

The history of Mount Everest has always been associated with the Sherpas' great mountaineering achievements. Without their input as mountain guides and carriers in high-altitudes, Everest expeditions are unthinkable.

Mount Everest but also into their homes. This trip to Nepal is a journey through time. Phurba lives in the most traditional habitation. His house has no electricity, the maize is still ground using hand stones and he and his neighbours live almost exclusively from what they can encourage to grow in the meagre soil of their fields. Ngima Tenji comes from near Lukla, a centre of Himalayan tourism, where two extremes collide. There are no roads to Lukla—everything has to be brought in by small propeller aircraft or on the backs of porters. Ngima, on the other hand, lives in a booming and teeming metropolis. Nobody knows exactly how many inhabitants Kathmandu has, but one thing is certain—the numbers are increasing daily. Among the Sherpas, Gelu is the only globetrotter as he works as a mountain guide also in Europe.

As inhabitants of the Nepalese mountains, especially the Solokhumbu and Makalu Valleys, they have the physical traits that enable them to spend extended periods in the zone above 7,000 metres. For a few months each year, they accompany alpinists from various nationalities to the world's highest and most challenging peaks. In the Makalu Valley, there is almost nothing that would merit the name of road; everything, from sack of rice to bathtub, has to be carried by porters to the most inaccessible villages. This film offers rare insights into the everyday life of the Sherpas.

90 years after the first Mount Everest expedition, in which sherpas also played a role, our team of four sherpas want to find the answer to one of the last secrets still jealously guarded by this highest of all mountains: were Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay really the first to set foot on the summit of Mount Everest? 'The Sherpas' Quest' presents breathtaking images and fascinating stories from the top and the land at the foot of the world's highest mountain.

'The Sherpas' Quest' follows four members of these special people—Phurba, Ngima, Ngima Tenji and Gelu—not only on



HISTORY



# THE SHERPAS' QUEST

1 x 53 min. Written and directed by Heinz Leger and Jochen Hemmleb

HD, 5.1 and Stereo Executive producers: Andrea Gastgeb, Sabine Holzer



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