

Day 13 Thursday 17 October

Guwahati

Today you explore the excellent Assam State Museum and the Guwahati Planetarium. After lunch you visit the Kamakhya Temple, an ancient Hindu pilgrimage shrine with 8th C foundations and the Navagraha Temple or the Temple of the Nine Planets. Worshipping the nine planets is one of Hindu mythology's oldest traditions. Tonight you sample Assamese dishes at a local restaurant.

**Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner
Overnight Guwahati**

Day 14 Friday 18 October

Guwahati to Shillong

Travel to the beautiful hill station of Shillong today, favoured by the British for its lushness and cool climate. Once the capital of Assam, it became the capital of the new state of Meghalaya in 1972. Here you visit the Don Bosco Centre for Indigenous Cultures, an excellent museum focused on the multi-cultural lifestyles of the native peoples of north eastern India. Its engaging exhibits cover history, costumes, housing, lifestyles, food, artefacts and ornaments. It is acclaimed as one of the best museums of its kind in Asia. The picturesque Elephant Waterfalls are also on your itinerary.

**Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner
Overnight Shillong**



Day 15 Saturday 19 October

Shillong to Tezpur

After breakfast you continue to Tezpur which is one of the oldest inhabited cities in Assam and its cultural capital. Enjoy lunch in a local restaurant then visit the peaceful Bhairabi Temple on the Brahmaputra River banks and Ketakeshwar Dewal holy Hindu shrine which is dedicated to the deity Lord Shiva. You also ascend Agnigarh Hill, an ancient mythological site with lovely views.

**Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner
Overnight Tezpur**

Day 16 Sunday 20 October

Tezpur to Kaziranga

This morning you enjoy beautiful scenery on your way to Kaziranga National Park which is UNESCO World Heritage listed for its unique biodiversity and universal value. It is home to the rare One-Horned Rhino which only exists in small pockets of north eastern Assam and Nepal. Other animals you may be fortunate

to observe include wild Buffalo and Indian Elephant (often in large herds), Royal Bengal Tiger, Indian Wild Boar, Pangolin, Deer and White-Browed Gibbon. The park is also home to turtles, crocodiles and a multitude of birdlife and is a photographers' delight. Enjoy a relaxing evening at your nearby lodge.

**Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner
Overnight Kaziranga**



Day 17 Monday 21 October

Kaziranga National Park Safaris

Enjoy a fabulous day of safaris beginning with an early morning elephant drive at this magical time of day. Return to your lodge for breakfast then take a 4WD jeep safari of the central range before lunch. In the afternoon you head out again on a 4WD jeep safari to the western range (all based on availability at the time). Dinner tonight is accompanied by traditional Bihu music and dance.

**Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner
Overnight Kaziranga**



Day 18 Tuesday 22 October

Kaziranga to Kolkata

Drive to Guwahati airport in your private vehicles today then board your flight to Kolkata. On arrival you are transferred to your hotel for an end of tour dinner.

**Breakfast • Lunch • Farewell Dinner
Overnight Kolkata**

Day 19 Wednesday 23 October

Kolkata

A later than normal hotel check out has been arranged for today and you have free time to shop and explore in Kolkata. Your tour leader is happy to take anyone interested on a local experience bartering and negotiating for colourful saris, fabrics and trinkets. Dinner has been arranged in a restaurant before transferring to the airport for your flight to Singapore.

**Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner
Overnight in flight**



Day 20 Thursday 24 November

Singapore to Adelaide

Arrive in Singapore in the morning and have a good connection on to Perth where you board your Qantas flight to Adelaide in the afternoon.



05 - 24 October 2024

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Please remember that on WEA Tours you may be travelling to remote and less visited places so please have an open mind and embrace the differences.

PHOTOGRAPHS: Akarsh Simha; Trans-India Holidays; rahuldlucca; Joegoauk Goa; Diganta Talukdar; aapaji; Woodlouse; Meena Kadri; Partha Salhia Sahana; Asis k Chatterjee; subamab; Mike Prince; Ankur Gulati; flowcomm; Anja Disseldorp; Andrew Reilly; !kuba!



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SIKKIM • ASSAM • WEST BENGAL • MEGHALAYA
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Kaziranga National Park & Safaris • Shillong

This unrivalled tour to the beautiful states of Assam, Sikkim & West Bengal, which nestle in the shadow of the mighty Himalayas of north eastern India, offers wondrous surprises at every turn. Bordered by Tibet to the north, Bhutan to the east and Nepal to the west, this region is a pure delight with Buddhist monasteries, Hindu temples, mosques and churches co-existing harmoniously side by side. Taking a path less travelled you explore genteel hill towns of the British Raj, colonial heritage, Tibetan and diverse ethnic cultures, museums, art and dance, tea plantations, wildlife on safaris, spectacular mountain scenery, spicy bazaars, colourful village life and delicious food. With several night stays in most destinations, comfortable accommodation and most travel in small private vehicles, discover this enchanting part of India in comfort, without compromise on authentic culture and experiences.

Tour Leader: Promila Gupta has led numerous tours to her Indian homeland for WEA Travel. She is passionate about its people, culture and food and is a caring and thoughtful tour leader.

Tour Includes: All international airfares with Singapore Airlines and Qantas; All internal flights; Full escort; All local guides, sightseeing and entrance fees; All accommodation in comfortable hotels; All meals as per itinerary, All transport; Pre and Post tour get together; Tour notes.



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Day 1 Saturday 05 October

Adelaide to Singapore & Kolkata
 Depart Adelaide this morning with Singapore Airlines to Singapore and on to Kolkata. Arriving in the late evening you are met and transferred to your hotel for the next three nights.
Meals in flight
Overnight Kolkata

Day 2 Sunday 06 October

Kolkata
 After a leisurely breakfast you begin exploring at the Howrah Bridge which connects the two sides of the city. Kolkata, formerly known as Calcutta is India's second largest city. It was chosen by the East India Company in 1690 as a British trading post because of its strategic location on the banks of the Hooghly River and it developed its own unique personality over the centuries. It is a thriving, colourful, dynamic metropolis offering wondrous surprises around every corner; a daily theatre of spiritual life, graceful culture and survival. You visit the daily flower market by boat, a wonderful spectacle of blooms and colour and such an integral part of Indian life and take in the fabulous architecture. As Kolkata was the capital of British India from 1772 to 1911 it boasts grand colonial architecture which you see around Dalhousie Square, the General Post Office, Raj Bhawan and the Writers Building. After lunch



Day 3 Monday 07 October

Kolkata
 Today you visit the Victoria Memorial, a monumental white marble domed edifice in British and Mughal architectural styles dedicated to Queen Victoria in the early 1900s. Echoing the Taj Mahal in design, it houses a vast collection of Victorian memorabilia and art as well as Indian historical exhibits. You also visit the Kali Temple an important Hindu pilgrimage site, Maidan Park the recreational, cultural and historical hub of Kolkata and the centuries old

Baba Ghats. The Ghats of Kolkata envelope you in the daily life of ordinary Indians. They provide a riverfront refuge for all with markets, food stalls and spaces to stroll, meet, worship and bathe. In the afternoon you visit the Indian Museum. Founded in 1814 it contains impressive archaeological, art and sculptural displays. The remainder of the day is at your leisure.
Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner
Overnight Kolkata



Day 4 Tuesday 08 October

Kolkata to Gangtok
 Today you take a short flight from Kolkata to Bagdogra in West Bengal. From here you travel by private vehicle to Gangtok, the capital of the Sikkim, for a three night stay. Sikkim is bordered by Tibet to its north, Bhutan to its east and Nepal to its west, contributing to its vibrant mix of ethnic groups, most of whom descend from these neighbouring lands and intermingle freely, forming a unique and homogenous blend. Buddhist monasteries, Hindu temples, mosques and churches coexist harmoniously and customs and traditions here are rich, colourful and diverse. The food is also delicious. At an altitude of 1700 metres above sea level Gangtok truly lies in the shadow of the mighty Himalayas and is famed for its scenic beauty and spectacular views of Kanchenjunga, the third highest mountain in the world. Enjoy a traditional Sikkimese dinner in a local restaurant tonight.
Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner
Overnight Gangtok



Day 5 Wednesday 09 October

Gangtok
 This morning you have a guided tour of the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology and which documents Tibetan culture and Buddhist practices and artefacts and where the foundation stone was laid by the Dalai Lama in 1957. You then visit the Do-Drul Chorten the largest and most significant stupa in Sikkim. There are over one hundred prayer wheels here which devotees turn whilst chanting mantras engraved on their surfaces. After lunch in a local restaurant you have some free time.
Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner
Overnight Gangtok

Day 6 Thursday 10 October



Gangtok
 Travel through lush countryside to Rumtek Monastery this morning. 16th century Rumtek is the largest Buddhist monastery in Sikkim and is sacred throughout the Tibetan Buddhist world. Originally dating to the 9th century, the three floors of the main building are filled with

rare Buddhist artworks, sacred items and relics. The beautiful halls are home to monks and nuns and a monastic college. In the afternoon you visit the fine Jawaharlal Nehru Botanical Gardens and a local market.
Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner
Overnight Gangtok

Day 7 Friday 11 October

Gangtok to Kalimpong & Darjeeling
 Depart Gangtok for Darjeeling today stopping in delightful Kalimpong which was once an important trade gateway between India, Tibet and China. Now a charming hill town overlooking the River Teesta, Kalimpong affords panoramic views across the Himalayas and is known for its orchids and exotic flowers. After lunch you visit the peaceful Zong Dog Palri Fo Brang Gompa Tibetan Buddhist Monastery. Continuing to Darjeeling you check into your hotel for a four night stay in this most beautiful region.
Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner
Overnight Darjeeling

Day 8 Saturday 12 October

Darjeeling
 Darjeeling was once a simple cluster of villages but with its pleasant climate became a British hill station and thriving centre of tea. It is a charming example of a Victorian town from the days of the British Raj and at just over two thousand metres above sea level is a popular and romanticised destination. After breakfast you board the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway known as the Toy Train for a memorable ride through the Himalayan foothills. The inaugural journey was in 1881 when the narrow gauge was considered a great pioneering feat. The train and track are now UNESCO World Heritage listed. Meander through jungle, tea plantations and teak forests before a zig-zagging ascent into the mountains and disembarking in Ghoom. Visit the Railway Museum, Ghoom Monastery and the War Memorial before driving through lush countryside to a Sourenee tea plantation. Learn the history of tea, and enjoy lunch in a picturesque setting.
Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner
Overnight Darjeeling



Day 9 Sunday 13 October

Darjeeling
 This morning you have the opportunity to witness the first rays of sunshine illuminate

the mighty Kanchenjunga Range of the Himalayas from Tiger Hill. This is a truly breathtaking experience and worth the effort of the early start. Return to your hotel for breakfast. Later in the morning you take the well known Rangit Valley cable car from Darjeeling to the Tukver Tea Estate, enjoying spectacular views over the tea gardens and ranges.
Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner
Overnight Darjeeling

Day 10 Monday 14 October

Darjeeling
 Today you visit the Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park which has an internationally recognised breeding program for the rare Snow Leopard, Himalayan Wolf and Red Panda. You have a guided tour to see these rare high altitude animals before touring the Darjeeling Japanese Peace Pagoda which was designed to promote peace amongst all races and religions. You also visit the architecturally beautiful Nepali style Dhirgham Temple which is a replica of the famous Pashupathinath Temple in Kathmandu and is dedicated to Lord Shiva. Lunch is taken in Chowrasta the historical hub of Darjeeling and a lovely place to soak up local ambience and enjoy some leisure time. You can explore at your own pace here or you might also choose to visit the Himalayan Tibetan Museum.
Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner
Overnight Darjeeling



Day 11 Tuesday 15 October

Darjeeling to Guwahati
 Today you transfer to Bagdogra airport for your flight to Guwahati in Assam state. Bordering Bhutan, Assam is an isolated and beautiful corner of north eastern India; diverse and enchanting with picturesque landscapes of verdant hills and pastures, tea gardens, rainforests and wilderness. The city of Guwahati, on the banks of the Brahmaputra River, dates from the 6th C. Following a brief orientation tour of the city (flight schedule permitting) you check into your hotel for dinner.
Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner
Overnight Guwahati

Day 12 Wednesday 16 October

Guwahati
 After breakfast you visit the Ugratara Temple which is a Shakti Shrine. Shakti is the personification of a divine feminine creative power. You then visit Umananda Temple a Shiva temple located on Peacock Island in the Brahmaputra River. Continue to Sualkuchi, one of the world's largest weaving villages where the entire population is engaged in weaving exquisite silk fabrics. Known as Muga, the shimmering wild silk of Assam is not produced anywhere else in India. Visit a private home and see the processing of silk from cocoon to beautiful saris and mekhalas from handlooms.
Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner
Overnight Guwahati

