



**Mount Everest 2016 - Blog No 6:**  
Mount Lobuche twice

Dear all,

Jaco returned safely back to Everest Base Camp on Monday after having summited Mount Lobuche twice! Please find an excerpt of his diary below

*"Hi everyone,*

*A couple of days no contact but here a kind of copy of my diary.*

*Here I am, lying in my sleeping bag on the summit of Mount Lobuche at an altitude of 6119 meters, and I'm emotional. Why? I don't know. Perhaps because for the first time I feel that I actually have a real chance of making it to the summit of Everest. Of course no time for champagne yet, but boy, I feel so strong at the moment! The last four days were extremely tough and tomorrow we have to descent 1200 meters, to then ascent 600 meters again. In total, we'll bridge a distance of around 25 kilometres in one day. Yes, clearly, the expedition has moved on to the next phase. Despite feeling great now, I definitely have had my 'shitty' moments during the past couple of days. During the first ascent on Lobuche we went from Base Camp to an altitude of 5500 meter. I was going first, but what a terrible weather! Visibility was only 20 meters, it was foggy and snowing, strong winds and around 4pm we already had to get into our tents.*

*We got up at 6am after a reasonable night and went for the first summit bid. But what a disastrous terrain. The rocks are full with yesterday's frozen snow and I'm scared! 2000 meter below I see Pheriche and I'm clearly not tracking in a relaxed way. After struggling for an hour I find my rhythm and we continue our journey through very challenging and rocky terrain. Not a single part is flat. But, it can be worse. After having sweated for three hours we have reached the glaciers and we need to start using our crampons. The sun is shining on my back and I feel I'm getting overheated. Don't be shocked, but the last 300 meters go up, 65 degrees steep! I can't find my rhythm, also because I'm trying to make pictures in-between and because I'm interviewed four times by the Discovery guys! I'm clearly going to do this differently tomorrow. Finally, at 1pm I'm there, on the top and what a reward! The view is amazing and indescribable! I hope the video clip gives a bit of an impression. But anyways, we're not done yet, because "walk high, sleep low" is the motto for today and therefore we need to descend all the way to Lobuche Base Camp, 1200 meter down. Unfortunately we're not alone and at the second rope where I need to lower myself using an arm rappel (place your body weight away from the mountain, let the rope slip through your arm and in that way 'walk' down) there's another group messing around. Because of that, I need to keep myself warm for half an hour whilst waiting for them in the side of the mountain. At the next rope I indicate in a very friendly way that I really need to pass them, and luckily that works. An hour later, at a very steep rocky cliff it goes wrong. Both my feet slip away and with my full bodyweight and backpack I fall on my right elbow and hip. After some cursing I get up and luckily I continued to hold the rope in a reflex. My hip is all right, everything in my right arm is as stiff as can be, but I'm able to move everything, so I give a thumbs up to guide Ritchie. The next part I'll do abseiling. After a descent of a little more than 3 hours I'm entering Base Camp, I take off my shoes, see that I have two blue toes and*

*take a couple of mugs of soup.*

*The next day is a rest day ... in order to climb the same peak another time today, but then all the way up from Base Camp. Just as a comparison – last night I slept 100 meters above Mont Blanc and I am going straight to the top of Mount McKinley. And by the way, it snowed last night. At 6.10 I'm having my backpack on and at 6.15 I know the ice skating ring is a fact – this is not going to be fun. Also because we can hardly find our way and it seems we're covering twice the distance. I'm slipping a couple of times but quickly I recover. Of course we're also passing the spot where I slipped yesterday but after having been treated by Tracee (our expedition doctor) everything is OK with the exception of being stiff. It's tough, especially the ice wall that is extremely steep. But then, suddenly, we're there! Again on the summit of Mount Lobuche, no view, a high heart rate and out of breath. But after 3 minutes I'm organizing my tent (yes, we're staying overnight on the top with 5 tents in-between 3 crevasses), melting snow to make tea, is my heart beat around 75, I don't have a headache anymore and I realise that this extreme acclimatisation program seems to be working. Tomorrow we'll be descending again (don't slip!) back to Everest Base Camp, for a couple of days rest, if all goes well.*

*Jaco"*