



INDO ASIA TOURS

Live & Experience the Paradise of India

Kolkata - Bagdogra – Darjeeling – Gangtok – Kalimpong – Bagdogra – Dibrugarh – Jorhat – Majuli –
Kaziranga – Guwahati - Kolkata

Travel Proposal





INDO ASIA TOURS

About the Program

From bustling Kolkata, India's vibrant capital of culture, to the astounding beauty of Darjeeling and surrounding Sikkim, with its verdant tea plantations, Himalayan vistas, and Buddhist monasteries - take the road less traveled. In the second half of the program, enjoy the natural beauty, culture, and wildlife in Assam.

This program is everything one can wish for.

The program starts with the hustle-bustle of Kolkata, one of the biggest metropolitan cities in India. However, the beauty and life in Kolkata are still unmatched. From Kolkata, your journey will take you to the majestic Darjeeling, renowned for UNESCO World Heritage Toy Train, and home to the famous Darjeeling Tea Estates. Thereafter witness beauty at various Monasteries in Rumtek and Gangtok, which make the hill station vibrant and lively.

In the second half of the tour, you will travel through Assam, one of the most famous states in North East India. Delicate beauty, offbeat tourists attractions, spiritual ambiance, the sacred river, humble people, and zealous culture, Assam boasts plenty of fascinating secrets. Travel to Assam is about witnessing a heady mix of history, culture, and nature at the same time. In this program, you will also rendezvous with one-horned rhinos at Kaziranga National Park, a site that will be in your memory for a long time.



INDO ASIA TOURS

Program Details

Day 01

Arrive at Kolkata

Arrive in Kolkata. On arrival, you will be greeted and assisted by our representative and transferred to the hotel.
(Rooms will be available from 14:00 hrs only)

KOLKATA - The word Kolkata derives from the Bengali term Kolikata, the name of one of three villages that predated the arrival of the British, in the area where the city eventually was to be established. Located on the east bank of River Hooghly, Kolkata is the capital of the Indian state of West Bengal. It is also the commercial, cultural, and educational centre of East India, while the Port of Kolkata is India's oldest port as well as its sole major riverine port.

On arrival in Kolkata, transfer to hotel. After breakfast, enjoy sightseeing of Kolkata including the following.

Victoria Memorial

A splendid architectural structure was built in the early 20th Century in memory of Queen Victoria by Lord Curzon





INDO ASIA TOURS

between 1906 and 1921 and was formally inaugurated by the Prince of Wales. The Victoria Memorial blends the best of the British and Mughal architecture. It is interesting to note that the Victoria Memorial was built without British government funds.

Kumartuli

Kumartuli is India's only potter's town. Every lane and by lane of Kumartuli will have houses which have been converted into platforms where artists work round the clock to develop clay idols of the deities of the Hindu pantheon like Durga, Kali, Saraswati, Ganesha etc.

Mother Teresa House

Nirmal Hriday is the first institution established in 1950 by Mother Teresa under her own Organization Missionaries of Charity. This is the home for dying people. Later she established many other homes in Kolkata like Orphanage, old age people etc. Kolkata is the worldwide Head Quarter of Missionaries of Charity

St. Paul Cathedral Church

St.Paul's Cathedral is built on the Indo-Gothic style of architecture. Major W.N Forbes of East India Company built it in the year 1847. The height of the Cathedral is 201 feet. This Cathedral has the rare distinction of being the 1st Episcopal Church of the East.

Overnight at the hotel.

Day 02

Kolkata / Bagdogra (Flight) / Darjeeling (95 Kms / 3 ½ hrs)

After breakfast, transfer to the Airport to connect flight to Bagdogra. On arrival, you will be greeted and assisted by our representative and drive to Darjeeling

DARJEELING – The name Darjeeling is believed to have originated when monks of the Bhutia Busty monastery referred to the region as "Dorjé-ling", meaning the Land of the Thunderbolt.

Darjeeling is often referred to as the QUEEN OF HILL STATIONS. It is located in the state of West Bengal in the Mahabharata Range or Lesser Himalaya at an average elevation of 6,710 ft (2,050 m). It is internationally renowned as a tourist destination, along with its tea industry and the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It conjures visions of snow peaks, serenity of vibrant green hills steeped in splendour, a land of breathtaking beauty crowned by the majestic Himalayas..

On arrival in Darjeeling, transfer to hotel.



INDO ASIA TOURS

Evening leisurely walk around the **Mall/Chowrasta** which is the centre of Darjeeling.

Overnight at the hotel.

Day 03

Darjeeling

Today we do for day tour to **Makaibari Tea Estate** (40 kms / 02 hrs).



Enjoy tea plantation tour, factory visit for tea processing and tea tasting. Later in the afternoon, drive back to hotel.

Or Alternatively

Post breakfast, visit Happy Valley Tea Estate (05 kms) to see the tea processing, tea tasting and garden tour. Later visit Rock Garden (11 kms) which falls amidst tea bushes and has a natural and scenic water fall along with small rivers around. Evening take a Joy Ride in the famous Darjeeling Himalayan Steam Train (approximately 02 hrs journey to and from Darjeeling Railway Station). Evening train timings usually at 04.00 PM.



INDO ASIA TOURS

Note: Tea Factory remains closed on Sunday / Only one option to be opted for the day's visit.

Overnight at the hotel.

Day 04

Darjeeling

After breakfast enjoy visit of Darjeeling including following:

Himalayan Mountaineering Institute & Museum (Remains closed on Thursday) - About two km from the town, the HMI runs courses to train mountaineers, and maintains a couple of interesting museums. The Mountaineering Museum contains a collection of historic mountaineering equipment, specimens of Himalayan flora and fauna and a relief model of the Himalaya. The Everest Museum next door traces the history of attempts on the great peak.

Himalayan Zoological Park (Remains closed on Thursday) - This zoo was established in 1958 with the objectives of study, conservation and preservation of Himalayan fauna. The animals are well cared by dedicated





INDO ASIA TOURS

keepers. To protect and breed the dwindling stocks of wild animals, to educate the public and instil in them a sense of the worth of these wonderful creatures, it is necessary to keep them in pseudo-natural habitats. The zoo houses India's only collection of Siberian tigers and some rare species, such as the red panda and the Tibetan wolf.

Tibetan Refugee Centre

Established in 1959, the centre comprises a home for the aged, and orphanage, school, hospital and craft workshops that produce carpets of pure ladakhi wool, woodcarving, leather work and wool items. The weaving and dyeing shops and the wood carving shop are particularly interesting.

Later enjoy World Heritage Toy Train ride.

Toy Train ride - A visit to Darjeeling is incomplete without a ride in the toy-train of Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR).



The miniature train, given heritage status by UNESCO, covers the distance of 88 km between New Jalpaiguri station and Darjeeling. This fascinating narrow gauge steam engine train still operates with the original steam engine and the loops and the zigzags along the route are remarkable feats of engineering. The Short journey from



INDO ASIA TOURS

Darjeeling town to Ghoom (the nearest station), becomes a joy ride in itself.

Ghoom Monastery - More correctly known as Yogacholing Gumpa, this is probably the most famous monastery in Darjeeling and is about 8 km south of town, just below Hill Cart road and the train station near Ghoom. It enshrines an image of the Maitreya Buddha. Foreigners are allowed to enter the shrine and take photographs. As Ghoom is frequently swathed in mists, and the monastery is old and dark, it is often affectionately called Gloom monastery.

Overnight at the hotel.

Day 05

Darjeeling / Rumtek / Gangtok (137 Kms / 6 ½ hrs)

Early Morning enjoy visit of Darjeeling including following:

Tiger Hill - The highest spot in the area at 2590m, Tiger Hill is near Ghoom, about 11km from Darjeeling. The hill is famous for its magnificent dawn views over Kanchenjunga and other eastern Himalayan peaks. On a clear day even Mount Everest is visible.

After sightseeing return to the hotel and enjoy the breakfast. After breakfast drive to Gangtok. Before reaching Gangtok visit Rumtek Monastery. Rumtek Monastery -





INDO ASIA TOURS

Excursion to Rumtek. Rumtek 24 Kms. from Gangtok in Sikkim is the seat of his holiness, the XVIth Gyawla Karmapa, the head of the Karma Kagyu order of Tibetan Buddhism. Rumtek is a famous monastery, all over the world, especially among the Tibetan Buddhists, and is situated near Gangtok, the capital of Sikkim. Originally called the Dharma Chakra Centre, it includes a beautiful shrine temple and a monastery for the monks. The 16th Karmapa built the monastery.

Also visit one of the largest collections of Buddhas preaching's in the library in Rumtek.

After sightseeing, continue drive to Gangtok

GANGTOK - The precise meaning of the name Gangtok is unclear, though the most popular meaning is "hill top"

The capital city of Sikkim is located on a ridge overlooking the Ranipool river at a height of 5500 feet.

Mount Kanchenjunga (8,598 m or 28,208 ft)—the world's third-highest peak—is visible to the west of the city. Once an important transit point for traders travelling between Tibet and India, it is today a busy administrative and business centre and presents an interesting mix of cultures and communities.

On arrival in Gangtok, transfer to hotel.

Overnight at the hotel.

Day 06

Gangtok

After breakfast, enjoy visit of Gangtok including following:

Tashi View Point

was built by the late King of Sikkim, Tashi Namgyal, it is situated 4 km from Gangtok town from where one can have a clear view of opposite hills, besides Mt. Khangchendzonga. This site offers a breathtaking panorama of the majestic Mt. Khangchendzonga and surrounding hills. Built by the late King of Sikkim Sr. Tashi Namgyal, it is situated about six kilometres away from Gangtok on the North Sikkim Highway; this place offers an astounding view of the Khangchendzonga snowy range on a clear day..

Namgyal Research Institute of Tibetology

The world-renowned Namgyal Research Institute of Tibetology, is built in the typical Tibetan style of architecture; roosted on a hilltop, it is an absolute must see. Situated amongst woods of magnolia and oak, the institute promotes research on the largest collections of books and manuscripts on Mahayana Buddhism in the world.



INDO ASIA TOURS

There are about 30 thousand volumes and translations of the original teachings of Buddha, and various other treatises of other venerable Buddhist scholars from around the world.

Cottage industries emporium

It is now known as the Directorate of Handicrafts and Handlooms as well as the Government Institute of Cottage Industries (GICI). Started during the time of the Chogyals of Sikkim, as a venture to preserve, protect and propagate the authentic Sikkimese arts, handicrafts and skills of local and village artisans, it has become one of the major attractions for people visiting Sikkim.

Overnight at the hotel.

Day 07

Gangtok / Kalimpong (85 Kms – 03 hrs)

After breakfast drive to Kalimpong by Surface. On arrival in Kalimpong, transfer to hotel.

Zong Dog Palri Fo-Brang Gompa, five km south of the town centre at the end of the ridge, was built in the mid - 1970s at Durpin Dara Hill and was consecrated by the Dalai Lama. There are impressive wall paintings in the prayer





INDO ASIA TOURS

room, and a rare three-dimensional mandala upstairs. Mountain views are good from Durpin Dara Hill. This area is a big military camp, but you are free to walk or drive through it.

Established in 1922, the **Tharpa Choling Gompa** belongs to the Yellow Hat Sect of Tibetan Buddhism, founded in the Tibet in the 14th century and to which the Dalai Lama belongs.

Lower down the hill, the **Thongsa Gompa**, of Bhutanese Monastery, is the oldest monastery in the area and was founded in 1692. The present building is not so old - the Gurkhas in their rampage destroyed the original across Sikkim before the arrival of the British.

Flower Nuseries

Kalimpong produces 80% of India's gladiolas and is an important orchid - growing area; flowers are exported from



here to many cities in northern India. The Sri Ganesh Moni Pradhan Nursery and the Udai Mani Pradhan Nursery are among the most important in the area. The Standard and the Universal Nurseries also specialise in cacti.



INDO ASIA TOURS

Overnight at the hotel.

Day 08

Kalimpong / Bagdogra (85 Kms / 03 hrs drive) / Dibrugarh (Flight)

After early breakfast drive to Bagdogra and transfer to the Airport, connect flight to Dibrugarh.

Dibrugarh derives its name from "Dibrumukha", which means the river 'Dibru' and 'Mukh' which means mouth. It is one of the largest cities in Assam. This beautiful city is full of natural and cultural sites to unwind yourself. Dibrugarh and its surrounding cities Tinsukia and Sivasagar account for almost 50% of India's tea crop in Assam, giving it the sobriquet of the "Tea City of India".

On arrival at Dibrugarh airport, transferred to Mancotta/Chowkidinghee Heritage Chang Bungalow.

Afternoon take a tea walk in **Mancotta Tea Estate**. Evening enjoy a dance performance (Bihu) by an ethnic dance group at Mancotta Heritage Chang Bungalow. Overnight at Mancotta/Chowkidinghee Heritage Chang Bungalow.

Overnight at the hotel.

Day 09

Dibrugarh

Today we visit **Ethelwold Tea Estate** and **Mukul Organic Tea Plantation** to know all about CTC & Orthodox tea. Also experience of a Tea tasting session of different types of tea with one of the knowledgeable person in the field of tea / practicing Estate Manager.

A Tea Tour through old heritage tea garden gives an insight into the different activities that vary from season to season. It teaches us all about tea- its origin, how it is grown, tea tasting and its quality.



INDO ASIA TOURS



Note: Visit to tea factory is subject to being operational on the day of the visit. There is no tea plucking between December till mid March and hence the actual manufacturing process of tea cannot be demonstrated when one visits the factory during this period. Factory also remains closed on Monday's of the week.

Overnight at the hotel.

Day 10

Dibrugarh- Margerita- Dibrugarh

Today post breakfast we drive to Margherita (100 kms / 2 ½ hrs) to visit a Singpho tribal village which produces **traditional Organic Tea** (optional at Supplement cost). Enroute at Digboi, we visit **Oil Museum** and the 2ND World War Allied Forces Cemetery where 200 graves are permanently maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Digboi: Digboi is a small but wonderful town in Tinsukia district in the north-eastern part of the state of Assam, India. Petroleum oil was discovered here in late 19th century and the Digboi oilfield is one of the oldest oil fields. With a significant number of British professionals working for the Assam Oil Company as late as until the decade



INDO ASIA TOURS

following the independence of India,.

Singpho people are Theravada Buddhists by religion. The Singphos are divided into a number of clans, each under a Chief known as “Gam”. They were the first to introduce the tea culture in Assam. Producers of Organic Tea coins, packed in silver foils and ready to use-dip the coin into a pot of hot water and it is ready to drink is gaining immense popularity in Europe and Southeast Asian countries. The entire process of manufacturing the tea is done in a traditional manner without the use of any machines or gadgets.

Note : Digboi oil Museum remains closed on Monday of the week.

Or alternatively

Post breakfast drive to Naharkatiya (60 kms/01 ½ hrs) and visit Namphake Village, inhabited by the Tai Phakial people. Visit the Buddhist Monastery at the village and also interact with the local people to know more about their rich tradition and culture.

Namphake Village is the largest of the Tai-Phake villages in Assam, boasting 70 odd families, which trace their ancestry to the great Tai race. The village folk speak a dialect similar to the language in Thai- land and still follow the traditional customs and dress code of the great Tai race. The hamlet is also home to the Namphake Buddhist Monastery, one of the oldest and most respected Buddhist Monasteries in Assam.

Later drive to Tinsukia (01 hr) and take a boat ride at Maguri Beel on a country boat to see some birdlife. Evening drive back to Dibrugarh (01 ½ hrs) and overnight at Mancotta/Chowkidinghee Heritage Chang Bungalow.

Overnight at the hotel.

Day 11

Dibrugarh- Jorhat - Majuli

Today post breakfast we drive to Jorhat (03 ½ hrs) and visit Tocklai Tea Research Station. Later post lunch drive to Neematighat to board country boat to ABN Charaidew I- Floating Heritage hotel on the Brahmaputra.

Tocklai Tea Research Association (TRA) is a registered co-operative society dedicated to sci- entific research and extension for improvement in productivity and quality of tea in North East In- dia. Research on all aspects of tea cultivation and processing is carried out at the Tocklai Experimen- tal Station, Jorhat. It is the oldest and the largest



INDO ASIA TOURS

research station of its kind in the world.

Note : TRA remains closed on Sunday of the week.

Check in and overnight at the boat.

Day 12

Majuli - Kaziranga

Today, after breakfast, board your country boat, which will take you to Majuli Island (approx 1 ½ Hrs boat ride), one of the world's largest river islands. Majuli Island, inhabited by Mising tribes, Deori and Sonowal Kachari tribes, is



considered to be the heartland of Assamese culture. The great 15th century Assamese saint and reformer, Sri-manta Sankardev had come down here and set up 'satras' or 'monasteries' preaching a monotheist branch of Hinduism called Vaishnavism, which motivated and established a socio-religious movement that ultimately shaped the island's Assamese society and culture into what it is today.



INDO ASIA TOURS

Once you reach Majuli, embark on a full day's excursion by SUV (Tata Sumo/Bolero) on the island. Visit the famous **mask making monastery of Sama-guri** – which still practices this ancient tradition of Vaishnavism. From here, drive to Uttar Kamalabari Satra, another monastery that's known for its monastic dance form. Afterwards, **interact with the monks**, which will allow you to get a deeper insight into how monks live their lives here in the island. Later, go for a walk into one of the Mising villages, and observe this riverine tribe's way of life as well as interact with the lovely tribal folk. Late afternoon, transfer to the Kamalabari ferry point where your country boat will be waiting to take you back to Neemati Ghat. Later continue drive to Kaziranga (02 hrs).

The **Kaziranga National Park** is a World Heritage Site, where more than 75% of the world's total population of the Great Indian One Horned Rhinoceros can be found.

It lies on the southern bank of the Brahmaputra River and is one of the oldest parks of Assam. Besides rhinos, the Asiatic Water Buffalo numbering over 1200, elephants over 1000, tigers more than 81, Swamp deer, Barking deer and Hog deer can be seen. About 400 species of birds are found in Kaziranga National Park. Swamp Francolin, Kalij Pheasant, Greylag Goose, Gadwall, Eurasian Wigeon, Mallard, Northern Shoveller, Northern Pintail, Streak Throated Woodpecker, Bay Woodpecker, Oriental Pied Hornbill, Great Hornbill, Osprey, Palas's Fish Eagle, Changeable Hawk Eagle, Pied Falconets, Lesser Adjutant Stork, Greater Adjutant Stork, Black necked Stork, Grey-headed Lapwing, Indian White Backed Vulture, Long Billed Vulture, along with a large number of Spotted Billed Pelicans can be seen. Sighting is excellent and is always a great experience. The specialties here are the blue napped pitta among a host of eagles and waterfowl.

Note: National Park in this sector remains open from 1st November to 30th April every year. However during October like previous year, we are hopeful that in October also the Forest Dept. will be able to keep the National Park open for Safari's. However, this can only be confirmed nearer to date, which Forest Dept. will declare keeping the weather and other factors in mind. In case park is opened in October, there is limited access as full access to all the ranges are normally not permitted due to weather and road condition. Alternatively 01 November to 30 April is confirmed date for opening of park. Hence, suggest planning the trip accordingly.

On arrival check in at hotel.

Dinner and overnight in the Hotel.



INDO ASIA TOURS

Day 13

Kaziranga

We spent the full day exploring the beautiful forests and grasslands of the National Park with Jeep Safari post breakfast.



JEEP SAFARI-

Forenoon: Entry time between 0730 to 1000 Hours. No entry after 1000 Hrs

Afternoon: Entry time between 1330 to 1500 Hours. No entry after 1500 Hrs.

Jeep Safaris are permitted on pre-defined tourist circuits within Kaziranga National Park- currently at the following four points. Each of these circuits takes about one and half to two and half hours (or even more depending upon interest of the tourists), subject to local range conditions and weather. Jeep Safari may be cancelled / curtailed due to any reason by the Park Authorities without prior notice.

1. Mihimukh in Central Range at Kohora



INDO ASIA TOURS

2. Bagori in Western Range at Bagori

3. Agaratoli in Eastern Range at Agaratoli

4. Ghorakati in Burapahar Range at Ghorakhati

The Central Range passes through the entire habitat spectrum from ox-bow lakes, savannah woodland to swamp forests. It is very good for mammal sightings as well as for birds (Blue-bearded Bee-eater, Great Hornbill, Rufous Woodpecker). While driving along the trail, one can see rows of Indian Roofed and Tent Turtles (*Kachuga tecta* and *Kachuga tentoria*). Water Monitors *Varanus salvator* are sometimes spotted in the beels.

The Eastern Range abounds in water birds such as bar-headed geese, falcated duck, grey-headed lapwing and spot-billed pelican (a colony of 200 pairs of this globally threatened species nesting on the Bombax trees can be found here).

The Western Range has the highest density of rhinos as this part of the park is swampier. It has grassland birds and raptors (swamp francolin, pallas's fish eagle etc). Smooth Indian Otters (*Lutrogale perspicillata*) can sometimes be seen fishing in its oxbow lakes.

Dinner and overnight in the Hotel.

Day 14

Kaziranga / Guwahati (4 ½ hrs drive) / Kolkata

After breakfast drive to Guwahati to connect flight to Kolkata.

On arrival in Kolkata, transfer to hotel.

Overnight at the hotel.

Day 15

Kolkata Departure

After breakfast transfer to the Airport to take the flight back home / onward destination. ***(Rooms will be available till 12:00 Hrs)***

End of Services



INDO ASIA TOURS

REGARDING SIKKIM INNER LINE PERMIT

For entering Sikkim a normal Inner Line permit is required.

This permit can be obtained on any one of the following procedures:

- At the time of applying for the Indian Visa itself, the clients need to mention that they will visit Sikkim and accordingly a 15 days inner line permit is stamped on the visa.
- On arrival in Darjeeling we need to produce the original passport with valid Indian Visa at the District Magistrates office and 15 days inner line permit can be granted. It takes half day.\
- While entering Sikkim the permits can be issued on the spot at Rongpoo Check Post (while going to Gangtok) or Melli Check Post (while going to Pelling). It takes 20 minutes to 1 hour depending on group size. A serial numbered form at the check post needs to be filled and submitted along with photocopies of passport and Indian visa and 02 passport size snaps.
- Effective from 01st September the following changes will be implemented which will affect tourist movement. Only 600 vehicles per day will be allowed to go to Tiger Hill for sunrise. The coupons for the same will need to be obtained one day in advance from Sadar Police Station after submitting the vehicle documents and details of the passengers. During normal season period over 2000 vehicles visit Tiger Hill as such with this limitation in number it will not be possible to guarantee the visit to Tiger Hill in advance and the same will be subject to availability of coupons which we will get to know one day prior to the date of travel only.