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Wilderness Trek - Kanchenjunga Massif and Goeche La

From**To**

2011

Available on request – minimum 2 persons

Best times to visit – March to end of May,
end of September to early November

Grade: Mod to strenuous
Max elevation 4940m



Duration: 17 Days

Land only price per person (join in Delhi). Includes four star hotel in Delhi, local deluxe hotels and resorts and tented camp on trek

Group Size	2-6	7-12
Luxury hotel in Delhi, local A category hotel in Darjeeling, tented camp on trek	£1855	£1695
Flight Price Delhi – Bagdogra- Delhi	From £250 per person economy return subject to change	
Flight price UK to Delhi	From £300 economy return	
Single hotel/camp supplement	£595	

Introduction:

This beautiful trek takes you along trails through moss-laden forests rich in a variety of flora and fauna, through high mountain meadows of grazing yaks, mountain sheep and Tibetan resettlement villages, over passes with fluttering prayer flags. The trail leads through some of the most spectacular forested areas of Sikkim particularly beautiful during the spring when the rhododendrons, giant magnolias and a profusion of other wildflowers are in full bloom. At Dzongri you'll come face to face with a magnificent view of Mount Kangchenzonga (8585 m), which, to the Sikkimese, is revered as an all-powerful God. As we trek along ridge tops, our views of the peak are steady, awesome, and intimate. The Five Treasures of Great Snow, possibly the most sacred, and surely the most imposing of the world's great peaks, reveals herself. A rugged terrain from Smiti Lake leads to Goecha La (4940 m), the highest point on the trek. The top of the pass places you at the foot of Kangchenzonga, as close to the mountain as possible. On the return journey from Goecha La we'll keep a look out for rare high altitude birds and the Blue Sheep. The trail gradually rises along the east ridge of Dzongri to Phedang and from there descends to



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Tsoka/Bakhim and on to Yuksum, from where we'll drive to Gangtok and visit the famous Buddhist Monastery of Rumtek.

Day 01: Arrive Delhi

Welcome to Delhi, a fascinating city amid the wonder of India. You'll be met and assisted at the airport by our local representatives who will arrange the transfer and check in to your hotel for a good night's rest.

Day 02: Fly Delhi to Bagdogra, drive Bagdogra to Darjeeling (82km, 3 hrs)

After breakfast at the hotel, this morning we transfer to the domestic airport for our flight to Bagdogra, leaving at 1005 arriving at 1200. On arrival we'll be met by our local representative, to begin the scenic drive to the picturesque hill station of Darjeeling. It's a pleasant drive uphill for around 3 hours through local tea gardens and small towns. We'll occasionally meet the famous Darjeeling Toy Train the highest narrow gauge steam train as it huffs and puffs its way slowly up the mountain. On arrival we'll be able to check in to our hotel with the rest of the evening at leisure to rest and relax and perhaps take a stroll around the local area.

Day 03: Darjeeling (2134m)

Enjoy some sightseeing around Darjeeling today. Darjeeling is a beautifully picturesque and charming hill station, surrounded by fragrant tea gardens and lush slopes interspersed with fern, bamboo and coniferous jungle and hamlets, a popular and vibrant Victorian holiday resort and major tea growing centre during colonial times in India and continuing today. Enjoy an early morning visit to Tiger Hill for fabulous sunrise views of Mt Kanchenzonga, the third highest mountain in the world, along with the highest Mount Everest and a host of other Himalayan giants also seen on the horizon. From here we'll drive back to the hotel and after breakfast we'll visit Ghoom, a Tibetan-Buddhist monastery and their botanical gardens to see their collection of rare orchids and other plants. We'll also visit one of the tea gardens around Darjeeling and this afternoon we'll visit the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute. Overnight Darjeeling.

Day 04: Darjeeling – Yuksum (1780m) (drive 7-8 hrs)

After a buffet breakfast this morning at the hotel we'll leave Darjeeling for the drive to Yuksum (1780m) in Western Sikkim. Yuksum is the original capital of Sikkim and this tiny hill town is the base for treks and expeditions to Mt. Kangchenzonga and other important peaks in this region. Overnight at a local hotel.

Day 05: Yuksum to Tshoka (3710m) trek 6-7 hrs

This morning we'll begin the trek after breakfast. The trail today passes through the dense, lush green forest and rises gradually to start with and later after crossing the last of the three bridges on our route the gradient increases and the ascent continues until we reach our camp at Tsoka, a small Tibetan settlement, which is the only one on this trek. From Yuksum we trek through a tropical jungle, which gradually changes into a temperate forestland as we approach Tshoka. The first few hours are a gradual climb, high on the right bank of the Prek Chu (River). We cross three bridges over icy cold streams until we reach the one across the Prek Chu where we'll stop for a hot lunch. From the Prek Chu Bridge to Tshoka it's a steep climb for about an hour. Tshoka village is the last and only village on the trek and the first place to get real views of the mountains and our first view of Mt Pandim. There are also some nice forests in the area including (depending on time of year) flowering magnolia and rhododendron forests. There is a small monastery in the village, which is interesting and worth a visit during evening prayers and the rest of the evening is at leisure. Overnight in tented camp or trekking huts.



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Day 06: Tshoka (3710m) –rest and acclimatise

Today is a full day of rest and acclimatisation. We'll explore the local area today and enjoy the views and surroundings. Overnight in tented camp or trekking huts.

Day 07: Tshoka to Dzongri (4030m) Trek 6-7 hrs

Today we follow the trail as it passes through thick rhododendron forest and rises almost continuously in the beginning through forests of rhododendron and magnolia until we reach the rolling hills and meadows of Dzongri which is home to rhododendron and "*Sunpatt*" shrubs. These meadows are also excellent grazing pastures for Yaks. We'll stop for rest at Phedang, known as half ground in local language. After our rest we continue walking on the trail which keeps on ascending till we reach Devrali, the highest point of today's trek. The trail after Devrali goes over a few ascents and descents before it reaches the high altitude grazing grounds of Dzongri. At Dzongri there are a few Yak huts made by local herdsmen as shelter for their stock. The view of Kanchenjunga (8598m), Pandim (5591m), Narsing (5825m) and other lesser peaks from Dzongri is stunning. The panoramic close-up view of the mountains from here is also just wonderful. Overnight in tented camp/trekking huts.

Day 08: Dzongri – Rest and acclimatisation

Today will be used for acclimatization before we trek to the higher altitudes of Smiti Lake & Goecha La. We'll take an early morning excursion to the Dzongri La (pass) where the views of Mt. Rathong, the Kabru range and Goecha peak from here are breathtaking. We'll return to the camp at Dzongri for breakfast and the rest of today is at leisure to explore the local area - for example maybe a climb up to Dzongri top, a spire abruptly rising over the grazing grounds from where on a clear day, the views of Mt. Kangchendzonga are superb. Or simply relax at camp and enjoy the views. Overnight at tented camp/trekking huts.

Day 09: Dzongri to Thangsing (3800m) trek 5-6 hrs

The trail today starts by heading towards Mt. Pandim before turning left and after going over a few small hills, dips steeply towards the Krok Chu (river). Here we'll cross the stream over the bridge and will continue our trek to reach the campsite of Thangsing, with magnificent Mt. Pandim and Mt. Goecha La in the backdrop. Thangsing is located at the head of the beautiful valley of Onglathang. The descent is through thick forests of rhododendron and silver firs. Overnight in tented camp/trekking huts.

Day 10: Thangsing to Smiti Lake (4200m) trek 3-4 hrs

Today we'll trek along a level trail with only one steep ascent just before the sacred lake of Smiti. We'll have continuous views of Mt. Goecha to our left and Mt. Pandim on the right, with the lake separated by a high ridge from the base of Mt. Pandim. Yaks and Dzos wander in the wild here at Smiti. We'll spend the rest of today just at leisure to enjoy and explore this area. Overnight in tented camp/trekking huts.

Day 11: Trek Smiti Lake- Goecha la (4940m)- Tangsing trek 9-10 hrs

Today is a long day and we'll start very early in the morning to beat the clouds, blanketing the Kangchendzonga Massif. We'll cross Smiti Lake along the bank and from here the trail begins to rise steeply for about an hour, to reach the high point, commonly referred as view point. From here there are some good views of the massif possible during day, if the weather is clear. For the next hour we'll follow the trail over and among the boulders to reach the small plateau of Zemathang, which not long ago was a camping site for the excursions to Goecha La, but the lack of water gives this camping site an abandoned look now. We'll follow the trail along the stream bed with high mountain spires towering above us before we follow the valley to the right and then left to reach the base of Goecha La. From the



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base we'll start ascending to reach the ridge leading to the Goecha La (pass). The views from the top of ridge are magnificent and a walk along the ridge brings us to another view point with Buddhist flags fluttering high in the breeze. This second view point is often mistaken as Goecha La by many trekkers and the views from here are good but not better than Goecha La itself, which is just a half an hour walk from here. We'll reach the Goecha La negotiating some snow cover on the ground. On a clear day, the views of majestic Kangchendzonga are truly breathtaking and the massif rises almost at a 90 degree angle. Depending upon the weather conditions, we'll spend around half an hour on the La before we take the trail back to reach Smiti where our kitchen team will be waiting for us with a hot lunch. After lunch we'll return to the lower camp of Thangsing where we'll rest overnight at camp

Day 12: Trek Thangsing – Phedang – Tsoka (3710m)

Today we'll trek back to the village of Tsoka. We'll avoid climbing to Dzongri again by instead trekking from Krok Chu to Phedang, more or less a level path along a narrow trail. Evening will be spent with a chance to sample the local brew called Tongba that is served in small, improvised bamboo vessels. Rest overnight at tented camp/trekking huts.

Day 13 Tsoka –Yuksom (trek 5-6hrs)

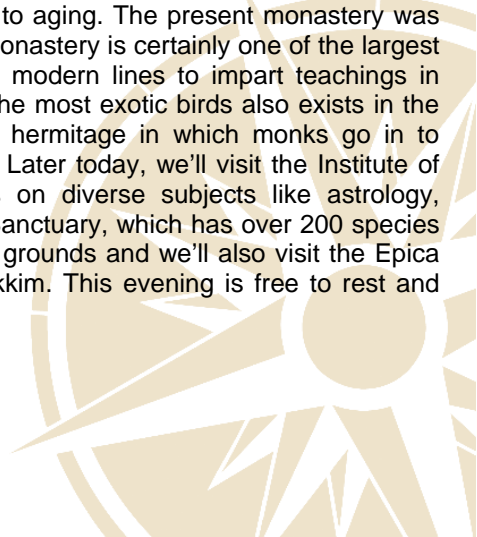
Today is the final day of the trek and we'll trek back to reach Yuksum. The rest of the day will be at leisure to rest and explore Yuksum and the local area. Overnight at a local hotel.

Day 14: Yuksum – Gangtok (1870m) – drive 6-7 hours

After breakfast today we'll drive to Gangtok a quaint, colorful and small modernized town that is the capital and principal town of Sikkim, and fairytale capital balanced on steep mountain slopes, and shrouded in clouds with surrounding landscape of lush rice terraces, swiftly flowing rivers and distant snow capped peaks. Overnight at local hotel.

Day 15: Gangtok

After breakfast today a short early excursion takes us to visit famous Rumtek Monastery, the seat of the Karmapa Lama who heads the Kagyupa Sect of Buddhism. Thangkas and frescoes decorate the walls of this ancient monastery, now renovated. His holiness Gyalwa Karmapa was the 16th reincarnate. The style of the monastery, strictly traditional, has been patterned on the lines of the Lamas series of Tibet. This monastery was first built in 1717 but crumbled to ruins due to aging. The present monastery was constructed by his holiness the Gyalwa Karmapa in 1960s. The monastery is certainly one of the largest and sprawls over a huge area. It includes a school built along modern lines to impart teachings in Tibetan and various aspects of Buddhism. An aviary containing the most exotic birds also exists in the monastery complex. Some distance above the monastery is a hermitage in which monks go in to complete seclusion for meditation for periods of up to 3 years. Later today, we'll visit the Institute of Tibetology, which has a collection of almost 30,000 volumes on diverse subjects like astrology, philosophy, magic and religion. After lunch we'll visit the Orchid Sanctuary, which has over 200 species of temperate and intermediate orchids on beautifully landscaped grounds and we'll also visit the Epica gardens which has a large collection of indigenous plants of Sikkim. This evening is free to rest and relax at the hotel.





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Day 16: Gangtok to Bagdogra (80km approx 2-3 hrs drive) fly to Delhi

Today begins with the scenic drive back down to Bagdogra in time to board the flight back to Delhi. On arrival you'll be met and transferred to your hotel with the rest of your day and evening at leisure to rest and relax. Overnight at your hotel.

Day 17: Depart Delhi

This morning you'll be transferred to the International Airport in time for check in and your departure flight home/onwards.

Please note that from 01 March 2009 for the next 3 years a mandatory Airport Development Fee (ADF) will be levied on all domestic and international flights by the Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL). The charge will be INR200 (approx £2.74) for each domestic passenger departing from Delhi and INR1300 (approx £17.80) for each international passenger (including Kathmandu and Paro departures). All visitors to India from 01 March 2009 will be required to pay these new mandatory charges to the airport authorities directly at the time of departure

Extending your holiday

There are many choices and options if you'd like to extend your holiday before or after your main booking. Here are just a few suggestions of extensions available for this trip:

- See the wonder of the Taj Mahal and enjoy relaxed sightseeing around Delhi
- Visit the neighbours – take a trip to nearby Nepal, Bhutan or even Tibet
- Enjoy the adrenaline rush of white water rafting
- Relax and cruise the waterways of Kerala on a traditional houseboat

Please contact our UK office if you'd like to extend your stay by booking one of the above options, if you would like ideas or advice on how best to spend your time and budget or if you would like help with arranging any special celebrations during your trip.

Useful Information

The following information is aimed at helping you to decide whether this trip is right for you. Additional information can be found on our website and in our brochure. If you have any questions or would like advice on any aspect of this trip please contact us and we'll be happy to go through everything with you.

Day to Day Itinerary

It must be realized that with adventure travel changes to an itinerary may occur, for example due to unexpected weather conditions. The day to day itinerary is provided as a general guideline and is intended to give you a general sense of what to expect, including places visited and activities during the trip to help with your decision regards which trip is the best one for you. Activities and timings may vary slightly from those outlined Your guide will make any changes necessary and all arrangements during the trip, including explaining reasons for any changes to the itinerary that may occur.

Trip Duration and Grading

This trip is 17 days with Day 1 beginning in Delhi and ending on Day 17 back in Delhi. The trip has been graded moderate to strenuous due to the higher elevations and amount of walking involved easy. There will be some easy day walks as part of your guided sightseeing, for example when visiting temples,



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palaces or gardens, usually a maximum of a few hours walking each day with no continuous walking and no high elevations.

Group Size

The maximum number of persons on this trip will be 12 and the minimum number 2 persons. By keeping group sizes small it means we can provide a more personal service to you.

Local Representatives and Guides

You will be met at the airport on arrival by our local representatives who will always be available to help with your arrival, departure and any queries or requirements during your trip. The group will be accompanied by a local English speaking guide throughout the trip. Once you have confirmed your booking we will send you details of how you will be met on arrival and you will meet your guide just after you arrive.

Accommodation

During this trip you will spend 02 nights at a good four star hotel in Delhi. In Darjeeling, Yuksum and Gangtok you'll spend 05 nights at local A class hotels. On trek you'll spend 08 nights at a fully provisioned tented camp and/or using trekking huts. All accommodation is based on twin share. If you are travelling on your own and are happy to share with someone, we will arrange for you to share a room with someone of the same sex, at no extra charge. If you request a single room the single room supplement charge for this trip will apply. It is usually possible to arrange single room accommodation but please contact our office to confirm this.

Meals

All meals on full board basis during the days spent in Sikkim – at Darjeeling, Yuksum, Gangtok and on trek are included in the price. During the time spent in Delhi meals on bed and breakfast basis only are included. This is to allow you the opportunity and freedom to sample the many wonderful eating places available in Delhi. Snacks, bottled drinks including mineral water and alcohol are not included.

Flight Inclusive Price and International Flights

The flight inclusive price is based on best available price (at the time of producing our current brochure) of economy return flights from the UK added to the 'land only' price. Flight prices are subject to change and do vary throughout the year. We use a variety of airlines and scheduled flights on our trips including British Airways, Air India, Gulf Air, Qatar Air etc. Our ATOL licence is T7199 and we work with other ATOL holders to issue flight tickets. For exact air fares and flight classes available at the time you wish to travel please contact us.

Land Only Option

Our trips are based on 'land only' as well as flight inclusive options to allow you the flexibility to choose to make your own arrangements for flights or perhaps to arrive a few days earlier or leave a few days later than the trip or to join the trip from anywhere in the world. If you choose the land only option we will provide full details of how and when to meet the rest of your group, details of your hotel and local contacts upon confirmation of your booking. All accommodation during your trip is included in the price although additional days before or after the start and end dates of your trip are not included. We are happy to book additional accommodation or optional activities, based on your requirements and budget, on request.



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Please note that whilst at all times we aim to run our trip even with just a few persons, on some of the longer treks or trips, should the group size be less than our minimum operating level we may cancel the trip up to 6 weeks before departure. In the rare event that this happens, we will offer alternative dates or trips or refunds as appropriate and agreed with you. If you are arranging your own flights and accommodation prior to the start date of a group trip we recommend that you book fully flexible and refundable accommodation and transport if booking more than 6 weeks in advance, as should we need to cancel the trip compensation will not be paid for any arrangements that have been made independently.

Climate and Weather

Depending on where you want to go and what you want to do, it is possible to visit India throughout the year. The coolest weather is from November to mid March when there are cool fresh mornings and evenings with dry sunny days. Between April and June the weather can be very hot and dry. Generally October to March are the best months to travel in most areas of India and Sikkim. In the far south January to September is a good time to visit. During the monsoon rainy season (June to September) is a good time to visit the deserts of Rajasthan and the northwestern Indian Himalayan regions. For Sikkim and northeastern areas March to August are good times to visit. For trekking, March and April to November is generally the best time although this depends on region and altitude

Clothing and Equipment

Generally lightweight to medium weight clothing in natural fabrics from March to October with something warmer for the evenings and warm clothing for winter. We also suggest you take comfortable walking shoes and a small day pack or shoulder bag. In the mountains and at high altitude the weather can change rapidly so it is important to have appropriate clothing and equipment. On teahouse style treks we provide free of charge a four season sleeping bag and cotton liner. On fully provisioned camping style treks we provide twin share dome or A frame sleeping tents, kitchen tent, mess tent, toilet tent, tables, chairs, stools, lanterns/candles, thin sleeping mattresses, all crockery and cutlery and a fully equipped kitchen set up. Upon booking with us we will send you a suggested clothing and equipment list appropriate to your trip including details of any must have items or items that can be hired (if required).

Baggage Allowance

We request that you aim for a maximum weight of 15 to 20 kg for your main baggage including clothing and personal equipment. Many of our trips involve porters and/or local flights and 15kg is the maximum safe weight allowance for porters and permitted on local flights. International flights will usually permit up to 20kg maximum weight. If trekking, some additional baggage can usually be stored until you return from your trek. Remember you may also want to leave some weight allowance for any items you have bought during your trip! The Himalayan Adventure Company and our local partners are not responsible for excess baggage charges.

FREE Himalayan Adventure Company Travel Gift

On confirmation of booking we will provide a complimentary travel gift, gift may vary each year and previous gifts included Trek bag and t- shirt, gifts subject to availability. For clients living outside the UK will provide a free gift on payment of post and packaging delivery only

Passport and Visa Requirements

A full valid passport and a current visa are required for all trips and treks in India. Passports must have at least 6 months validity after the completion date of your trip. To secure your booking and avoid any



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additional charges, please ensure that the information (eg spelling of your name) provided to us on your booking form matches exactly the details as shown in your passport.

All foreigners (adults and children) who plan to visit India are required to obtain a valid Visa in their home country before arrival to India. Tourists wishing to visit India are usually granted short-term tourist visas, effective from the date of issue and valid for 6 months or up to 1 year depending on the type of visa issued. These tourist visas are non-extendible and non-convertible.

If you are planning to visit restricted or protected areas you will need an additional special permit and should contact the VF Services Ltd or the High Commission of India, London to check whether the places you intend to travel to are categorised as restricted/protected areas. For example if you plan to visit Sikkim or Ladakh you will need to mention this when applying for your Visa to ensure you are issued with the appropriate permits for your travel.

No Visas are issued upon arrival in India – you must have a valid visa prior to arrival in India. If you are simply transiting in India and will not be going through immigration but immediately taking an onward flight you may not require a visa. Please check with us for information & guidance.

The procedure for applying for a visa has now changed with effect from June 2008 aimed at improving Visa services. The visa application process has now been outsourced to VF Services (UK) Limited to whom all visa applications must now be made. The main way to apply for your India visa is online where you will also be able to track the progress of your visa application. In addition to the online application form a number of Indian Visa Application Centres (IVACs) in London and Birmingham will provide visa processing services.

To apply for your India visa you will need to submit your visa application to either of the VF Services (UK) Ltd. offices in person or by post or use the main online process where you can apply and find more information at <http://in.vfsglobal.co.uk>. This link is also available from the Useful Links page of our website at www.thehimalayanadventurecompany.com or www.greathimal.com

The new system is very much based around an online application process and you are advised to complete the Indian visa application form and pay the fees online. After doing this you will then be able to make an appointment to drop your application and passport at the Visa Application Centre or send it by post and to plan your trip to the India Visa Application Centre and avoid unnecessary queues and delays. You will also still be able to walk into an India Visa Application Centre (IVAC) and wait in the queue to submit your application if you prefer.

Processing times vary from application to application at the sole discretion of the High Commission of India and its Consulates in the UK, and some applications may take longer than others to get processed. However general guidelines are that applications submitted in London and Birmingham will take a minimum 2 to 3 working days to be processed. Postal applications need approximately 15 working days to be processed. This does not include the period they are in transit to and from the High Commission or the Consulate General.

For more information or guidance please contact VF Services Ltd can be contacted via their website at <http://in.vfsglobal.co.uk/index.aspx> , by post at 142-148 Goswell Road, London EC1V 7DU, email info.inuk@vfshelpline.com, by telephone (answered between 0830hrs to 1600hrs) +44 207 8287369 or by fax on +44 207 8284979



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If you'd like guidance and more information we will also be happy to help and you can contact us at info@greathimal.com, by phoning 0845 094 0273 or by visiting our website at www.greathimal.com

You are responsible for ensuring you have a valid passport and visa prior to departure. Where appropriate, we will arrange any special permits or visas required to visit specific restricted areas included as part of the itinerary whilst you are in the country and may request information from you to allow us to do this.

Permits

To enter certain areas e.g. National Parks or other trekking or protected areas, you may require a permit. All our trip prices include the cost of relevant permits and entrance fees. Where this is not the case, for example you have booked a tailor made private trip, we will inform you of any required permit fees before you make a booking with us.

Health and Medical Information

It is your responsibility to ensure you are well and fit enough to join the trip. If you are unsure of this please contact our office to talk it through with one of our experienced staff members. We also recommend you speak to your GP if you are in any way unsure of your fitness level required to join the trip. We also suggest you have a thorough medical and dental check up before you travel. You may need specific vaccinations appropriate to the country or area you will visit. You must tell us if you have an existing medical condition or disability that might affect your holiday before you make a booking with us. If, in our reasonable opinion, your chosen holiday is not suitable for your medical condition, disability or level of fitness, we reserve the right to cancel the contract or to suggest more appropriate alternative options for you. A group medical kit will be carried on each trip or trek but we also recommend that individuals carry their own basic first aid kit and we will send a suggested list of items for this when you make a booking.

For useful health and general travel advice and information we suggest you visit the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website at <http://www.fco.gov.uk/knowbeforeyougo> and also obtain a copy of the UK Department of Health leaflet *Advice on Health for Travellers* or speak to your local GP or practice nurse for their recommendations.

What's Included in the Price?

Airport pickup and transfer, local English speaking guide services, 02 nights accommodation at the four star Le Meridien or similar hotel on bed and breakfast basis in Delhi, 05 nights accommodation in total staying at local A class hotels in Darjeeling, Yuktsum and Gangtok on full board basis (breakfast, lunch and dinner included), 08 nights accommodation at fully provisioned tented camp/trekkers huts during days on trek on full board basis, pre trek briefing on arrival, all accommodation during the trip on twin share basis, air conditioned transport in Delhi and non air conditioned transport in Sikkim and Darjeeling, National Park and trekking permits, all sightseeing and activities as per the trip itinerary including entrance fees to sites visited, private airport transfers, a group first aid kit, complimentary Himalayan Adventure Company travel gift, complimentary Safe Seat Plan issued to all our clients confirming that as members of the Travel Trust Association all bookings made with us are 100% financially protected at all times.



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What's Not Included in the Price?

Visa fees, international and domestic flights (on request, subject to availability and best fare at time of booking), personal travel insurance, vaccinations, airport departure and reentry fees, mandatory Airport Development Fee (ADF) payable directly at the airport*, additional private bus, car or jeep rental to any destination on the trek other than transport provided during the trip, bar/alcoholic beverages, bottled water, personal expenses eg for souvenirs, personal clothes & trekking gear including down jackets and sleeping bags, food or snacks during transfer journeys, tips for guides, porters, driver etc, alternative transportation, accommodation or other service required as a result of missed, delayed or cancelled flights, weather conditions such as heavy rainfall, landslide, strike, road blockage or other unexpected event outside our control (payable locally and directly if required), laundry, optional trips, holiday extensions and activities, excess luggage charges, additional accommodation before or after the start and end dates specified (available on request).

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Our Experience

We have a love of and respect for the Himalaya. Our founders and office staff are all experienced travelers who share many years of helping other travelers achieve their ambitions. The fact that we specialise in travel to the Himalaya and that we have extensive local knowledge and experience of the area means that we can offer you a wide range of travel options and provide the best standards of service to you. Being an independent specialist travel operator means we can offer a friendly personal service and are able to be flexible and use our experience and contacts to build new and tailor made programs as well as to continue to develop new and improved services. We have a wealth of experience in helping many individuals and groups in designing and planning adventures, ranging from romantic breaks to personal challenges to school study programmes to extreme adventure expeditions, from low budget to no expense spared and we have lots of ideas, suggestions and experience to share with you. We are also delighted to say that many of our clients return again and again to travel with us and many of our new clients are through recommendations and word of mouth from happy and satisfied clients who have previously traveled with us.

Fair Pricing

We aim to provide you with the best service at fair and competitive prices and excellent value for money. As part of this, most of our trips are priced for different group sizes with the higher price applicable for smaller groups. With larger groups the price drops so that everyone benefits from a cheaper holiday. We offer 'land only' prices, for travellers who prefer to make their own international flight and transfer arrangements but are happy to arrange flights for you on request, using a variety of international carriers from regional and national airports. Our ATOL number is T7199 and we work with other ATOL holders to issue flight tickets. Additionally, we offer special discounts for groups of 10 or over, schools and group leaders. Contact us for more information.



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Your Financial Protection

We understand how important it is that the money you spend on your holiday is securely protected. You may also have concerns about booking with an independent operator. To give you peace of mind and confidence in our service to you we have a number of ways in which we protect the money you pay for your holiday. The company is a full member of the Travel Trust Association (<http://www.traveltrust.co.uk>) membership number U3237, in compliance with the EC Directive on Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours. For flight bookings and issuing of tickets our ATOL number is T7199 and we work only with ATOL licence holders. For flight bookings the money you pay is protected under the ATOL holder's licence. For all other arrangements, your payment to us is held in a separate Trust Fund and only released to us on your return. In addition, we provide free to you, a 'Safe Seat Plan' insurance cover which means that in the unlikely case of your money not being held in the Trust Account or of our insolvency, you will be fully reimbursed for the loss of any monies paid to us, up to a limit of £11 000 per person. Therefore, for your peace of mind and confidence, all money you have paid to us is always 100% protected and available to pay for the services you have booked.

Insurance

Before confirming your booking we will need to see evidence of adequate travel insurance. Whilst you are able to choose your insurance from any provider, we recommend the Travel Trust Association (TTA) as providing some of the best and most competitive travel insurance on the market to our clients. Policies can be printed and given or mailed out or emailed to you. For our higher elevation treks and tours we work with Snowcard who provide excellent and very competitive insurance services for adventure and activity based travel. For no obligation quotes please follow the links on our website from the Useful Links, Make a Booking or Latest News pages where you can check quotes and cover details as well as purchase your travel insurance online. If you'd like to contact Snowcard directly they can be called on 01327 262805 or visit their website at www.snowcard.co.uk. If calling or emailing please mention you are a Himalayan Adventure Company client to obtain lower rates and quotes based on our trips which are very competitive and offer great levels of cover. Contact us for more information, to request a quote, to see policy wording or to purchase your insurance.

Responsible Tourism

We believe that tourism should benefit local communities and that responsible travel does not mean a compromise in standards. We aim to promote responsible travel that respects and benefits local cultures, communities and environments and we support Tourism Concern, are a sponsor of the International Porter Protection Group and a friend of The Sahara Group. We only work with local guides and communities in each region where we operate and we work with local partners, guides, office and support staff and ensure they have good facilities and fair wages and we work as a team to ensure you a wonderful adventure holiday.

Suggested Reading

We recommend you learn about the places and cultures you will visit before you travel so that you can enjoy your travel even more. Below are just a few varied suggestions to get you started:

Lonely Planet India (Travel Guide), Hugh Finlay, Sarina Singh (Editor)
Seasons of Splendour: Tales, Myths and Legends of India, Madhur Jaffrey, Michael Foreman (Illustrator),
Sikkim Himalaya: Travels in the Cloud Kingdom, David Lang.



itineraries

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How to Book

Once you have chosen your trek or trip, contact our office to check availability and ask any questions you may have. We'll hold a provisional booking for 7 days. Please read our Terms and Conditions prior to making your booking. Then email, post or fax us your completed booking form (available in our brochure or downloaded from our website) along with the appropriate non refundable deposit of £250 per person and (if applicable) any payments for flight bookings. All flight fares are subject to change and availability until final confirmation and as they vary so much throughout the year, all flights must be paid in full at the time of confirmation. If you choose to phone us with your debit or credit card details, a signed and completed booking form will still be required for confirmation of booking. Bookings will only be confirmed once we receive a completed and signed booking form along with appropriate payment.

We will confirm your booking and email you a trip dossier which will include confirmation of your booking, receipt of payment/invoice, a day by day itinerary, visa and trekking permit instructions, vaccination and health information, a suggested first aid pack list, a suggested equipment and clothing list, a suggested reading list appropriate to your destination, a responsible travel briefing and other useful information relevant to your booking.

The final balance for your booking will be due 12 weeks (3 months) before departure. NO REMINDER WILL BE SENT. Your Himalayan Adventure Company travel gift will be mailed to you separately, usually a few weeks before your departure date. For clients outside the UK, a gift will be sent on payment of delivery costs only.

We wish you a wonderful Himalayan adventure!

