

SIKKIM

The tiny Indian state of Sikkim is bordered by Bhutan, Nepal and Tibet and is still relatively unspoiled by tourism. Although many Sikkimese are now Hindu, Buddhist prayer flags and white-washed chortens remain ubiquitous. Sikkim is most famous for monasteries such as Rumtek and Pemayangtse, as well as for being home to the world's third highest mountain, the Himalayan peak of Kanchenjunga, which dominates the skyline.



The finest tea in the world, Darjeeling © Stephen Cameron

HIDDEN KINGDOM

9 days/8 nights

From \$2491 per person twin share

Departs daily ex Bagdogra

Price per person from*: Cat A Cat B Cat C
\$3011 \$2674 \$2491

*Based on two people sharing, singles on request.

INCLUSIONS

Transfers, city tours and excursions in standard air-conditioned private vehicle with English speaking driver, local guides, entrance fees, accommodation on a full board basis, 1 bottle of water per person per day for all surface travel, standard still camera fees.

A Silver Oaks/Mayfair Resort/Mt. Pendim/Mayfair Resort

B Silver Oaks/Denzong Regency/Mt. Pendim/Cedar Inn

C Kalimpong Park/Norkhill/Mt. Pendim/The Elgin

Tucked away in India's mountainous north is the remote kingdom of Sikkim and also the famous tea terraces of Darjeeling. This region is where you'll find spectacular scenery, remarkable religious monuments, Buddhist monasteries and a vibrant, welcoming people.

Days 1/2 Kalimpong

Arrival transfer from Bagdogra airport to the scenic town of Kalimpong (3 hrs), perched on a ridge overlooking the Teesta River. The next day,

tour the Botanical Gardens and Zong Dhog Palri Fo Brang Monastery, containing 108 rare holy scriptures brought by the Dalai Lama when he fled Tibet in the 1950s. BLD

Days 3/4 Gangtok

Depart for the Sikkim capital of Gangtok (3 hrs). Visit the prestigious Namgyal Research Institute of Tibetology, sacred Do Drul Chorten and revered Enchey Monastery. BLD

Day 5 Pelling

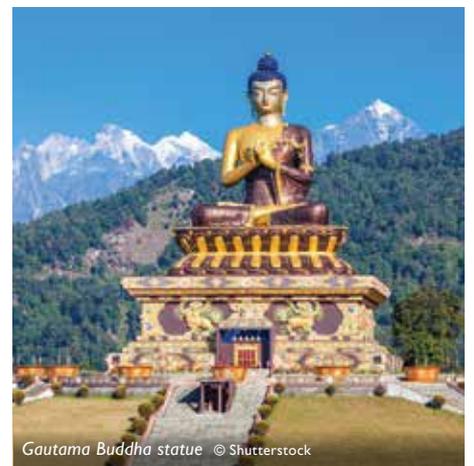
Admire unique religious art at Rumtek Monastery and stroll the serene Nehru Botanical Garden before lunch at a local restaurant. Drive to Pelling (5-6 hrs) with the evening at leisure to enjoy the tiny town's jaw-dropping mountain vistas. BLD

Days 6-8 Darjeeling

View the ancient Pemayangtse Monastery before travelling to Darjeeling (5 hrs). On Day 7, witness sunrise from Tiger Hill. If the weather is clear, you may be treated to a glimpse of the majestic, snow-capped Kanchenjunga massif. Later, stop by at Ghoom Monastery, yet another important repository for valuable Tibetan texts. The following day, explore the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Gumbu Rock site and Tea Estate. Free afternoon to relax. BLD

Day 9 Tour ends Bagdogra

Return to Bagdogra airport/railway station (4 hrs), where your trip concludes. B



Gautama Buddha statue © Shutterstock



Ceremonial welcome, Kalimpong © Stephen Cameron



Enchey Monastery, Gangtok © Shutterstock



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STAY LONGER

Gain a deeper understanding of Buddhism and the complex history of this Himalayan region by visiting neighbouring Bhutan. On pages 40-41, you'll find two sample itineraries to this isolated mountain kingdom and one of the most unique destinations on the planet.

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