

Sikkim - Beneath Kangchenjunga Trek

Trip Code: SIK

Version: SIK Sikkim - Beneath Kangchenjunga Trek



WALK & TREK



GUIDED GROUP



CHALLENGING



HIGHLIGHTS

- Complete a sensational Indian Himalaya trekking holiday with an itinerary unique to KE
- Experience close up views of Kangchenjunga, the world's third highest peak
- Enjoy pristine wild campsites including at Jumlay Pokhari below the Danphebir Pass
- A fascinating sightseeing day in the British Raj hill-station of Darjeeling

AT A GLANCE

- 14 days trekking
- Max altitude - 4500 metres
- Join at Delhi

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

- All meals included
- 7 nights Hotel
- 13 nights Camping

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

Introduction

As seen from the characterful hill-station of Darjeeling, the five-summited massif of Kangchenjunga (8586m) dominates the northern horizon. Kangchenjunga is the world's third highest mountain and we make our approach to it by crossing the border into the Indian state and former independent kingdom of Sikkim and trekking up onto the crest of the Singalila Ridge, the prominent spur of high ground that forms the border between India and Nepal. Here, we find views that extend northwards to Kangchenjunga, but also across to the distant Nepalese peaks of Everest and Makalu. Our route continues through a mountain wilderness, taking us via high passes and a succession of lovely camping places to the valley of the Prek Chu. It's from this point, above sacred Samity Lake, that we make our ascent to the viewpoint for Kangchenjunga's huge south-east face. Providing a brilliant travel experience, as well as first-class trekking amongst fabulous mountain scenery, this is a simply superb trekking holiday in the Indian Himalaya.

Is this holiday for you?

This is a unique and exciting trekking holiday, which provides a taste of some of the finest trekking in the generally restricted territory of Sikkim. The conditions we will find on this trek range from easy trails, sometimes in forest, to narrow ridge paths and sometimes rather rougher tracks across glacial moraine and scree. We mostly use well-made and established trails throughout the trek, following the routes used by yak herders, to take their animals to high pastures for grazing in the monsoon months. The unspoiled Himalayan foothills trekking, variety of scenery, the lack of other trekkers and the pristine nature of the campsites make this Sikkim trek special. The pace of a trip such as this has to be governed by speed of our pack animals and porters. Some of the walking days are quite short as a result of this and for this reason we have graded the trip at the lower end of our blue range. However, trekking at altitude is always challenging and there are several longer days during the trek.

Itinerary

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DAY 1

Meet at the group hotel in Delhi. Transfers from Delhi Airport are provided.

Your holiday starts at the hotel in Delhi. Transfers from Delhi Airport are provided. After lunch there will be a city sightseeing tour. In Old Delhi we visit the Red Fort, built by Emperor Shah Jahan and then walk through the lanes of Chandni Chowk where each lane specializes in a commodity such as spices, jewellery, sequins and book. New Delhi was the creation of the British Raj and is home to many grand buildings designed by the greatest ever British architect, Sir Edwin Lutyens. Alternatively, this afternoon, you may choose to take it easy at the hotel, which is close to the airport.

Meals: **L D**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 2

Fly to Bagdogra and drive to the former British Raj hillstation of Darjeeling (2500m).

After breakfast, we drive to the domestic terminal of Delhi Airport. The flight to Bagdogra runs parallel to the Himalayas and if the weather is clear, we have views of all of the Himalayan giants; including Nanda Devi and Panch Chuli, and the 8000 metre peaks; Dhaulagiri, the Annapurnas and Manaslu, Cho Oyu, Everest, Makalu and then the massive bulk of Kangchenjunga, just as we come in to land. Arriving in Bagdogra we are met by our trek leader and we climb aboard the bus for the 4-hour drive to Darjeeling (2500m). At first, we drive through flat rice fields and Assam tea plantations, before the road starts to climb into the foothills of the Himalaya. Darjeeling, built on top of a ridge, faces the Himalaya and is a popular tourist destination for Westerners and Bengalis alike. The richly forested land was originally acquired by the British in 1833, who introduced tea growing and promoted the settlement as a health resort. Arriving in the town, we check in at a comfortable hotel. Just 5 minutes walk from the hotel, there are views northwards to the Himalayan peaks.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 3**Morning sightseeing tour. Afternoon free to relax at the hotel or explore Darjeeling's bazaars.**

After breakfast, we will arrange a sightseeing tour of some of the attractions around Darjeeling. We visit Ghoom Monastery, boasting one of the highest railway stations in the world, as well as a large gilded statue of the Matreya, or future Buddha. We can also visit the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, which has a superb collection of memorabilia from the early days of Everest exploration. Also on the 'not to be missed' list is the Tibetan Refugee Centre where one can purchase handicrafts at reasonable prices. After lunch at our hotel, we can relax in the grounds of the hotel or take a stroll into the nearby and vibrant bazaar streets.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 4**Drive to Pelling (2250m). Pemayangtse Monastery visit either this evening or in the morning.**

After an early breakfast, we set off by jeep for the 6-8 hour drive through tea estates and lush river valleys to Pelling (2250m). If the road conditions via Tukvar are not good, then we make a detour and drive to Pelling via Melli. Our accommodation is at the delightful family run Pemaling Hotel, which offers superb views of Kanchenjunga from the balcony. Whilst at Pelling, either this afternoon or in the morning, we will take the opportunity to visit Pemayangtse Monastery, Sikkim's second oldest monastery, which is also the most prestigious centre of religious learning in Western Sikkim.

Meals: **B L D**








Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 5**Drive to Uttarey, meet the crew and trek to a camping meadow on the ridge at Archaley (2880m).**

After breakfast, we take a scenic 3 hour drive through the tea plantations to Uttarey (1960m). The road follows the River Ranjit, passing through a beautiful steep-sided valley en route. At Uttarey, we meet our trekking crew and check our permits at the control post. We then set off on our first afternoon of walking through the scattered Sherpa villages, climbing gradually on a good path through forest to a rest point

called Thumki. The trail continues, climbing more steeply to a forest clearing at Uttarpani and then to a viewpoint a Ramite (literally meaning 'something nice') where we can see Kangchenjunga and Pandim. The views get better as we climb further to our camping place on the meadow at Archaley (2880m). Great views of Kangchenjunga and surrounding peaks.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 1000M		Descent 80M		Time 4 - 5 hrs trekking		Distance 6KM
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DAY 6

Trek through forest and grazing grounds to our next camp at Kalizar (3450m).

Leaving camp, we descend to a small stream and then ascend through rhododendron forest and via a number of clearings, large and small, with mountain views. It is a pleasant walk on a good trail which leads up to Khardak Danda, another small clearing and a good viewpoint. From here, we continue to climb to some abandoned shepherd huts and then further to our campsite at Kalizar (3450m). The panorama here includes Jannu (7710m), Kangchenjunga and Pandim (6691m). Water is often scarce at this campsite, which means that the kitchen staff have to descend a long way to fill up their jerry-cans.

Meals: **B L D**






	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 760M		Descent 190M		Time 5 hrs trekking		Distance 6KM
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DAY 7

Early excursion to the viewpoint at Phoktey Dara (3750m) and then trek via Chiabhanjang to Major (3270m).

We get up early to walk up to the viewpoint at Phoktey Dara (3750m), around 45 minutes from camp. There are great views from here of the Nepal Himalaya - Mera Peak, Chamlang, Nuptse, Lhotse (8571m) and Makalu (8481m). On a clear day you can also see distant peaks in Bhutan. Below us we can also look down across steep valley-sides with scattered villages. Descending from our high point, we trek through rich rhododendron and pine forests to Chiabhanjang where there is a police camp and where we have to show our permits. We then continue through more rhododendron forest, ascending easily to our camp at Major (3270m).

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 600M		Descent 780M		Time 4 - 5 hrs trekking		Distance 6KM
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DAY 8

Another excellent day of trekking between Nepal and Sikkim. Overnight at Dhor (3720m).

A slightly longer day today, starting out with a steep climb through the rhododendron forest for one and a half hours to a set of prayer flags at a high point of 3500 metres. Although steep, the trail is excellent, having been used for centuries by herders moving their yaks from one grazing ground to another across the ridge. Descending slightly, the path switches between Nepal and Sikkim with spectacular views down either side of the ridge. It is obvious why the trail clings to the ridge top, as there is simply no way down on either side, so dense is the rhododendron forest! In spring, this part of the walk is spectacularly colourful. A level and slightly wider section of the ridge, offers a perfect resting point for lunch, before another small climb and more airy ridge-top trekking leads to our camp just beyond a yak herders camp, known as Dhor (3720m). We camp a little below the ridge-top and have splendid views across a succession of ridges, as well as a autiful sunset panorama of the high peaks of Nepal, including Makalu and Everest.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 1000M		Descent 550M		Time 6 hrs trekking		Distance 10KM
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DAY 9

After an early start to see the sunrise, trek along the ridge to Paharay Megu (3900m).

Just above the camp there is a particularly fine viewpoint for Kangchenjunga and it is worth getting up early to watch the sun rise on the world's 3rd highest mountain. The early morning light along the ridge and the spectacular views of the mountains ahead, make for a great start to the day. We follow the ridge for most of the morning on a good path which once again switches from side to side along the ridge with many short ascents and descents and very little flat walking! The highpoint of the day's trekking is at a collection of prayer flags at 3920 metres, which is reached around mid-morning. After lunch, the trail stays high up, as we continue to our camp at Paharay Megu (3900m) which is one of a series of high grazing areas used during the monsoon.

Meals: **B L D**





	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 630M		Descent 450M		Time 5 - 6 hrs trekking		Distance 8KM
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DAY 10

Trek via Lam Pokhari and the Kangla and Damphebir passes to Jumlay Pokhari (4450m).

Leaving our camp at Paharay Megu, we trek by way of a single hut (used as a shelter by pilgrims) and then climb steadily, staying on the west side of the ridge. The terrain becomes more open and the scale of the mountain scenery much grander as we follow a wide valley, turning east, in the direction of a large waterfall and a break in the ridge which takes us to a lunch stop at the pilgrimage site beside the lake of Lam Pokhari which is surrounded by prayer flags and by hundreds of large flat stones that have been turned on their ends by pilgrims as a mark of respect for the gods - an inspiring place. After lunch, we our route skirts the lake and heads towards a quite obvious pass in the distance, marked by 4 cairns. A steep zig-zag path takes us up to the Kangla (4460m). It is quite atmospheric, walking alongside the yaks and yak men with the sound of jingling yak bells and the whistles from the yak men, urging on their charges. After short celebrations (the next pass is slightly higher) we drop down and then contour across the hillside for a further 30 minutes to reach the Damphebir Pass (4500m) marked by hundreds of prayer flags. The views to the north are once again stunning and we relax for a while to take in the magnificent scenery. Camp is a short distance beyond the pass beside the twin lakes of Jumlay Pokhari (4450m). This excellent campsite offers spectacular sunset and sunrise views and close up views of the mountains.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 870M		Descent 320M		Time 6 - 7 hrs trekking		Distance 11KM
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DAY 11

An easier day, trekking down to Gomathang and then on to camp at Yangseb (3950m),

An early wake-up for the sunrise is an option today. After breakfast, the walk down to the valley floor is most enjoyable, following a good trail across the open slopes at first and then down through pine and juniper forest to Gomothang by the river and then on an undulating trail for an hour or so to a good place for lunch. It's just a short walk after lunch with many ups and downs to Yangseb (3950m) where we camp beside the stream. Depending on the weather conditions, today, we might choose to continue directly to camp for lunch.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 350M		Descent 850M		Time 4 hrs trekking		Distance 6KM
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DAY 12

Trek through pine forest and across the Kokling Pass to Panding (4275m).

Contouring across the hillside, we can now look across to Dzongri, a vast grazing ground on the main trekking route to Kangchenjunga and our destination in 2 days time. We continue contouring across the hillside, climbing at times, until we cross a small river, beyond which a final climb leads to the Kokling Pass(4260m) adorned by prayer flags and with wonderful views looking back across our route of the last 2 days. A short distance below the pass, the trail climbs steeply once again up the hillside for an hour and then turns a corner to reveal a spectacular view across a wide ridge, to Kabru and Pandim. We now feel that we are getting really close to the big mountains as the landscape opens up in front of us. We camp in a clearing known as Panding (4275m).

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 650M		Descent 325M		Time 4 - 5 hrs trekking		Distance 6KM
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DAY 13

Descend to the Rathong Chu and cross a low pass to Chaurikhang and Dzongri (3990m).

We take a direct descent today to the river, the Rathong Chu, which takes a good part of the morning, crossing the stream, we climb easily to a low pass, beyond which we reach the expansive meadows of Chaurikhang (4120m) and then Dzongri (3990m) where we set up camp near a shepherd's hut in a natural bowl on the ridge. The peaks of Pandim, Narsingh and Joponu now appear to be distinctly closer. A short walk above Dzongri is a superb viewpoint for sunset and sunrise on Kangchenjunga, well worth the effort for an early evening stroll. For the best approach to the viewpoint, follow the trail up the ridge, where the viewpoint is easily visible due to the large number of prayer flags. As well as Kangchenjunga, there are superb views of the neighbouring peaks, including Rathong (6683m), Kokthang, Kabru Dome and Forked Peak.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 400M		Descent 685M		Time 5 hrs trekking		Distance 10KM
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DAY 14

We spend a rest day in Dzongri.

After 9 days of trekking, this is an opportune moment to take a break and Dzongri is a great place to spend a day with the chance to make early and late visits to the prayer flagged viewpoint for the sunrise and sunset views. This day can also be used as a day of contingency in case we have experienced delays earlier in the trek. We spend a second night at the camp at Dzongri.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Camping

DAY 15

Trek up the valley of the Prek Chu via Thangshing to Lamuney (4170m).

From Dzongri, we follow the original Kangchenjunga trek to the Goecha La. We are likely to encounter more trekkers from this point on. Today's walk starts with a short climb to a ridge, which affords open views across Sikkim. We follow this scenic ridge for about 5 kilometres, before descending a steep spur to our lunch spot on the banks of the glacial Prek Chu. A short stretch of boulder hopping and then we cross the stream to begin the climb to Thangshing, a large open area of pasture. The southern Ridge of Kangchenjunga and the moraines of the Oglathang Glacier are visible directly ahead and there are close-up views of Pandim. We have lunch at Thangshing and continue for another 2 hours on an easy trail in a wide open valley with Kanchenjunga looming straight ahead. We set up camp at Lamuney (4170m).

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Camping



Ascent
720M



Descent
540M



Time
6 hrs trekking



Distance
11KM

DAY 16

Ascend via Samity Lake to the spectacular viewpoint for Kanchenjunga (c.4500m). Trek back down to Thangshing (3930m).

After an early start, we follow a path beneath the west side of Pandim, through dwarf azaleas and rhododendron to the first of the terminal moraines of the Oglathang Glacier. We climb to the crest of a moraine ridge and find ourselves on the shores of the lovely and sacred Samity Lake. Ringed by prayer flags and reflecting a number of snow-capped peaks, including Pandim, Samity Lake is a beautiful place. It was formerly possible to camp here, but environmental concerns have led the Sikkimese Authorities to ban this practice. The track to the Goecha La skirts the lake, before ascending a series of moraine ridges on the eastern edge of the Oglathang Glacier to the viewpoint for Kanchenjunga, which we should reach in approximately an hour and a half from the lake. Rising more than 4000 metres above the Talung Glacier, at a distance of only 8 kilometres (5 miles) from our viewpoint, is the stunning eastern wall of Kangchenjunga, which includes the five principal summits of the massif and also the very impressive Kabru and Rathong peaks. Due to conservation efforts to preserve the abode of the snow leopards that inhabit this area, we are not allowed to go further than this viewpoint. Having had our fill of the spectacular panorama, we return to Samity Lake and continue down-valley to Thangshing (3930m), where we camp for the night.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 500M		Descent 740M		Time 6 - 7 hrs trekking		Distance 8KM
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DAY 17

Descend the Prek Chu to the abandoned Tibetan refugee settlement of Tsokha (3000m).

Descending the valley from Thangsing, we take a direct route, missing out Dzongri, following a lower trail through dense rhododendron forest. After a long descent (almost 1500 metres), we set up our camp near the small abandoned Tibetan refugee village of Tsokha. The Sikkim Forest Department have rehabilitated the Tibetan refugees that lived here to other parts of Sikkim. It is a pleasant change to be camping in warmer conditions tonight. From our camp, we look out on ridge after ridge of temperate forest and to the river far below. There is the opportunity for you to try the local millet 'beer' (hereabouts called 'thumba') which is available at the caretaker's hut. This is served in drinking vessels made out of bamboo.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 300M		Descent 1230M		Time 6 - 7 hrs trekking		Distance 12KM
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DAY 18

Trek out through the richly forested Rathong Valley to the roadhead at Yuksom (1750m).

More downhill from our camp, all the way to the Prek Chu. Then the trail follows the narrow Rathong Valley, through thick, semi-tropical forest, contouring the east bank of the river with several undulations and tributary rivers to cross. We are now back in the warmer lower valley and reach Yuksom mid afternoon, where we check in at our hotel. The rest of the day is free and we can take tea in the hotel garden (with distant views of Mount Kabru) and reflect on an excellent trek. Yuksom is an important place in Sikkimese history as the first king of Sikkim was coronated here and his seat can still be seen. You can also a walk up to Dubde Monastery - the first monastery of Sikkim, reached by following a row of prayer flags. In the evening we will have a party to say goodbye to our yak men, porters and Sikkimese trek crew.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Hotel		Ascent 600M		Descent 1850M		Time 6 - 7 hrs trekking		Distance 13KM
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DAY 19**Drive to Kalimpong. Afternoon free to explore the streets of this thriving bazaar town.**

After a reasonably early breakfast, we have a 5-hour drive to Kalimpong, which was once an important market town, strategically located at a crossroads between Sikkim, Bhutan, Tibet and the plains of Bengal. One of the principal commercial enterprises of the town today, is the growing of flowers in extensive nurseries. We stay at a comfortable hotel on the outskirts of town and have the chance to explore the bazaar.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 20**Drive to Bagdogra Airport, fly to Delhi and transfer to the group hotel.**

After breakfast at our hotel, we drive back to Bagdogra Airport, where we check in for our usually late afternoon flight to Delhi. Arriving in the Indian capital in the early evening, we transfer to our airport accessible hotel. This evening we will have a 'farewell' dinner.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 21**Your holiday ends after breakfast. Transfers to Delhi Airport are provided.**

Your holiday ends after breakfast. Transfers to Delhi Airport are provided. To extend your holiday in India, why not pre-book a visit to Dharamsala (home of the Dalai Lama), to the Taj Mahal or a longer excursion taking in the whole of India's classic Golden Triangle. Contact our office for details.

Meals: **B**

Extensions

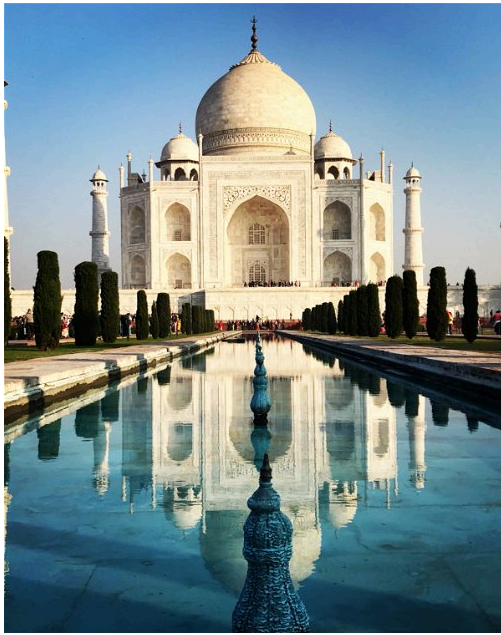
When booking your holiday, you will be able to 'add an extension option'. Once we have received your booking we will contact you to discuss additional services required for the extension and to take any additional deposit.



Agra and Jaipur four day extension

The Golden Triangle needs little introduction and is rightly considered a classic trip in its own right. Easily accessible from Delhi, this excursion takes in the wonders of the majestic Agra Fort, the incomparable Taj Mahal, the abandoned ghost-city of Fatehpur Sikri and the architectural jewels of Jaipur and Amber. This four day trip ensures you get the most out of these stunning attractions at a relaxed and unhurried pace.

4 days from
US\$735 per person



One day tour of Agra and the Taj Mahal

The Taj Mahal needs little introduction. Built by the Moghul emperor Shah Jahan as a mausoleum for his beloved wife Mumtaz, it is widely considered to be the most beautiful building in the world. Nearby is the oft overlooked Agra Fort, itself an awe-inspiring and magnificent complex of palaces and ancient forts. Traveling from Delhi on the express train and returning by private vehicle, our one-day extension to Agra is perfect for those with limited time who wish to complete their India experience with exploring one of the most admired and loved buildings on the planet.

1 day from
US\$290 per person



Dharamsala and the Dalai Lama

Dharamsala is a former British Raj hill-station in the Dhauladhar mountain range and currently home to the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government in exile. On this four day extension, you will be able to sample a flavour of life in Tibet and enjoy visits to the Dalai Lama's temple complex; the Norbulingka Institute; the Tibetan children's village and visit a local Gaddi Tribal village to experience the life of the people who traditionally inhabit the lower reaches of the Dhauladhar.

4 days from
¥9,223,372,036,854,776,000 per person

0 days from

¥9,223,372,036,854,776,000 per person



Agra & the Taj Mahal two day tour

Our two-day extension is for those who wish to explore Agra and the surrounding area at a relaxed pace. We start by exploring the oft overlooked Agra Fort, itself an awe-inspiring and magnificent complex of palaces and ancient forts, before waking before the next day to see the sunrise break over the Taj Mahal. Needing little introduction, the Taj Mahal was built by the Moghul emperor Shah Jahan as a mausoleum for his beloved wife Mumtaz. It is widely considered to be the most beautiful building in the world. This tour also gives us an opportunity to explore the fascinating abandoned ghost city of Fatehpur Sikri.

2 days from

US\$470 per person



Delhi Sightseeing Tour - Full day

Old Delhi is centred on the Red Fort and is a labyrinth of narrow, bustling streets including Chandni Chowk bazaar. Must-sees here include the Red Fort, built by Emperor Shah Jahan; Hummayan's Tomb, constructed in similar style to the Taj Mahal and the towering Qutab Minar minaret. New Delhi was the creation of the British Raj who wanted to show their ascendancy over the former Mogul rulers with many grand buildings designed by the greatest ever British architect, Sir Edwin Lutyens. Exploring this area by vehicle will give a glimpse of this interesting aspect of India.

1 day from
US\$170 per person

Holiday Information

What's Included

- An experienced English-speaking leader
- Delhi Airport transfers on group arrival and departure days
- All internal flights and land transport involved in the itinerary
- All accommodation as described in the trip dossier
- All meals throughout the trip
- Full trekking service including food and all equipment (excluding personal equipment)

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Delhi Airport transfers (other than on group arrival and departure days)
- Indian Visa
- Tips for trek staff
- Miscellaneous expenses - drinks and souvenirs etc.

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The group will meet at the hotel in Delhi.

Transfers are provided from/to Delhi Airport for all clients arriving on Day 1 of the Land Only itinerary and departing on the last day of the Land Only itinerary.

Hotel contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

Meal Plan

All meals are included

Food & Water

It is not recommended to drink untreated water from the taps. If you are on a trekking or cycling holiday, water is supplied to fill up your individual bottles. This will be boiled, filtered or provided in large jerry cans or 5 litre bottles. Additionally you should take purification tablets or a filter bottle (such as a [Water-To-Go bottle](#)) to treat your water when in towns or where water is not supplied. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

The food served during the trek is a mixture of local and Western, mostly purchased locally and cooked for us by highly trained trek cooks. The emphasis is on providing a high-carbohydrate and largely vegetarian diet, which we have found to be easily digestible at high altitude. In Delhi, we take our meals in the group hotel or in nearby restaurants. All meals while on trek and while staying in hotels are included in the trip price.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your diet with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Accommodation

On arrival in Delhi and for one night after the trek, we stay at a hotel close to the airport which provides comfortable accommodation, as well as pleasant gardens and a pool. Being near the airport makes the whole travel experience more relaxing, whilst still allowing us to include a sightseeing city tour. Our itinerary also includes 2 nights in a comfortable hotel in Darjeeling, 1 night in a hotel in Yoksom and 1 night in a hotel in Kalimpong. On trek there will be 13 nights camping. All accommodation is allocated on a twin-sharing basis. If you are travelling by yourself, you will be paired up with another single client of the same sex. It is possible to hire a single tent while on trek. Depending upon availability it may be possible to arrange single rooms. For Hotel prices and single supplement costs please refer to the dates and prices page of the trip on our website.

Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be led by an experienced English-speaking trek leader who will meet the group in Bagdogra. While in Delhi the group will be looked after by a KE representative. During the trek, the trip leader will be assisted by local guides, camp staff including a cook and by baggage ponymen.

Altitude

This holiday involves going to very high altitude. During the course of your trip you will be spending at least one night above 4000 metres and/or trekking to 5000 metres or above. This is not something that you should worry about; the human body is quite capable of adapting to a very wide range of altitudes, but it is important that we follow some simple rules in order to acclimatise successfully. Before coming on this holiday you should read the advice on [trekking at high altitude](#). Unless you have previous experience of trekking above 4000 metres you should consult one of our trekking experts before embarking on this holiday. On this trip we carry a portable altitude chamber (PAC-bag) and/or bottled oxygen for use in emergencies.

Spending Money

Approximately £200 (or equivalent in Euros / US dollars etc.) changed into local currency, should be allowed for miscellaneous expenses, including porter and trek crew tips and soft drinks, etc. It is not necessary to purchase local currency (Indian Rupees) before you travel. We recommend taking your personal spending money in cash since you will be changing the majority of this into local currency on the day of arrival. Sterling, US dollars and Euros are readily exchanged in Delhi. Credit cards can be used to purchase many goods in Delhi and are particularly useful for more expensive souvenirs. It is also possible to withdraw cash (rupees only) from cash machines in Delhi using credit and debit cards.

Guidance on Tipping

Tips are the accepted way of saying 'thank you' to your local guides and porters. Tips do not form part of their wages. KE always pays local crews the best rates of pay, no matter what country they are in and any tips they receive are seen as a personal thank you from group members. For our part, we advise local teams that tips are not a duty or a prerequisite but are a bonus and entirely dependent on the service that was given. Most people will want to tip their guides and support staff and we recommend that you do this as a group. As a guide, we suggest that a contribution of approximately £70 (in Indian rupees) from each group member will provide a sufficient pool for these tips. At the end of a trek many people also like to donate various items of their equipment to the porters and trek staff who work so hard to make the trip a success. Boots, gloves, hats, scarves and even socks (clean of course) are always warmly received by the porters and ponymen, many of whom are simple farmers earning extra cash by portering for trekking groups. Technical clothing and equipment such as head-torches and trekking poles are highly prized by the local guides and camp crews.

Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage, which should be a soft and sturdy duffel bag, and a day pack. Your baggage on trek will be carried by porters or pack animals and should weigh no more than 15kg. Please note that the check-in baggage limit on all internal flights within India is now 15kg and you are responsible for any excess baggage charges that the airline may apply. It is possible to leave travel clothes and any other items not required on trek at the group hotel.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status and so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders. A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required, and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday. Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel. For the most up to date information on entry requirements, please visit the [UK Government website](#).

Visa India

Most nationalities, including travellers from the UK, the USA and many European countries can apply for their Indian Visa online through the **E-Visa Application** process. You must make your application at least four days prior to departure. Please download the detailed information document for details of how to apply for your visa: [Visa India PDF](#)

Health & Vaccinations

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips. You will need to carry your own treatment for the allergy with you, as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' are not carried as standard by KE leaders and staff. You should inform your leader on arrival of your allergy, and let them know where you keep your adrenaline pen.

Dengue fever is a known risk in places visited. It is a tropical viral disease spread by daytime biting mosquitoes. There is currently no vaccine or prophylaxis available and therefore the best form of prevention is to avoid being bitten. We recommend you [take precautions to avoid mosquito bites](#).

Zika virus has been confirmed as active in this country. It is a tropical viral disease spread by daytime biting mosquitoes. There is currently no vaccine or prophylaxis available and therefore the best form of prevention is to avoid being bitten. We recommend you take the usual precautions to avoid mosquito bites. The mosquitoes that transmit ZIKV are unlikely to be found above 2,000m altitude. For more information, visit the website of the National Travel Network and Centre (NaTHNaC) at <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk>

Vaccinations

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations or other preventive measures. You should be up to date with routine courses and boosters as recommended in the UK e.g. diphtheria-tetanus-polio and measles-mumps-rubella, along with hepatitis A and typhoid.

Malarial prophylaxis is not usually required for trips in the mountains, however if you are visiting rural and remote low lying areas then they might be necessary.

On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dentist check up. A good online resource is [Travel Health Pro](#).

Currency

The currency of India is the Indian Rupee.

Preparing for your Holiday

It makes a lot of sense to spend some time before coming on a trekking trip getting some additional exercise. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience. For this trip you need to be aerobically fit and also comfortable with walking up to 7 hours each day and longer on some days. We would suggest that you adopt a weekly exercise regime leading up to your trip. Regular hiking in hill country is the best training but any regular exercise will be good for developing cardio vascular fitness and stamina. Before departure, we suggest that you try to fit in a number of long walks in hilly country.

Climate

During both the spring and autumn departures, the daytime temperatures will be of the order of 25°C at Darjeeling and will be rather cooler, at about 10°C to 15°C once on trek. Night time temperatures at our highest camps will certainly drop below freezing and you must be prepared for cold, often damp, evenings at camp. Our trek dates are outside the monsoon period but you should be aware that the eastern end of the Himalaya receives more rainfall than further west in the Everest or Annapurna regions. It can and does rain here and you should be prepared for this. Generally, the period outside of the monsoon is stable, but weather in the Himalayan foothills is notoriously difficult to predict and short-lived storms can occur at any time of the year.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](https://www.gov.uk/travelaware)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that prior to travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates direct from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

- Top Treks of the World. New Holland /Steve Razzetti
- Trekking in the Indian Himalaya. Lonely Planet
- India. A Travel Survival Kit. Lonely Planet
- The Trekkers Guide to Pakistan and India. Hugh Swift
- Exploring the Hidden Himalaya. Kapadia and Mehta

Maps

Sikkim Himalaya - 1: 150,000. Schweizerische Stiftung für Alpine Forschung (Swiss Foundation For Alpine Research)

Although a monochrome map (black and white detail with a sepia coloured relief shading), this map is much more detailed than some other more colourful maps. As well as the relief shading it has 100 metre contours, spot heights, peaks, passes, and glaciers, and graphics to show various types of terrain. Coverage extends south to Darjeeling, and within Nepal to the western edge of the Kanchenjunga Glacier.

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

The following checklist should help you with your packing. As a general rule, you should always try to keep the weight of your equipment to a minimum. The packed weight of your bag whilst trekking should be no more than 15 kgs.

You must bring the following items:

- Hiking boots
- Trainers or sandals for river crossings and camp use
- Walking socks (2 or 3 pairs)
- Trekking trousers
- Waterproof overtrousers
- Thermal baselayer - leggings

- Baselayer shirts
- Shirts or T-shirts
- Fleece jacket or warm jumper
- Waterproof jacket
- Warm jacket (down)
- Sunhat
- Warm hat
- Headtorch and spare batteries
- Daypack 30 to 40 litres
- Water bottles 1 litre (x2) (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Water purification tablets
- Gloves
- Warmer and waterproof gloves or mittens
- Sleeping bag (comfort rated -20°C)*
- Sunglasses
- Washbag and toiletries
- Small towel
- Antibacterial handwash
- Basic First Aid Kit including: antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium), altitude (Diamox), painkillers, plasters and blister treatment, and re-hydration salts (Dioralite).

- Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)

The following items are optional:

- Thermarest (note that foam mattresses are provided)
- Trekking poles (recommended)
- Insect repellent
- Spare laces
- Shorts
- Scarf or buff
- Sleeping bag liner
- Travel clothes
- Pen-knife (note: always pack sharp objects in hold baggage)
- Repair kit - (eg. needle, thread, duct tape)
- Camera
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

Equipment hire / rental

Items marked * can be hired / rented through KE Adventure Travel. Please make requests at least 6 weeks prior to the trip departure.

Note all hire / rental equipment will be issued in Delhi.

Specialist Equipment

Depending on the conditions, the trip leader may issue 'in-step' crampons to group members for the crossing of the Goeche La. These are small lightweight crampons which can quickly and easily be attached to any kind of walking boot. We would strongly recommend that you bring a pair of trekking poles for the pass crossings.

Cotswold Outdoor



Many of the Equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive 12.5% discount voucher from Cotswold Outdoor and other retailers.
[-> Find out more](#)

Land Only Information

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for the itinerary starting at the hotel in Delhi. Transfers are provided from/to Delhi Airport for all clients arriving on Day 1 of the Land Only itinerary and departing on the last day of the Land Only itinerary.

Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London to Delhi. Outbound flights will usually depart from the UK in the evening, arriving in the morning on the following day (Day 1 of the Land Only itinerary). Return flights will depart Delhi on the last day of the itinerary, arriving in the UK later the same day.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

Trekking in the Indian state of Sikkim requires a special permit and this is a logistically challenging trip to run. Thirty years of experience in the area mean we know how to get it sorted and the result is one of the finest of all Himalayan treks with a fabulous itinerary unique to KE.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 19/05/2024 and the trip is subject to change