

Eco Everest Expedition 2009.

**This is a copy of Yury Pritzker's Blog from –
<http://himalayadream.wordpress.com>**

Website: <http://www.himalayadream.com>

Coming Home!

The flight details are in! Yury will be arriving on:

AA 87, departing London LHR 10:15AM,

Arriving: Chicago O'Hare 12:50PM

We invite you to join us at the airport to welcome Yura back home, and there will be a lunch at our house right after that. If you can't make lunch, we will have a get together soon (maybe Saturday) for a more formal report from the Everest trip.

Thanks to everyone who has been following this blog! Your support has been invaluable.

[1 Comment](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayadream](#) | May 30, 2009 ([edit](#))

Update from Kathmandu

Yury will be arriving as planned at 12:30pm Chicago time on June 2. He is currently heading out of Kathmandu for white water rafting with his climbing buddies. Yesterday there was a joyous and inspiring award ceremony celebrating all the climbers who summited Everest. He is looking forward to seeing everyone back home!

–Yan

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted by: [himalayadream](#) | May 29, 2009 ([edit](#))

Hanging out in Kathmandu

From: Pritzker Yury
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2009 4:17 AM
To: Lana Pritzker
Subject: Going rafting for 2 days
Svetik,

There nothing todo here. So I am going rafting for 2 days. And maYBE bungy gumping??!!!.
there are 4 of us going. Our bags still in Lukla. I am good, eATING ALL the time.
Today it is going to be some ceremony were they give a medals all summiters.
Will try to call at night
love

There nothing todo here. So I am going rafting for 2 days. And maybe bungee jumping. There are four of us going. Our bags are still in Lukla. I am feeling good, and eating all the time.

Today there will be a ceremony were they give a medals all summiters. Will try to call at night.

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted by: **himalayasdream** | May 29, 2009 ([edit](#))

[Yura in Kathmandu](#)

Yura is in Kathmandu, feeling great and awaiting a flight home. His group has come down all together, as they have formed a tight bond from climbing together. They are all happy and congratulating each other on their successes.

Yura should be arriving June 2 but he might be getting an earlier flight out which will then arrive on June 1.

We will soon post exact flight arrival info, and anyone who would like to come meet him at the airport is very welcome to do so!

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted by: **himalayasdream** | May 25, 2009 ([edit](#))

[5/25/09 Periche to Namche](#)

I am in Pheriche today and I am planning to go to Namche Bazaar tomorrow. Then we will continue to Lukla. The weather is bad right now. It is snowing and raining. If the weather permits, we will fly to Kathmandu on 28. In the worth case scenario we will be sitting in Lukla, waiting for our flights. I feel good, maybe a little bit weaker going up the trek that is very steep at times, but it is mostly down from now on.

There is nothing to report except that I am really trying to keep myself dry 😊

Love, Yura

Posted by: **himalayasdream** | May 23, 2009 ([edit](#))

[5/23/09 Full Summit Report from Yura](#)

I came to base came today at 11 am. I am so happy to be here, “at home”, and to be safe. It is difficult to embrace and fully understand what was done, and it is kind of strange to listen to all congratulations from

all the Sherpas and other people that are here, at Base Camp. It feels like it was not me who just climbed Mt. Everest, but some other person.

Me and Nic (who was following the same climbing schedule as me, and reached the summit one hour after me), can not stop discussing all the nuances of our summit night. I can hardly move from the group tent to my tent that is 10 m away and when I do, I feel like I am learning to walk again.

Before I start describing what has happened during the last 6 days, I want to thank all the people who thought about me that night and followed my progress. I think I was feeling so strong only because of all your support. Especially, I want to thank my family. My wife, who was supporting me not just in this whole endeavor, but also the million times when I called for healing, moral support, and to just hear her voice. My sister, who was always there to help me with my multiple health related problems. My parents, for suppressing their endless worrying, and supporting my dream. My son and daughter that gave me the strength and support to do what I wanted to do.

It all started on My 17, when we began our climb from BC to Camp 2 for our Summit bid. As usually, crossing the Khumbu Ice Fall was the most dangerous part of the whole climb, and I was glad that I would do it only two more times. At night it does not look as scary as during the day time because you can only see the part that is directly in front of you, lighted up by your head lamp. I made it through the ice fall in 4 hours and was feeling strong. It took me another 2 hours to reach camp 2. This time I felt pretty good and was not as tired as the last time.

Our next day was a planned rest day, but unfortunately it started with a tragedy. My friend Henry, who was settled in the tent next to mine, felt down outside of the tent and injured his head. I woke from hearing his screams and hurried out to see what was happening. By the time I got out of my tent, I found Henry sitting in his tent with blood all over all his face. He was out of it and could not remember what happened. Me and some Sherpas were trying to help him, but his condition worsened. His health was deteriorating quickly, and he started having convulsions. I would not really want to go into all the details of this accident, but want to mention that with the help of two doctors that we found in camp 2 we were able to stabilize Henry. It became evident that he had to be carried down to the BC through the ice fall and the next morning be flown to Kathmandu by a helicopter. Today he is still in Kathmandu and we know that he is ok now. It is very sad that he had this misfortune because Henry was the strongest in our team and would definitely have reached the Summit.

On May 19 we started our climb to camp 3. It was the most difficult part where we needed to ascend without oxygen from 6400m to 7200m over the steep ice wall that goes from 45 to 65 degrees. It took me less then 5 hours to get to camp 3 and even though I was happy with my time, I was very tired.

This day in camp 3 I had a lot of different feelings going through me. A big part of me wanted to quit. I could not imagine going another 700 vertical meters the next day to the camp 4 in the South Col and then to the summit. Laying exhausted in my tent that night, I could not imagine how anyone could continue. I called home that night, expecting to hear something like: “come home”, but I did not hear this and I am so grateful to Sveta for holding up and believing in me. I also remembered my thoughts back at home were I was telling myself that if I reached camp 4 at South Col, I would be already happy.

On the positive site, two thoughts came to mind: I was much faster than many other climbers around me, and I had not used my oxygen yet. I actually came to camp 3 faster than some people who used their oxygen between camps 2 and 3. During that night I started using oxygen for the first time. I had two systems for delivering it: the mask that I would use on the summit day and a system similar to one that is used in hospitals, with tubes going through my nose. I used the latter and slept at a rate of one liter per hour. The night went very well.

May 20th we started the climb to the South Col (camp 4) at 6 am. It was not cold enough to wear my down suit and because I am always afraid to get overheated, I was wearing my regular climbing clothes. The oxygen was helping a lot. It was still a very slow climb in comparison to climbing at “normal” altitudes, but nothing is normal at 7700m. From camp 3 up the climb continued through the steep Lhotse face at 55-60 degrees and then to traverse toward the Yellow Band, a distinct yellow slice of rocks that we would need to negotiate. After the Yellow Band, the climb continues traversing with an altitude gain toward Everest Summit and eventually ends up at Geneva Spur, a very steep rock section. After this part the South Col is very close. I climbed from camp 3 to 4 in 4h 45 min which was very good: 6 hours is considered a fast time for this section. It was 10:45 am and our summit start was only 9 hours away.

Initially I was planning to spend a night at South Col which meant that I would start my summit push not in 9 hours, but rather in 33hours. The weather forecast was telling us that May 21st had the best prognosis for reaching the summit, so I decided to follow the regular climbing protocol that excluded the overnight stay at South Col and leave for the summit the same night.

Camp 4 is a very famous place and I was happy to be there. Also, after making it to the camp in less than 5 hours, I gained much more confidence. The Everest summit was still not visible from there, but most of the climb up became visible for the first time and it seemed like very steep and very long.

The area at Camp 4 was covered with rocks, empty gas canisters, broken tents and other garbage that has accumulated here over the years sitting on top of the rocks. It was amazing to see the climbing history reflected in this garbage. We spent time in the tent, drinking water and eating a little bit. I was trying to get some sleep, but could not get any. I was too excited and preoccupied with the preparations.

The departure time was set at 8:30 pm, but I started my preparation much earlier. I put on my two warmest pair of socks, but my feet were still a little cold, so I turned on my electric warming system that we put together with my friend Arnold Sheynman. Then I realized that my boot lacing system felt too tight with these two pairs of socks, so I spent next 30 minutes fixing the problem. Then I reminded myself that I needed to drink more. I put on my down suit and boots and was ready to go, when I discovered that my Sherpa lying near me was still sleeping. I looked at my watch and was surprised to find out that I mixed up the time and was one hour ahead of schedule. Now I had to take off my boots and repeat the whole procedure in an hour.

Finally we were ready and got out of the tents. It was not too cold, just around -15C (5F). I had two Sherpas accompanying me: Thuktan in front of me and Nima behind me. We agreed to follow this order during the climb because there are many people climbing in similar down suits and oxygen masks, so it is very difficult to understand who is who in the dark.

The bottlenecks on the fixed lines (ropes), is one of the serious problems on the summit day. The ropes start 200 m up from the camp 4 and continue up to the summit. If there is a slow climber(s) on the rope line, then all the people behind him are stuck or need to unclip themselves from the safety ropes and try to bypass a slow climber (s). It is very dangerous and difficult because you then need another 5-10 min to recover from such a sprint.

From the very beginning of the climb, my front Sherpa Thuktan was jumping the line, bypassing two or three people at a time. I was afraid to lose him and followed him religiously. My second Sherpa, was following behind me for some time, but very soon we lost him. I was a little hot and had to open my down suit. There was not a thought in my head besides just keeping the pace and breathing.

There are four major climbing points on the way to the summit. The first one is the Balcony, a small flat space at 8300 m where the summit trek reaches the South Ridge. It is the point where a lot of people feel

overwhelmed by the difficulty of the climb or encounter weather conditions and turn around. The second major point is the South Summit. It is located at around 8700m. Right after this point there is the Hillary Step, a 40ft vertical rock climb. The fourth one is the Summit itself.

My oxygen plan was to start with 4-liter bottle and change it at the Balcony. Then use a 3-liter bottle and change it when it was empty and so on. As this climb progressed, I lost track of time. My watch, which I clipped to the backpack shoulder strap, was not functioning because of the cold. All of a sudden we reached the Balcony, our first stop and I sat down there for 5 minutes, drinking a little bit of water. The temperature at the Balcony fell to -20C (-5F). I could see a lot of lights coming from the people climbing up behind us, but I also saw a lot of lights shining from much higher than where we were. By looking at this line of lights I could imagine how much higher we still needed to climb. One very particular light was so high that I thought that it must have been the summit and someone was there already.

We continued to climb, bypassing more people on the way. I felt good, but at some point I was really happy to be stuck behind some slow people and get some rest by following their pace. The climb became very steep (I think it was around 60 degrees) and I was worried that if I ran out of oxygen here, there would be no way for me to change to a fresh cylinder. At some point I asked Thuktan to check how much was left in the tank and he did and gave me a sign that it was ok. He also said that we were near the South Summit.

I was really shocked because it was only around 2 am and I could not understand how it was possible to be so far ahead. We continued our steep ascent and soon reached a group of 7 or 8 people that were going at such a slow pace that I began worrying again about running out of oxygen. Bypassing them was out of the question on such a steep slope covered with a mixture of snow, ice and rocks.

Finally we reached the South Summit. At this point we did not see a lot of lights in front of us because we made it up almost to the front of the line. But the one light that I saw before was still there. It was so high that I finally realized that this was not a person on the summit, but a shining star. That was a big relief.

I knew that after the South Summit the trek is more exposed, but because it was very dark, I did not see much and just felt the void on both sides of the ridge. Before the Hillary Step we had to traverse some rocks. This area is very steep and flat and the rocks are hanging over a 2000 m vertical drop. All of this was happening at almost 8800 m while I was wearing an oxygen mask and my down suit, so it was hard to see my feet. That made this part quite a challenge.

The Hillary Step that is considered to be the crux of the climb was not difficult at all. However there was a rock at the top that had to be traversed, and there was no other way than to go over it as you would if you'd climb on a horse. All of all this, again, over 2000 m drop. I knew that after the Hillary Step there was only 20 minutes left to the summit. I was looking around for any sign of the dawn, but it was still a complete night and I could only see some flashes of light very far on horizon as sometimes are seen from an airplane. It was 4:15am and the temperature was -25C (-13F).

I was pretty warm. My electrical socks worked perfectly and I also had some electrical warmers and chemical warmers in my mittens. I was so warm that sometimes I was using my bare hand to make switches on the fix line with my ascender. The ascender is a device that allows you to be clipped to the rope and move on the rope by sliding it up. It does not allow you to slide back and is able to hold a climber clipped to the rope in case of an emergency.

At 4:15 am we were 100 horizontal meters away from the summit that was visible in my beam of the head light. There was a big rock on the side of the trail and a large hole around it that allowed us to hide from

the wind that we experienced from the time we reached the South Summit. We decided to spend some time behind the rock and wait for the sun to come up.

At 4:30 we've started climbing the last 100 m up. It was an easy climb. Finally we were on the top of the highest mountain on the Earth, watching the sun rise. What else anyone can dream of?

Then there was the drama with taking pictures. My Sherpa Thuktan was taking them for me, but when I checked his shots, they were all taken without my head or legs. Then my main camera with 2 AA batteries stopped working. We used another camera without any progress, while Thuktan wanted to go down because he was very cold. I felt great and used my bare hands to take photos and refused to get down before I would get an acceptable photo. Finally we finished our photographic business and were about to get stated our descend as Nic came up to the summit. We hugged and I took some more pictures of him.

The way down took me 3 hours. In the morning light it was now visible how dramatic and difficult was the climb. The trek between Hillary Step and South Summit has big holes in between them and you can see China 3000 m down there. These holes are just near your steps... At the Balcony it got so hot that I pull down the top portion of my down suit and wrapped it around my waist. We finally reached the South Col at 8:30 am.

We spent time resting and drinking and around 2 pm started down to camp 2. It was hard, but it was much safer not to sleep at South Col, still at 8000 m. It was so hot that I stopped at camp 3 for an hour to drink and wait for the sun to get down a little. Around 5 pm I started from camp 3 to camp 2. I was so tired as I was rappelling all the ropes on a steep sections of the Lhotse face! I finally reached the camp 2 at around 6:30pm. It was 36 hours of climbing without sleep from camp 3 to camp 4, up to the summit and back to camp 2.

Nic and I had a dinner and I went to my tent. I remember getting into the sleeping bag, but I did not have time to zip it up. I just fell into a deep sleep. I woke up in the middle of the night because I was cold and found out that my sleeping bag was unzipped. It was kind of funny.

The next day it was difficult to move between tents because my legs felt painfully tired after such a long decent from the summit. But the party was not over yet. I had to get to the Base Camp through the Ice Fall for the last time. It was a very difficult journey, but I managed it just fine in 4 hours. All the people in the Base Camp were waited for me and it was very emotional to meet them.

After all calculations and verifications from the radio reports that we made, the statistics of the summit days are amazing. I started from South Col at 9:15 pm and made to the summit in 7h 15 min, and it took me around 3 hours to get down. The predicted time was 12 hours up and 6 hours down. I used only 2.5 bottles of the oxygen with only one 4 liter bottle. Apa Sherpa who established a new record this time (19th summit) summited at around 8 am on the same day and when he came to the Base Camp, we hugged and he sad that now I am Yura Sherpa because I was so fast in the summit day. It was the biggest reward for me to hear these words from him.

As I am writing this update over 2 days period, the whole team is now on the way down. We had 6 summiters out of 14 people in our expedition (excluding Apa Sherpa). Bill Burk summited today at age 67. He is the oldest American who summited Mount Everest and we all are so proud of him. I am also proud to admit that I was the fastest among all our summiters.

There is a big celebration going on at Base Camp. Every time, regardless of the time of the day, teams ring a bell by hitting an empty oxygen cylinder as soon as there is a radio transmission of their member

summitting. There are lots of shouts and songs going on from many directions. Some teams are packing and leaving.

As soon as all of our members are down we are going to hike back to Lukla. It will take about 3 days. Then we will fly to Katmandu and back home. I am expecting to be in Chicago on June 2. Thank you all for reading my updates and supporting me. Sveta is sending me all your comments via emails, so I am very grateful for all of your love, support and kind words.

Love Yura

[5 Comments](#)

Posted by: [himalayadream](#) | May 22, 2009 ([edit](#))

5/22/09 Yura is at the base camp

Yura called late at night today reporting that he is at the base camp and feeling much better. He is writing an update that we will post soon. He is planning to return no later than June 1... or sooner, depending on ticket availability. We are working on that.

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayadream](#) | May 21, 2009 ([edit](#))

5/21/09 Coming down the Mt. Everest

Yura called today at 9 am Chicago time. He was so tired that he could hardly speak, so it was almost impossible to understand what he was saying. Apparently, his crew was planning to stay at the camp 3 for the night, but could not find the space in the tents there. All his expedition climbers were up the camp 3, going for the Summit while Yura and his team was coming down the mountain. The weather window is short these days and everyone is on the move.

Yura said that it was an exhausting trip after a whole night climb up, so they were stopping a lot and trying to rest on their way to camp 2 every couple of hours. He went to sleep right after they have reached the camp and promised to contact us as soon as he gains his ability to move his tongue inside his mouth.

We are grateful to his Sherpa guides, his teammates and Dawa Steven for helping Yura along and keeping us well informed about all the events on this trip. We had an amazing day yesterday following Yura's steps via Dawa Steven blog and reading what the others had to say about this journey. It really helped us, the family and his friends, stay connected and stay calm... well, sort of 😊

Thank you to all of you, dear sponsors and supporters. Thank you all who called from US, Israel and other parts of the world to be with us and to express your joy for Yura. You are amazing people and we really know how much you care.

More news later, Love to all

[1 Comment](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayasdream](#) | May 21, 2009 ([edit](#))

5/20/09 10:13 pm Yura Summited Everest!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Congratulations! The first Pritzker had reached the top of the world! The 2 months odyssey is almost over!!!

Yura just called with the good news. He had summited Everest at about 8:10 pm Chicago time. It took him 8 hours to get there. He was there ahead of his group and was able to experience the mountain 2 hours before everyone else from his group got there. But we all know Yura, right? If he is pushing, he is pushing all the way up!

Coming down is not an easy task after being on the mountain for that long. It is about 9 hours climb back. He made it to the 4th camp where he will be resting after this very hard yet very exciting day. We are hoping to hear from him again from the camp 3 later or tomorrow morning. But who can sleep now anyway?!

[13 Comments](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayasdream](#) | May 20, 2009 ([edit](#))

May 20 2009, 6:36 pm Yury at the Hillary Step

Yura's expedition guide Dawa Steven received a call from Thukten Sherpa that Yura and his Sherpa team climbed over the Hillary step and is less than an hour from the summit. The rest of the team, Apa, Nic, Krushnaa, Gyalu, Pasang and Phurba are still behind but making progress.

Love

5/20/6:01 pm

Yura is ahead of the other groups and heading up strongly. His crew is on the balcony looking at the sunrise and we are expecting him to be at the Summit very very soon!!!

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayasdream](#) | May 20, 2009 ([edit](#))

5/20/09 From 4 to Summit Today

Lucky us! Yura called at 12 :30 am yesterday from camp 4 on the South Cole. He did take his phone after all. He made it to camp 4 fast and was happy for his personal record of 4:45 instead of 6 hours predicted

by Sherpas. He said that he was feeling strong and was first in his team on his way up. His Sherpas were a bit behind carrying the “stuff” and Yura had to figure out where his team’s tents were 😊

He sounded very optimistic, reporting an amazing close up view of the Summit and being very excited about his climbing record: 8000 m! He took his oxygen mask and was breathing well while we were talking. Yura said that the view was breathtaking , the weather looked good and the sky had just a few small clouds. Everest felt so close, very close, as never before!

After a short rest, Yura and his Sherpa were going to start the Summit climb at about 9 pm their time in order to reach the Summit their at about 4-6 am their early morning tomorrow which is our early evening today!

Love

[1 Comment](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayadream](#) | May 19, 2009 ([edit](#))

5/19/09 Camp 3 and 4

Yura called today from the camp 3 right before going to sleep. He was tired, but sounded strong in spite of experiencing the camp 3 altitude challenges. One of his team member had lost his consciousness yesterday just near the tent and fallen hard on his head. Yura said that a team of sherpas went down to bring him to the base camp. The other climbers remained in camp 3 and are planning to start coming up the camp 4 in the morning (our evening tonight).

He said that he is leaving his phone behind, so we will hear from him most likely on Wednesday evening or Thursday morning when his Summit trip will be completed. He is summiting his Thursday morning which should be early Wednesday evening in Chicago.

These 2 days are the hardest days of the whole trip for both us and him. It is when your months of training, all the emotional and mental strength and inner guidance align for the final push through to Summit helping you overcome your limitations, fears and expectations. Truthfully, every day on this trip pushes you beyond what you know, but these last days before the Summit are the hardest. It is the time to face the raw power of the mountain and the raw power of who you are as a spiritual being having a spiritual experience called human life. I truly believe that Yura has all it takes to meet this raw power with courage, strength and wisdom to chose his next step.

Blessing to all who are supporting him in his quest.

[2 Comments](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayadream](#) | May 18, 2009 ([edit](#))

5/17/2009 11:04 pm

I have just spoken with Yura. He called from the camp 2 where he's gotten from the BC in 6.5 hours. He said that he feels strong and he is happy with his timing.

As you may know Yura was planning to sleep at the camp 4, but the weather is still unstable, so his plans have changed. He is resting today and will start climbing up the 3 and 4 camps, leaving camp 4 faster than was previously scheduled to avoid weather changes. Yura confirmed that his Summit day will most likely be moved to 21st if weather window is still available (that is our 20th).

He sends all of you his love and hugs

[2 Comments](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayadream](#) | May 18, 2009 ([edit](#))

[5/17/2009 Yura is Heading to the Summit](#)

The last time I had Yura's news, he's reported that he was doing really well and after eating Isagenix shake and double breakfast all at once he was going to leave his computer at the BC and head for the Summit push.

I have just received the news that the weather looks good and the group is actually moving on according to their schedule. Yura's expedition was split in two smaller groups and he's gotten into the first group along with Nic, Bud, Henry, Krushnaa accompanied by Phurba, Puchhanga, Tenzing Dorje, Thukten Dorje, Gyalu, Pemba Tenjing and Nima Kanchha Sherpas.

Their group left at 4 am yesterday (they are a day ahead of us) and are now settled at Camp 2 for a day of rest before climbing to camp three, camp four and Summit. Yura is very fortunate to have the legendary Everest climber Apa Sherpa leading his team to Everest summit on the 21st! May they be blessed with a great weather, courage and our love!

<http://www.asian-trekking.com/eve/home/index.php?function=page&id=111> There is Yura's latest photo at the bottom of the Asian Trekking update for 5/17.

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayadream](#) | May 15, 2009 ([edit](#))

[Getting Ready for the Summit: Yura's 5/15 Update](#)

5/15

This e-mail just came directly from Yura.

"I came to BC yesterday after spending 5 days in Pheriche. It is a common practice to spend some time at the lower altitude before the summit bid.

The lodge was filled with climbers resting there. While in Periche I catch some stomach bug and got sick at the end of my stay. It is very common here because of the food preparations and general hygiene. Having stomach problems is usually a consideration for the climbers when they decide to go down to villages from the Base Camp. There are much more possibilities to get sick here being in contact with so many trekkers and locals. Unfortunately it happened to me and I could not eat during the last two days I was there. Because of that I was very weak coming back to BC. I am much better now. I am eating normally (and even asking for the second helpings) and I am getting my strength back.

The base camp met us with a beautiful sunshine and much better weather. It felt much more like home. There are many changes on the glacier. Most of the tents now are standing tall, settled on the ice pedestals because there was a lot of melting going on around the tents. I was about to make a picture of such tent that was towering in front of my tent and then discovered that my own tent has even more dramatic view from the side.

Even though the Base Camp feels sort of like home, it is still a very difficult place to live. It is located at 5350 m after all! We are wearing down coats almost all the time here. Yesterday, it was minus 10 degrees C inside my tent when I went to sleep.

Our team is holding up pretty good in comparison to the other teams. According to the BC rumors, other teams already lost about 25% of their members that either got sick or quit for some other reasons. We are all still together except for Will Cross who decided to climb another 8000 m peak instead and left 8 days ago.

We are not really wasting our time here trying to warm the environment with our own body heat. We are the real scientists now. Austrian doctors are conducting a study here. They are testing how Viagra can help adjusting to the high altitude and our team is gladly participating in the study. We went through the ultrasound test today were Dr. Felix was measuring our heart chambers. Then we took the pill and measured the heart chambers again in two hours. According to Dr. Felix our results are very good and we will use Cialis from camp 2 and on. We will see what will happen later on.

Most of our conversations now are around the summit push that we are preparing for in a couple of days. We talk about how to use the oxygen, the optimal rates of usage and work out summit strategies. The whole base camp is in the “short start” as we are all getting the weather forecast from the same couple of sources.

This is a difficult year for all the teams that came to BC much earlier than our team. The weather is not cooperating and they are running out of time. As of now there were only 5 summits made by Sherpas who went to fix the ropes to the summit on May 5.

Today we received our oxygen masks and went through the exercise of fitting them and learning how to changed oxygen cylinders without blowing regulator gaskets away. We are now fully trained and the mask feels much more comfortable than I was expecting.

It is an afternoon at BC and it is cloudy as usual. The temperature is dropping fast after the sun is gone and I am finishing this update in my tent, sitting in my sleeping bag with the hot water bottle inside – very nice.

This is my last update before I am going up for the summit. I do not know how it will turn out, but I am full of optimism. I will continue to call home via my satellite phone from all camps and Sveta will continue to update this blog. As of this moment my schedule looks like this:

May 17 – Base Camp – Camp2

May 18 - Rest at Camp 2

May 19 – Camp 3

May 20 – Camp 4

May 21 – Rest at Camp 4

May 22 – Summit.

The summit day will actually start at 9 pm on May 21st. That is 10 am on May 21st in Chicago. The Summit is expected May 22nd somewhere between 9 am and 12 noon Nepal time which will be an evening of May 21st in Chicago (central time.)

This schedule might change upon the weather forecast of course.

I am grateful for all your love and support and I appreciate your encouraging and supporting thoughts during my summit effort.

Big love to all of you,

Yura”

[6 Comments](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayasdream](#) | May 15, 2009 ([edit](#))

[Up the Base Camp](#)

Today Yura called with a short update. We are waiting for a full report he promised to send soon.

Periche days are over and the group went up to the Base Camp again. The weather is really bad and the two days trekking up the camp was not so easy even though Yura was still ahead of the most climbers.

It has been a long time since the expedition started. The recent events on the mountain, the bad weather factor and the living conditions at the high altitude often affect the fine balance between being in prime form and ready to climb and the need to hold back. Yura said that he is feeling much better now when they are on the move again. His appetite is back and his blood oxygenation level is high.

The plans now are to stay in the Base Camp until May 17th or 18 th and begin the final assend if the weather will allow the group to move further up. The forecast looks better these days, so we all hold a strong vision for his successful summit and and wellbeing.

Being a mountain climber is about both: climbing and being patient. Yura’s continues effort, the strength and his courage to continue his trip under the hardest conditions of the 2nd - the 3rd camps and during the avalanche events makes us proud of each and every one of his Personal Peaks. No matter how the weather will play its role in this journey, he already achieved many Personal Summits on his trip and this is what matters more then any “publicly” recognized achievement.

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayadream](#) | May 12, 2009 ([edit](#))

May 12, 2009

Yura called today at about 10 am to check in and share how he was. It has not been easy for him to sit still in Periche, a tiny village at about 4000 meters. Being with the same people in the same dining hall is not that entertaining, but "resting" and "waiting for the weather" are the two activities that Yura "loves" the most in his life. Those who know him personally would really understand what it means for him to relax and be still... He is doing really good though and even promised to meditate with some of the very powerful audio recordings that were strategically placed on his Ipod exactly for such time. We also sent him some breezing yoga exercises that help deepen his breezing patterns and strengthen the mind before the last push for the summit.

The plan for tomorrow is to start moving up the trek and reach the base camp within two days. It will take 2 days to get to the base camp where the group will be waiting for the summit opportunity. On his way up he will stay one night at Lobuche and continue up to the camp the next morning. Lobuche is another tiny village with a nicely decorated pleasant lodge that has a very limited space for the trekkers and the climbers. It gets booked pretty fast and the chances to book a room on a spot are very slim.

The group will check with the lodge and depending on the space available will stay another day in Periche or start its march to BC tomorrow.

Yura is grateful for all your loving thoughts, comments to the blog and e-mails flowing his way. He really feels your support and love and he asked me to send you his deep gratitude for keeping him in your thoughts and seeing him successfully moving forward.

[2 Comments](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayadream](#) | May 11, 2009 ([edit](#))

Pheriche – burning the yak poop

We are still in Pheriche. It is snowing here for the second day and we have 3-4 in of the snow on the ground. Actually today was the first morning in 1.5 months that we woke up and it wasn't a sunny day.

It is very cold in the rooms today because there is no sun. The hotels here do not have heating system, so all inhabitants are sitting in the huge dining room. The dining rooms in all these hotels are built the same way. It is usually a large room, about 10×20m, with benches covered by soft ragson the perimeter of the room.

Tables follow the perimeter also, so people can sit on the benches and eat. In the middle of the room there is a heating stove made out of metal that uses yak poop for heating. Apparently it is a very efficient fuel that produces a lot of heat, but strangely no smell. There are some chairs that surround this stove so if you

are really cold you can sit there too. As the trekking season is almost over, there are mostly climbing teams here resting in this hotel.

The Pheriche village is 300m long with some lodges scattered on both side of the trail. There are no roads here because there are no cars or other ways of commuting except feet.

There are two tiny stores around the hotel that we call the shopping mall. We can buy candy bars there for 50% less than in the hotel. The price of a Snickers bar is around \$1.20 in the Shopping Mall, and \$2.50 in the hotel.

It is an entertaining experience for us once a day to go to the Shopping Mall to see what is on sale today. After 2 days of watching the sale and recording the price trends, I came to the conclusion that the price of candy bars here is pretty stable, and does not really reflect variances of world oil prices.

Another source of entertainment is to climb a ridge that is behind our hotel and in 20 min reach another village that sits behind it. It is called Dingbuche. It is approximately the same size but has internet cafe. The price of the connection is \$40/h. Yes it is expensive.

The villages here are completely independent of foreign oil. Everything here runs on solar power. It is a prototype of what we will have soon in the US when we get rid of foreign oil and rely on our own solar power.

The news from the BC is the same. The weather is not good and some teams abandoned their summit bid and are coming down from Camp 4.

[ed note: I have heard from a phone call that Yury is planning to take the oxygen he has for two attempts all at once and make one good attempt. He will use the oxygen to get better sleep at high altitude before the final summit push. More to come...]

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayasdream](#) | May 10, 2009 ([edit](#))

[Update from Pheriche](#)

5/9

Yesterday we left the Base camp to go down to Pheriche at 4200m for the final rest before our summit bid. This is pretty much standard procedure.

There are 4 of us, and we are accompanied by Apa Sherpa – the world record holder of 18 Everest Summits. His role is to make sure that we are ok, and he is watching us like a good shepherd. We are taking his presence for granted, we can talk to him any time – hear his stories from his previous expeditions and the people he was climbing with. He is a living legend here and people stop him and take pictures with him frequently when they recognize him.

It took us almost 7 h to get down, including lunch and tea break. It was very cold, cloudy, and windy almost all the way down. I thought that I would be weak and tired after

coming back from c3 to c2 and then to BC on the 2 previous days, but I felt strong and was moving fast. Here, at 4200m, there are some tiny flowers growing and the air is thick and rich.

We are staying in the newly built Himalayan hotel. It is very nice – has a flushing toilet – something I have not seen for 6 weeks. I took a shower (hot water) finally that officially completed my second rotation 😊

Dinner was nice and I felt very good sitting there in the warmth of the hotel, seeing people eating and talking. It has been 3 weeks since we came to base camp. The only one part was missing that I do not have my loved ones here with me. But I felt their presence any way – maybe this is why I was so completely happy.

We are doing nothing today. I watched 3 episodes of Prison Break before lunch and now am preparing this update. There are 3 more members of the team coming down here today. Will Cross left the team and decided to go and climb Cho Oyo instead – he already climbed Everest before.

My plan is to continue doing nothing for another day and then slowly (in 2 days) return to the BC, staying the night in Lobuche.

Thanks to everyone who is writing to me and thinking about me. It gives me strength and connections to the normal world.

[ed note: remember to reach Yury please email ypritzke AT gmail DOT com]

Tragedy at base camp (but I am ok)

Today I came back from Camp 2 to BC. Unfortunately I have to start my update for the last 6 days that I spent on my second rotation with this day because we have some tragic news.

Today Everest stories are coming to me not from the books, but from the Ice Fall. My schedule is in sync with the Austrian team that is part of the Asian Trekking Eco Expedition. In BC we have different dining tents, but in Camp 2 we share everything.

This is a very nice group of people, who are led by Walter Laserer. He is a professional guide and summited Everest already 2 times. This morning we all were having breakfast together and then I left for BC with my Sherpa Thuktan 5-10 min earlier.

We reached Camp 1 in 1h 10 min, and after a water break started down the Ice Fall. Very soon the sun hit us and it becomes very hot. This time, Thuktan was feeling something and he was hurrying me up all the time. He was moving very fast and I was trying to go as fast as I can. He was so scared, that sometimes he was two or three hundred meters in front of me, and most of the time I did not see him because of the maze of the Ice Fall.

We crossed over 25 ladders. Almost near the Base Camp (5 min), a huge Ice Avalanche hit from the West shoulder of Everest, as it did the last time. We were safe, but watched it coming to us. We knew that it is going to be only snow mist but hid from the path of the ice.

We reached the BC 5 min later, and as it happened, the Whole BC was watching the people still on the Ice Fall. All teams called on the radio to check on their people. Soon we found out that two people got into the crevasse.

Their Sherpa, Lachpa was missing. The BC response was tremendous. Many Sherpas and Western Guides started running up. We were all watching with binoculars and listening on the radio. We saw that some people were being helped out of the crevasses.

Emergency equipment was sent up – oxygen, stretchers, down sleeping bag. After 40 min we started hearing some good news – the climbers were not badly injured and were coming down on their own.

2 hours after the avalanche hit the rescue group came to BC. One of the climbers was bruised, hypothermic, but was ok. However the search for Lachpa Sherpa was unsuccessful, and was abandoned after 3h. This is the guy that I talked with this morning....It is the first death this year on Everest, and it is in our team.

Now I am reverting back to tell you about the beginning of my second rotation.

On 5/3 the day started at 4 am. We headed to the Ice fall to camp 2 directly, bypassing camp 1. Climbing Ice Fall in the dark makes time disappear. You do not know if you going for an hour or three. You just concentrate on breathing and it is hard.

At camp 1 I figured that I was fast coming up in 4 hours, one of the shortest times we've had. The weather changed, it start snowing and got windy and it took me another 3 hours to get to Camp 2. I came there completely exhausted got to my tent and could not move for 15 min. The last 40 min are the most difficult because your are moving along other team's camp sites, but ours is almost at the top.

This was the hardest part of my day so far, but I did not know then what it would be like to get to camp 3 at 7200m.

5/4 went by sight seeing and resting. The night was tough. I was thinking whether I should sleep at camp 3 or just touch it and go down. Most of the people now do not sleep there because at the summit push most of us will use oxygen for sleep and on. After some consideration and Walter's advice, I decided to sleep there.

On 5/5 we (my Sherpa and I) started to Camp 3. It took us 2 h to reach the Lhotse face where static ropes start. The Lhotse face is steep – sometimes up to 65%. We are using ascenders – moving it up and then making a step. You make a step, then two or three breaths, then another step. First section is the most steep and it goes and goes on. Then it eases up a little and there is a very long section of the wall under 45% were it never ends.

At this altitude you move so slowly that the end of the slope seems to be at the same place for hours. The last section before camp 3 is the ice wall at 75%. After it, tents are in 10 meters which takes 10 min to pass. Camp 3 is 5 tents sitting on a shelf carved out of ice. You basically can not walk any more than 10m before you would need crampons. We were at 7200m.

I spent the rest of the day breathing very hard and trying not to sleep. It was perfect weather and we could see as far as camp 1. The summit of Pumori that hangs over the BC was at the eye level and the Lhotse face was very close. It took me 5 h to get to camp 3, which was very good time. The night went very well. I was feeling very good in the morning with my pulse going at 80.

On 5/6 we went back to camp 2. This was another lesson to learn. For some people going down a steep ice wall is a technical challenge so they are going face up (to the slope) and moving very slowly. For me it was not difficult and I moved face down grabbing the rope with my hands and moving pretty fast; I

bypass many people on the way but after an hour of such speed at such altitude I was out of breath and done.

It took me 15 min to get to my senses at the bottom of the face, but I was still very weak. Over the next 15 min moving slowly, I got some control over my breathing but did not fully recover until camp 2. It took us 3 h to get down. The whole day at camp 2 it was difficult to move from tent to tent though. You know the rest. I'm coming down to Pheriche at 4800m where we will stay for 4 nights resting before the summit push.

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: **himalayadream** | May 6, 2009 ([edit](#))

[Camp 3](#)

Yesterday Yury went up to camp 3 and after talking to some other climbers they decided to spend the night there. The climb was very tough but they made it quickly and the breathing and sleeping was not as hard as anticipated. It was very warm inside the tent.

They descended to Camp 2 and will spend the day resting and sleeping at Camp 2, and returning to Base Camp today/tomorrow. More to come...

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: **himalayadream** | May 4, 2009 ([edit](#))

[Update 5/3](#)

Yury's group passed the first and second second camp in 7 hours, faster than before. They are making better time than expected, so it's a great sign. There will be one more night at camp 2, and tomorrow morning they will go to camp 3 and spend 2-4 hours there and then go all the way down to base camp for the final rest before summit!

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: **himalayadream** | May 4, 2009 ([edit](#))

[Update 5/2](#)

This morning at 9:30 am we had a big ice avalanche coming from the west shoulder of Everest covering the Ice Fall. It was so big that the base camp got some snow from it. We were at the dining tent eating and talking when it happened. We all got out to see it, then I went to my tent to pick up the camera and start shooting the video.

Fortunately it was mostly mist from the ice falling from the hanging glacier of the west shoulder. Everyone was worried about people on the ice fall because it is usually the time when people come back to BC from upper camps. These avalanches happen frequently but this morning it was significantly bigger.

Henry and Krishna came back today. Henry came back from spending the night at Camp 3 after 2 nights at Camp 2. He looks very tired and looks like he lost a lot of weight. It was his first rotation and he went to Camp 3 which is really unusual.

If the weather in the morning is not bad I am leaving for my second acclimatization rotation tomorrow. The plan is:

Sunday – go straight to camp 2

Monday – rest day at camp 2

Tuesday – climb to camp 3 and possibly sleep there, maybe not, depending on weather and my condition

Wednesday – go back to camp 2 or maybe to BC

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayasdream](#) | May 1, 2009 ([edit](#))

[Happy May Day](#)

Today I am celebrating the May 1 Holiday. Actually I am celebrating my first month since I left home. It is the biggest absence from home in my life I believe. So it is a time to sit, relaxed and think what was achieved over this last month

1. I am here in one of the most amazing places on Earth.
2. I do not have Khumbu cough (<http://www.climbing-high.com/khumbu-cough.html>)
3. I did not get diarrhea on the way here
4. I believe I can still count up to 10 regardless of people saying that at altitude brain cells die like crazy
5. I already reached 6600m, which is my personal record and on the way I did not lose any food except in the normal way.
6. I have the honor of being in the company of very famous climbers, who are frequently subjects of photos, and who give me so much to learn.
7. I am in the middle of my dream and playing a part in it.
8. My loved ones and friends are in good health and are supporting me.
9. I am waking up every day and see through the open door of my tent the most beautiful pictures that one can only imagine

On April 30 I went to the Pumori base camp again for exercise. At this time I went alone and enjoyed the solitude. I reached the Pumori base camp and continued up the trail somewhere toward the Pumori advanced Base camp. I reached 5700m and turned back.

After my previous trip to Gorak Shep, where I took a very fast pace and burned myself out, I was not sure of my strength. However during this trip I was feeling normal but still not sure completely if I gained or lost my initial strength when I got to Base Camp.

The weather turned cloudy and as soon as I got back to my tent and it started snowing. It is a usual pattern here at BC where the weather is perfect in the morning and then gets cloudy around 1 pm.

Today I woke up under the perfect blue sky and the BC was covered with an inch of fresh snow. As usual our Sherpas woke us up with a cup of hot tea at 7:45 or so. Some of our members recommend to carry out this practice when we come back home, so I am writing this so that it's no surprise at home when I will not wake up before the morning tea.

Because of the first of the month and the Holiday, as our old Russian tradition dictates I decided to take a shower. It was quite pleasant as you can imagine. After the shower I just turned my clothes inside out before I put them back on (just kidding).

My next step to celebrate May 1 (Labor Day) was to go and collect some Everest garbage.

Our leader Dawa Steven Sherpa for the second year in a row pays cash for garbage that people collect on Everest. This is a part of our Eco Everest Expedition. This year it started slowly but after one of our member Nic brought 35 kg of garbage (and got paid on the spot) after just an hour walking on the glacier the whole idea exploded. Sherpas from all teams worked constantly for 6-7 days now and as of now we have around 5 tons of garbage collected. This number is already a record of any such efforts.

So this morning I decided to go for garbage hunting also. You just go toward the ice fall on the glacier and after 5 minutes you are in a beautiful maze of ice formations running from 1 to 10 m high. Because the sun is up pretty high and the temperature is around 15C the glacier is melting and multiple rivers run on the surface and somewhere under the ice.

Ice formation frequently opens up for the big flat areas where one has to be very careful not to get under it into the water. It was difficult to find any garbage as Sherpas did a great job collecting it. After 1.5h I was able to collect some old ropes and some old Aluminum cans.

On the way back I decided to test the fact that flat places on the glacier might give out, and got my one foot under the surface where it found some ice water. But I was quick to get it back so the damage was not so great. I also successfully tested the idea that SmartWool socks keep you warm even when they are wet.

In any case as you can see the day went fully engaged in celebration and some experimental work. As I am typing this update I am looking forward to change into my down clothes as it is getting a bit chilly. After the dinner I will go to my now relatively clean apartment (tent) where I will watch 67th, 68th and maybe 69th episode of Prison Break – another day at Everest Base Camp.

[1 Comment](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayadream](#) | May 1, 2009 ([edit](#))

[New Update](#)

Yury is feeling great. There was 2" of new snow and on Sunday they are looking to go up go directly to camp 3, and then sleep at camp 2. After ten days of acclimatization, it is getting easier to breathe. Bill Burke profiled the team on his blog, and had this to say about Yury:

Yury Pritzker: the romantic, who wears his emotions on his sleeve, and is prone to tears at big events involving team members. This occurred when he saw me enter the dining tent at Base Camp upon my return from Camp 2. His high sense of emotion undoubtedly stems from his background as an emigrant to the United States from Russia. Yury and his family were admitted to the US as Jewish refugees 20-years ago. He and his family are now proud Americans. Yury is also a very strong climber.

Read more on Bill's Blog: <http://eightsummits.com/pt/blog/>

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayasdream](#) | April 29, 2009 ([edit](#))

[New Update from BC](#)

Another day in BC. The plan is to go up this Friday but now we have a forecast that it will be snowing on the weekend and we will wait to see if we need to spend the day here.

Today I decided to reorganize and clean my one bedroom apartment. I vacuum cleaned the floor from the down that floats everywhere and organized my furniture in a more optimal manner. As you might imagine as in any good apartment, I do have a front and back door.

Both doors have vestibules and I do use them. My back door vestibule contains one duffel bag where I keep some food that I brought here. I am not using it a lot here – only some Isagenix shakes. The front vestibule has another bag that contains useless stuff that I do not need.

From the furniture perspective I have only two other pieces: one small nylon bag where I keep only clean (less than 10 days of use) clothes and one big bag that has some useful but not frequently used stuff. I organized my shoe shelf at the front door on the right and my electronics at the left deep corner. After all this work was done I stopped, looked at it, and decided that it was good.

My entertainment so far has been Prison Break, a show that I already finished two seasons of – around 40 episodes. Very interesting. I am watching it when I go to bed at night for 1.5-2 hours or until my hand holding the player is getting frozen. Sveta's player that I borrowed for this purpose is working magically and sometimes I keep forgetting where I am. Sometimes I find myself thinking very hard of nothing for a long time. I think that they call it being in the moment.

During the day it is getting pretty warm here at BC, and the glacier we are sitting on is melting. The tent platforms that are built are getting higher and higher relatively to the uneven surface of the glacier. Some edges of the tent start hanging over small cliffs and water is forming puddles in between tents. During the night when it's quiet I can hear some loud pops (like shouts) that come from the glacier – summer is coming. Over time, the desire to take a shower every day diminishes. I think I lost some weight but it is not a scientific fact yet.

I am drinking from 4-6 liters of liquid a day – not sure that this is enough. I assume that I produce the same or almost the same amount of liquid myself but this is not a scientific fact yet. Sometimes during the day or at night we can hear ice avalanches goes around, but it is normal in the mountains. Sometimes conversation during our meals gets very entertaining and it is quieted down when a single female member of the team is present – not climbing. When the sun goes down in the evening it gets pretty cold here and we gather around our small gas furnace..

Want more?

Listen to audio commentary: <http://eightsummits.com/pt/blog/>

Read Dawa Steven's blog: <http://sherpas.sltrib.com/2009/index.asp>

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: **himalayadream** | April 28, 2009 ([edit](#))

Update 4/28

Today I was doing laundry. Washed 4 pairs of socks, 2 pairs of underwear, two shirts. After lunch I went down do Gorak Shep and back, took me 3 hours, and I came back exhausted as I started very fast and as Vysotskiy sad: “Rvanul kak na 500 i speksya”

Note: If you want to reach Yury directly, please contact him at ypritzke AT gmail DOT com. He is not checking any of his other emails. Please email him as he would love to hear from everyone!

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: **himalayadream** | April 27, 2009 ([edit](#))

Update from Yury at Base Camp

I am back to BC since yesterday. On Apr 22 at 4 am we started through the ice flow for the first time. After a fast breakfast and 2 minutes of Puja (went to the altar and a Sherpa did fast prayers) we got our crampons on and started our first climbing day. It was a nice night, not cold, I was wearing thin gloves and a soft shell over a base layer only.

There was a bunch of climbers on the ice fall before us and it was very nice to see their headlamps all over the ice fall. After 40 min we encountered our first ladder. It was not so bad at all. The ice fall is spectacular, like nothing I have seen before. We had a pretty good pace and got to the camp 1 in 5 h, which is pretty good time. At the top portion the altitude was letting itself be known, and it was pretty hard. Camp 1 is at 6100m.

The day at camp 1 was hard, it was very hot inside the tent, but nowhere go. The first have of the night was not that easy also, but the I slept relatively well. In the morning of the 23rd we went to Camp 3. Forgot to mention that the view when you reach camp 1 is so spectacular and so familiar from books and descriptions, but sill so different. Western Cwm is in front and Everest And Lhotse seem like you can touch them with your hand. Pumori sits as a huge guard closing the view behind.

It took us less then 3 h to reach Camp 2 at 6400m. Camp 2 is similar to base camp, sitting on top of the Khumbu Glacier, partially covered with a moraine. It is quite big and it took us at least 30 min to get through the whole camp to were our spot was, near the top of the camp.

I was feeling pretty good. Camp 2 is 2 h from the Lhotse Face, where people can be seen climbing to Camp 3 as small dots. It is visible how steep the Lhotse face is, with ice shining all over its face. It is so close now that the summit of Everest is not visible any longer; only its south face hangs over the camp. This south face was first climbed by our Base Camp Manger – Pertemba Sherpa in 1975.

It is so interesting to hear his stories at our supper and then see that face and appreciate their effort. The day was spent resting and breathing, drinking and peeing – This is what it is all about 😊. The first night went relatively well. We have a dining tent at Camp 2, and a cook. My oxygen saturation at Camp 2 was pretty low, near 70, however my morning pulse was around 75 which is really good.

The next day (24) was a rest day. The second night was not as good as the first. Do not know why but in the morning of 25th I was not 100%. However I thought it would be better if I start moving and breathing harder to get more oxygen into the system. My Sherpa Thuktan and I went up to the Lhotse face and in 1.5h reached 6600m. It was not bad but when we came back to Camp 2 by lunch time, I was not feeling good. As my father always tells me to think before doing the next step, I sat and was thinking hard for the next 2 min. Conclusion was to go down.

We went to camp 1 and reached it in 1.5 hours. As soon as we reached Camp 1, I was much better, got some appetite and the night went very well. By the way it was the right decision as of this night it got very windy at Camp 2, and people did not sleep much there.

On the morning of the 26th at 7:30 we started to base camp through the ice fall, but this time during the day time so I again can appreciate its beauty, and danger. We were taking a bunch of pictures and Thuktan took over my camera and was shooting videos from every corner, so now I have a video proof me crossing multiple ladders. He got the hang of it and was having fun. At many places on Ice Fall you can here Sherpas chanting (praying) and moving fast.

When you go down it is hard to believe how big the Ice Fall is and how we managed to climb it. It took us less then 3 h to get to the BC. The air here at BC is so thick now, we hardly have any trouble breathing here. I will be here for the next 3-4 days taking the oxygen at 5300m and recuperating.

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayasdream](#) | April 27, 2009 ([edit](#))

[Back at Base Camp](#)

Yury called for an update.

He is back at Base Camp after spending several days acclimatizing at Camp 2. While there, he took a hike additionally 200m up above Camp 2. He has been staying in a tent by himself. The weather is unusually warm and he is feeling pretty good, and his pulse is on target, though his oxygen saturation levels could be better. They will spend several days resting at BC before making another ascent, this time to Camp 3, then down to sleep at Camp 2. Finally they will return below BC to have a final big rest before starting the trek for the summit.

[Update from Camp 2](#)

Yury called today, it was my first time talking to him directly and I was surprised at how good the satellite reception actually was. A couple times the connection cut out and was a little muffled but by the end of the conversation I was hearing him very clearly.

On the 21st they made their first ascent over the ice flow, leaving at 4am and climbing for 5 hours, it was quite difficult. They spent one night at Camp 1 and then made their way to Camp 2 to acclimatize. Breathing is difficult at this altitude. Even lying in the tent, I could hear him breathing heavily while talking to me. He says the views are beautiful all around and all the mountains feel very close.

They will spend two more days at Camp 2, then return to base camp for several days of rest. There will not be any emails for two days until they return to base camp.

Meanwhile, read about the Eco Everest expedition's trash collection efforts here:
<http://sherpas.sltrib.com/2009/index.asp>

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: **himalayadream** | April 21, 2009 ([edit](#))

[Update 4/21](#)

Today 2 members of our team had to go to camp 1. Usually people leave at 4am. Some are leaving even earlier to avoid sun on the ice fall. However everyone came back because one ladder on the ice fall moved and it would require ice doctors (Sherpas that support the ice fall) to fix it. Everyone came down and it there was a lot of noise and it looks like people had a good time at 5am.

Some of us (me included) went for a 3h walk to 5500m where there was a very nice view of the Lhotse face where our camp 3 would be located.

Our plans changed a little. Tomorrow I am going to Camp 1 and will sleep there. If I feel good I will either go for camp 2 or will spend another night at camp 1

Will call try to call from camp 1 but not sure if it will work. I am not taking my laptop so, there will be no emails.

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayasdream](#) | April 20, 2009 ([edit](#))

[Update 4/20](#)

We had a puja ceremony today. It is a very important ceremony and no Sherpas sleep on the mountain before it. It was very interesting, colorful. They build a big altar and put a lot of different food and drinks near it. We also brought all our climbing gear to put near the altar.

At the end we all danced around the altar and the Sherpas sang their songs.

I also took my first shower today here at BC. It was pretty comfortable. They provide a big hand pump with hot water and the pump has a connection to the shower. So I pump multiple times to get pressure in the canister and then use shower head.

Now after the Puja we are free to go climbing.

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayasdream](#) | April 19, 2009 ([edit](#))

[Update 4/19](#)

Another day at base camp. This morning we went for acclimatization to Pumori Base Camp and then climbed to 5500m. All the exercise took a little more than 3h.

Apa Sherpa finally joined us. It is such an honor to sit with him at the same table and talk to him at any time. People often recognize him and ask to take pictures with him.

This afternoon we have a training going through ladders and other ice fall techniques — it was fun. Dawa Steven announced the climbing schedule:

- 20 – Puja ceremony
- 22 – climbing to camp one through ice fall and coming back the same day
- 23 – rest
- 24 – Camp 1 sleep there
- 25 – Climb to Camp 2 and back to base camp, possibly stay a night at Camp 1

After that we rest for 3-4 days and will go to on the last acclimatization trip:

Base camp – Camp 2 directly,
Stay at Camp 2 for – 3 nights
Go to Camp 3 – sleep there
Back to BC

I am feeling good. Slept the well last night, better than the previous night. The temperature at night in the tent is -6C, but I keep both doors partially open to increase ventilation

You can listen to Bill Burke's audio commentary for 4/19 [here: www.byoaudio.com/play/WnMJN9GQ](http://www.byoaudio.com/play/WnMJN9GQ)

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayasdream](#) | April 18, 2009 ([edit](#))

[At Base Camp](#)

We came into base camp yesterday at 3pm. It is an amazing place.

Completely different then I was imagining it. It is on a very uneven glacier. The Small hills of ice from 2 to 7 m high rising everywhere. Some ice is covered with stones. Tents big and small are everywhere. Our camp is at the top of base camp at crampon point. That means we do not need to walk before we put our crampons on and start to climb the ice fall Ice fall is huge much bigger that I imagined. We can see tiny figures of people moving up and down. Sherpas say that it is much safer this year.

Our community tent is a very long high tent that is 10 m long and we can easily walk there. There is a long set of tables in the middle and high chairs on both sides. The floor is cover by carpet. There are always thermoses with hot tea and milk tea on the table. We are very cautious about hygiene so we have a bucket of hot water outside of the dining tent so we can wash hands before eating.

Forgot to mention that there is a gas heater in the corner and last night it was very warm inside the tent even though we were wearing warm clothes. Before dinner was served we were given hot moist towels to wipe our hands. We all have individual tents that are 3 person tents. The floor of the tent is covered with foam mats and we also have a thick mattress.

The most amazing thing is a light that goes to every tent and hangs from the tent ceiling. It lights the tent very well and all this comes from solar power. I put all my three huge duffle bags inside and still have plenty of room.

It's noon now, and the sun is shining strong. I use my new battery powered trimmer to trim my beard, which has grown very much since I left home. It has been 19 days since we left and we are only at the base camp. All my previous expeditions would be over by this time. I can feel that this is a very different one.

We all talked about different strategy for acclimatization. Camp I is ready and sherpas are building Camp II. It will not be ready by the middle of the next week. We will be having Puga ceremony on April 20, and after that we can go up.

There are two tactics for acclimatization: two trips up or three trips up before the summit bid. Not sure what I would do yet. Today I talked to my personal Sherpa. His name is Thuktan. He is 40 years old, summited Everest 6 times and also climbed many other peaks here. He is a little shy and will see how it goes. I slept not bad today. Waking up many times. It is expectd at ths altitude – 5350m. The next nights will be better. My oxygen saturation this morning was 78 and pulse was 67 which is very good as far as I am concerned. No headaches so far.

Yesterday was a big meeting with all the leaders of all expeditions present. According to Dawa Steven Sherpa (our leader) it went very well. Most of the big operators are on this side of the Everest because the

Chnq (?) is closed their side. All decided to contribute Sherpas and equipment, so we hope that the entire mountain will be fixed up to the summit by the end of this month. This is very good news because it will open opportunity for them to climb earlier. They also decided to put two routes (ropes): one up and one down to reduce the possibility of bottlenecks.

Love you all!

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayasdream](#) | April 17, 2009 ([edit](#))

[Updates 4/13 and 4/16](#)

4/13

Today we have a rest day in Dingboche. It is 4300m. we are higher than the treeline. For exercize I went to the hill near by and climbed up to 5000m.

Feeling good. It is a little cold here but most of the cold comes from altitude so I am wearing many layers. Using warm bottles before going to bed. The cold will pass as soon as the body gets adapted to the altitude.

The plan is to go to Lobuche 4900m tomorrow and also spend two days there. After that – Base Camp. The rumor is that the Ice fall is fixed and after the Puga ceremony and a couple days of rest we will be ready to test it. We saw Everest for the first time yesterday from Tengboche. It was so far and high...

For the last two days we are going around Ama Dablan – seeing its beauty.

All around us is amazing.

4/16

We are in Lobuche, 4900m – rest day. My oxygen saturation this morning was 86, pulse 65. It is good considering the altitude. All the rooms on the way here are two person rooms. My room mate is Henry. He is from Germany. He's a very good fellow and we are getting along very well. He is a very strong climber, runs in front of everyone. He already climbed one 8000m peak – Cho Oyu solo on the last day.

We will be in base camp tomorrow. I am looking forward to see this famous place.

I'm not writing what is happening day to day as our leader Dawa Steven Sherpa is keeping a blog (editor's note: I've linked to it in the past posts, here it is again:

<http://sherpas.sltrib.com/2009/index.asp>

You can also follow the blog of Bill Burke here:

<http://eightsummits.com/pt/blog/>

[1 Comment](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayasdream](#) | April 16, 2009 ([edit](#))

[Updates 4/9 – 4/14](#)

Apologies for lack of posts, we've been having some communication difficulties with our Everest team 😊 But everything is going great! Yury called to say that he feels great. They are having a rest day, and tomorrow they will reach basecamp. He feels relaxed and his pulse at 65. How many people have such a great pulse even at this altitude? 😊

Following are some emails I got from Yury lumped together for the past days...

4/8

We have landed in Lukla yesterday around 5:30pm. Our patience was rewarded. Most of the teams left the airport, but we were determined to stay as long as it takes. The landing strip in Lukla is amazing. It goes up at a 10-15 degree angle and we landed uphill. It was much colder here because of the 2800m altitude. We spend the night in the loge nearby.

Today was our first day of trekking. The Khumbu valley is beautiful with houses spread all over the valley and green terraces. We hiked for 3 hours today and actually lost 200 m of altitude.

I talked to Sveta yesterday, They not only reached Everest Base camp at 5300m but also climbed Kala Patar 5500m. The evening before was snowing and her way up to Kala Patar was all on snow. She sad that she was making 5 steps and then resting. I am so proud of what she has done. It is probably the most difficult hiking trek in the world considering altitude and length of the trip.

Tomorrow we are going to Numche Bazar and most likely will meet with Sveta.

4/9

We continue to toward Numche today. The first part of the trek was along the river crossing multiple bridges. After lunch we came to the spot where the trek goes pretty steep up and gains 800 m (2600ft) of altitude. It usaly takes 2.5, 3 h to get up to Numche. Henry started the race by going very fast. I have decided to follow him. We were slowed down multiple times were the trail is too narrow and it was impossible to bypass porters or animals caring loads.

I could not keep up with Henry at the end. My time to Numche was 1.5hours and his was probably 10 min less. I feel great even though at the end I was a little tired. Numche is an amazing place, it is a city carved out on the narrow cirques. All buildings are build out of light stones that are manually cut somewhere nearby.

As soon as we reached the lodge it start raining and then snowing hard. Sveta came only after 3 and it so nice to see her. It was like a miracle that we have met in such moment and such circumstances were she just completed a very hard hike to the Base Camp and I was going up there. We went shopping and talked until 10:30. She told me all about her heroic journey under very difficult circumstances.

4/10

Sveta left this morning for Lukla and we started on the normal Base camp trek to the Apa Sherpa lodge which is in the village of Thame. The day is beautiful and sunny, and after the snowfall last night all around us is shining. Today is the real first day when we start seeing mighty mountains around us. They are so are beautiful in the fresh sunlight and they are only 6000-6500m peaks. It took us 4.5 h to get to Thame. Apa Sherpa's lodge is very nice. It has a lot insignia of him reaching Everest 18 times. He and his wife welcomed us and we are having a great time.

Altitude here is 3800m – 12300ft, I am feeling great.

Editor's Note

You can read the official Eco-Everest blogs for the past few days here:

Apr 13: <http://www.asian-trekking.com/eve/home/index.php?function=page&id=96>

Apr 14: <http://www.asian-trekking.com/eve/home/index.php?function=page&id=97>

Apr 15: <http://www.asian-trekking.com/eve/home/index.php?function=page&id=98>

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: **himalayasdream** | April 13, 2009 ([edit](#))

[New Update, Follow the climb on Twitter](#)

You can follow the progress of the Yury and his team by following Apa Sherpa (18 times summitter of Everest and climbing leader for the Eco-Everest expedition, who will attempt the 19th summit of Everest this year). Please follow his updates on twitter: <http://twitter.com/everestclimb>

Another way to keep up with the expedition is the blog featuring writing by Dawa Steven Sherpa, leader of the Eco-Everest expedition. Read today's entry here:

<http://sherpas.sltrib.com/2009/blog.asp?DY=2009-04-12>

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: **himalayasdream** | April 12, 2009 ([edit](#))

[Expedition Update](#)

Yury called today to say that everything is great and going according to plan. The Asian Trekking blog has been posting updates ([Read more](#)) on what happens to the Eco-Everest expedition. I (Yan) will keep posting here as I hear more either from Yury or from the Asian Trekking blog. Here is a photo from earlier this week as the team flew to Lukla to begin their trek to Everest base camp.

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: **himalayasdream** | April 10, 2009 ([edit](#))

Expedition Update

This is Yan writing. Yury is on his way to Everest Base Camp. Everything is going great, and we'll have more updates coming soon. Please watch for daily expedition updates on the Asian Trekking blog: <http://www.asian-trekking.com/eve/home/index.php>

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Waiting for weather

Dear friends,

We are still in Kathmandu. After 7 hours at the airport and two attempts to fly out (the second up to the runway), we are back at the hotel. The weather in Lukla is bad and all expeditions are waiting, some already for 4 days. But we are hope to fly out tomorrow.

We are all taking it easy, this is what is expected from a such expedition, patience is a key here.

I just talked to Lana, she is very well, reached Base Camp today - the biggest and most famous base camp. It is a great achievement! When I was talking to her it was snowing at the Base Camp. If the weather is good in the morning they are scheduled to climb Kala Patar - a summit that is higher then the base camp and has a very nice view on the Everest and surroundings.

I am a little tired from the early start today – going to bed. That's all for now.

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: **himalayasdream** | April 6, 2009 ([edit](#))

Kathmandu, April 4

Today was another day in Kathmandu. I went to the tourist shopping district. Streets are narrow and both sides of the streets are lined with small stores. Every third store sells climbing and trekking equipment. All famous brands are present – North Face, Mountain Hardwear, etc – all made in Katmandu – all are fake but very good quality. I could not contain myself and bought nice balaclava.

The streets are full of people, bikes, and cars. It is now clear why people have to stay in Kathmandu for some time before they go to Everest. It is a test. If you survive traffic on the streets of this city and don't get killed or get a heart attack – you are ready to go.

I came back to the hotel and spent 1 hour on treadmill.

We have had our fist team meeting today at the Asian Trekking office. Dawa Steven Sherpa – our Expedition Leader discussed multiple topics related to our expedition. Then we had a presentation by Ted Atkins, who is inventor of the TOPOUT oxygen masks that we are going to use. It was very entertaining and interesting. Dinner was served and we drank to a successful and safe expedition.

Here's a picture from our dinner:

Upper row from the left:

Henry Voigt – Germany, Nic Cunningham – USA, Dawa Steven Sherpa- expedition lider, Mogens Jensen, the guy who you have seen on the discovery channel series for 2 years, he is an asthmatic who is trying too reach the top without supplemental oxygen. He already summited Everest with oxygen.

Second row from the left: Yury Pritzker –USA, Pertemba Sherpa – our Base camp manger – 3 times Everest summitter, Jesse Easterung –USA

Sitting: Apa Sherpa – 18 times Everest summitter (world record) – lead climbing sherpa Bud Alen – USA, Bill Burke –USA

[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayasdream](#) | April 3, 2009 ([edit](#))

[In Kathmandu](#)

Dear friends

I am in Katmandu. My flight was not so bad, much easier than I was expecting. The longest wait was in London were I spent 11 h laying on the nice soft bench in the middle of the shopping center of terminal 3. It was a little challenging not to lose the spot during my toilet breaks, so I was waiting for nice people to sit near me and asked them to watch my luggage.

As some might know I was caring all my important summit gear with me in case of a catastrophic and very unusual situation when the luggage does not arrives. So I was caring around 30 pounds in two backpacks and a big plastic bag.

The flight to Bahrain was not that significant. It was a Gulf Air. It was very nice to receive a large menu for the dinner in coach class. However expectations were not met when after of 2.5 h waiting after menu was delivered we were given just what was left, no choices.

On my last leg from Bahrain to Katmandu I was unexpectedly given a business class seat instead of my coach assigned seat. However the flight was relatively short – just 4 h- so I spent the whole time learning how to move my seat in 5 different directions, switching on and off my new individual tv screen, and trying to find an even more comfortable position.

It was another advantage to be in the business class: I was the first to get my new Nepalese Visa. It took just 5 min and \$100. It looks like they learned how to take money very efficiently. In my surprise and joy my luggage arrived safely and I was given a green light to exit customs. Asian trekking people met me and I was introduced to the craziest driving I have ever experienced.

After a quick shower I met Dawa Sherpa – our group director. The plan is to relax and have a group meeting on Saturday, April 4. We are planning to fly to Lukla on April 6, but the weather is not good for some time now and there is a big line of expeditions and trekkers to get there. We might need to wait another day here.

As I discovered six months is not enough time to prepare for the Everest expedition. I ended up forgetting my music. So as of now I am logged in remotely to my home computer and FTPing my music to my website, so I can ftp it from there to my laptop that I have here with me. At least it gives me something to do.

I also just went for a walk in the center of the city where I discovered a huge number of stores that sell mountaineering equipment. I bought 2 nice duffle bags to double mine in case of a rain or rough carrying on yaks. I also bought a pair of spare down mittens – all for a fraction of the price we pay in the US.

That's all for now. Cheers,

Yura

[1 Comment](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [himalayadream](#) | March 30, 2009 ([edit](#))

[Leaving for Everest](#)

Dear Friends,

Thank you very much for your support. I am leaving for Nepal this Tuesday. All is ready and packed. I am ready and very excited.

Yan (my son) will be posting my messages to this blog so if you would like to know what is going on please subscribe to the RSS feed or just visit here once in a while.

The plan is as follows:

March 31 – fly to Kathmandu, arriving there on April 2

April 6 – fly from Kathmandu to Lukla

April 6– April 13,14 – hike to the Everest base camp

April 15 – May 15 – acclimatization climbing, reaching camp 3

May 15– May 27 – summit attempts

June 1 – flying home

Hope to talk to you soon!