

# THE JOURNEY UP

The expedition team faced new challenges and different dangers as they continued their death-defying ascent up Everest.

## The Western Cwm

After the Khumbu Icefall, the climbers worked their way up a gently rising valley called the Western Cwm. Here, the sun's strong rays reflecting off the snowy slopes could cause temperatures to rocket to 37°C, exposing the climbers to severe sunburn and dehydration. But, when the sun set, the thermometer would plunge below freezing once more.

**SUMMIT**  
29,024 FEET

**SOUTH SUMMIT**  
28,356 FEET

**NORTH-EAST RIDGE**

**SOUTH FACE**

**SOUTH COL**

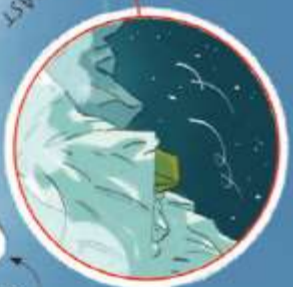
**SOUTH-EAST RIDGE**

**DEATH ZONE**

**NUPTSE**  
28,680 FEET

**THE SOUTH COL**, 25,900 feet: Most Sherpas reached the South Col, helping to carry over 700 pounds of vital supplies (vents, oxygen, food, fuel, cookers, climbing equipment). The final staging post for the first of the two summit attempts.

**BASE CAMP**: At the foot of the Khumbu Icefall, it was surrounded by hundreds of tents.



**CAMP 7**: The halfway point on the punishing climb between Camp 6 and the South Col.

Climbing up during the night on the western ridge before summiting.

**CAMP 5**  
20,900 feet

**CAMP 6**  
22,000 feet

**CAMP 7**  
24,000 feet

**CAMP 8**  
27,000 feet

**CAMP 9**  
27,900 feet

**CAMP 10**  
28,000 feet

**CAMP 11**  
28,100 feet

**CAMP 12**  
28,200 feet

**CAMP 13**  
28,300 feet

**CAMP 14**  
28,400 feet

**CAMP 15**  
28,500 feet

**CAMP 16**  
28,600 feet

**CAMP 17**  
28,700 feet

**CAMP 18**  
28,800 feet

**CAMP 19**  
28,900 feet

**CAMP 20**  
29,000 feet

**CAMP 21**  
29,100 feet

**CAMP 22**  
29,200 feet

**CAMP 23**  
29,300 feet

**CAMP 24**  
29,400 feet

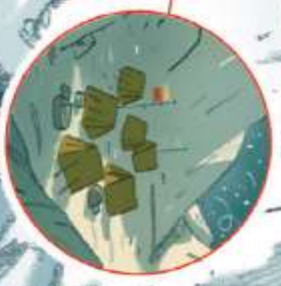
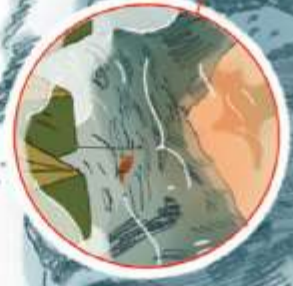
**CAMP 25**  
29,500 feet

**CAMP 26**  
29,600 feet

**CAMP 27**  
29,700 feet

**CAMP 28**  
29,800 feet

**KHUMBU ICEFALL**: Sherpas carried over three tonnes of stores through this hazardous mass of moving ice. The trail needed to be in the middle of the icefall to avoid avalanches.



**CAMP 2**: A rest point for those ferrying equipment up the mountain. The team later abandoned this camp because the violent ice movements made it too dangerous.

**ADVANCE BASE CAMP**: Up to 30 men lived in a village of tents while providing support to the climbers.



**THE SOUTH COL**

**The South Col**  
Next came the South Col—a freezing, desolate moonscape of rock and ice, continually swept by fierce winds so powerful that to Tenzing they sounded like 'the roar of a thousand tigers'. At 26,000 feet (7,925 metres), the climbers had now entered the Death Zone. At such a height, the concentration of oxygen in the atmosphere is so low that nothing can live for any length of time—not even with supplementary oxygen. It was from here that a smaller team would now attempt the summit. And that team would have to make their move quickly.

**THE LHOTSE FACE**

**The Lhotse Face**  
At the head of the Western Cwm lay their next great challenge: a treacherously steep ice slope known as the Lhotse Face. To ensure the supplies could be carried up the 4,000-foot (1,220-metre) slope safely, a special party of climbers and Sherpas spent time cutting steps and fixing ropes up it. The work was thwarted by illness, heavy snow and extreme cold. But above all, lack of oxygen eroded the men's ability to move and even think properly. One of the team, George Lowe, later said, 'I thought I was going extremely well. In fact I was staggering about like a man in a dream.' With the monsoon season closing in, Hunt was worried that slow progress on the Lhotse Face would scupper the expedition. But somehow the team forced a way up. 'It was a performance,' Hunt later said, 'that should go down in mountaineering history.'