid. Our expedition leaders and local staff are familiar with the locations of local medical services and hospitals. Where no mobile/cell phone network is available expeditions are accompanied by two-way radios and satellite phones. Our expedition leaders have 24/7 access to our office in Ireland.

What emergency procedures are in place?

A detailed assessment of risk is completed for all expeditions. The risk assessment covers potential minor and major injuries, environmental risks, political risks and evacuation plans detailing the locations of local hospitals, emergency services and airports.

What happens if someone gets sick or injured?

In the event of someone falling ill or getting injured, the expedition leader will assess and treat the sick or injured person. Often with some rest, participants can continue without a problem. If needed a guide will help the injured person to the next camp where an evacuation to a hospital can be arranged for more serious incidents. In the unlikely event of a serious incident which requires urgent hospital treatment a helicopter evacuation can be requested from local authorities. Extra costs incurred as a result of an evacuation must be paid by the participant. Your personal travel insurance must cover such eventualities.

What happens in bad weather?

In the event of a sudden change of weather conditions the Earth's Edge expedition leader will assess the situation and make an informed decision on what to do. Participant safety is always the priority in the decision-making process. Our itineraries are designed taking into consideration possible bad weather. Alternative routes and contingency plans are always in place in case of adverse weather conditions. We always aim to keep to the itinerary as much as possible but please remember that this is adventure travel and changes can occur!

What happens if the airline loses a participant's luggage?

If an airline loses luggage, Earth's Edge will help report the lost baggage and chase up the airline while the participant continues on the expedition. Personal travel insurance should cover the purchase of any necessary clothes and equipment needed. Generally, the airline will deliver lost luggage within 24 hours.

What happens if a participant misses their airport connection?

If a flight connection is missed because a previous flight was delayed, the airlines will offer an alternative flight and accommodation if necessary. If this disrupts any part of your expedition, Earth's Edge will make alternative arrangements to get you back on schedule. Any extra costs incurred due to a missed connection will be covered by the airline or the participant's personal travel insurance.

Why Earth's Edge?

- Earth's Edge is Ireland's first fully licensed & bonded adventure travel company.
- Earth's Edge is 100% Irish owned.
- We send expedition leaders from Ireland with solid travel experience & who are 'salt of the earth' genuinely lovely people.
- We send doctors on all our expeditions, regardless of the difficulty or remoteness of its location. They are accompanied by a comprehensive medical kit.
- We excel at expedition planning and management. Each expedition goes through a custom-made event check-list starting 12 months before departure to ensure we do all we can to run expeditions as smoothly as possible.
- We provide excellent expedition support. All expeditions are managed from our office in Dublin and have 24/7 support from an operations and medical expert.
- We endeavour to respond to all enquiries from both current & potential participants within 24hrs.
- Our office staff are all highly qualified and boast many years of customer service and operations experience between them. Most importantly, they are keen adventurers themselves and are passionate about exploring the globe! They each take part in at least one Earth's Edge expedition a year. So, when you make an enquiry, you are speaking to an expert as opposed to a travel agent.
- We offer very inclusive packages which are excellent value for money.
- The emphasis we place on preparing our participants for their expeditions is second to none. We provide detailed informative trip documentation, medical & vaccine guidance & visa support.
- Earth's Edge hold training weekends prior to each expedition which include a full expedition brief, two training hikes and expert advice from an Earth's Edge expedition leader and doctor.
- We follow a strict environmental, social & economic responsible travel policy.
- Earth's Edge group sizes are always small. This enables us to minimise our environmental impact & it also ensures we retain the element of adventure in our expeditions that separates them from your average holiday.