

# North-East India Wildlife Highlights | 15 Days



This trip exploring Kaziranga and Manas (the finest of India's national parks), the charming hill station of Darjeeling and Pelling in Sikkim famous for magnificent views of the snow-capped Mt. Kanchenjunga range, the third highest peak in the world, plus an exciting optional extension to the magical kingdom of Bhutan.

Northeast India is a largely unvisited region of India. The biodiversity of Northeast India is one of the most diverse in the world. This region is home to a multitude of Asia's rarest and most secretive animal and bird species. It is the home to indigenous hill tribes of a very different cultural anthropology. The Naga tribes in particular, who are indigenous to both India and Burma, have largely preserved their cultural heritage and distinctive features to this day.

Only since 1994 have some areas been opened to foreigners. Since then, the still almost unknown Manas National Park has been open to tourists interested in nature & wildlife. This park borders Bhutan and is home to a fabulous fauna with a rich bird life as well as a variety of highly interesting mammals.

We visit four very different destinations – each dominated by the rich flora, fauna and mighty Himalayan range – for this unusual tour. First we head to Kaziranga National Park. Situated on the Brahmaputra River in Assam, Kaziranga has a superb variety of wildlife and is probably the best place in the world to see the endangered Great Indian One-horned Rhinoceros. Next we visit Manas National Park, which is situated in the foothills of the

Himalayas bordering Bhutan. Next we spend six days in Darjeeling and Pelling, enjoying the area's nature, culture and breathtaking views of the eastern Himalayan peaks.

### Trip Highlights

- The world's largest population of Indian One-horned Rhinoceros in Kaziranga
- Hog Deer, Swamp Deer, Hoolock Gibbon & the chance of seeing a Tiger
- Extensive bird list featuring waterbirds, raptors & Bengal Florican
- Highly endangered species of mammals such the rare Pygmy Hog, the Hispid Hare and the Golden Langur, Fishing Cats, Wild Buffalo, Wild Dog (Dhole) in Manas National Park
- Montane vegetation including Himalayan Rhododendron in Sikkim & Darjeeling
- Picturesque scenery in Darjeeling, including tea estates
- Breathtaking view of the entire Kanchenjunga mountain range from Pelling in Sikkim
- Optional extension to Unique Bhutanese architecture including spectacular temples & dzongs

### Detailed Itinerary

#### Day 1: Arrive in Kolkata

Welcome to India! Upon arrival in Kolkata a *travel-to-nature Asia* guide/representative will be at the airport to greet and take us to our hotel. Please look out for your name-card once you exit out of arrival area.

If time permits, we will explore bit of Kolkata city - visiting Victoria Memorial Hall, Jalighat Temple, also visit Ashram of Mother Teresa.

**Accommodation:** The Oberoi Grand

#### Day 2: Fly Kolkata - Jorhat | Drive Kaziranga National Park (80 m | 112 km | 2.5 hrs)

# North-East India Wildlife Highlights | 15 Days

Today we leave Kolkata and proceed to the airport where we board our flight to Jorhat in Assam.

Arriving at Jorhat Airport, we will board our minibus and drive to Kaziranga National Park (about a 2-hour drive), where we will settle into the Wild Grass Lodge or Infinity Lodge. These are small, comfortable lodges which offers en suite rooms with showers and is set in a pleasant garden. It is surrounded by open grassland and some wooded areas, both of which are good for watching birds.

Kaziranga, with an area of 430 square kilometers, is one of the world's most beautiful national parks. It lies on the south bank of the great Brahmaputra River and is one of the last haunts of the Greater One-Horned Rhinoceros. The area was first given protection as a forest reserve in the early years of this century, but it was not opened to visitors until 1938, and it was not until 1954 that the Great Indian One-Horned Rhinoceros was given complete statutory protection, allowing Kaziranga to become one of the most important refuges for this endangered mammal. The wildlife sanctuary was given National Park status in 1974 and today there are over 1,100 rhinos in the park, a figure which represents over 70% of the world total. Kaziranga is also home to the Asian Elephant, wild Water Buffalo, Swamp Deer and the endangered freshwater Ganges River Dolphin.

**Accommodation:** Infinity Resort  
**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

### Day 3-4: Explore Kaziranga National Park

We will spend our two full days in Kaziranga exploring the reserve by jeep and on elephant back. There will be ample time for birdwatching and photography as well as opportunities to learn about the work of the reserve patrols.

Kaziranga is a vast area of swamps interspersed with broad tracts of tall elephant grass, open forests, watercourses (known as 'jheels') and reedbeds. To the south the ground rises to 1,200 metres to form the Mikir Hills, an important refuge for the reserve's wildlife when the lowlands flood during the annual monsoon.

In addition to seeing the endangered Greater One-horned Rhinoceros, we also hope to see Kaziranga's important population of Water Buffalo, (one of the last remaining wild populations), and a variety of other mammal species, such as Rhesus Macaque, Common and Capped Langurs, Sambar, plus Swamp, Barking and Hog Deer, Common and Clawless Otters, and Wild Boar. We will make every effort to locate other more elusive inhabitants of the Reserve such as Asian Elephant and Hoolock Gibbon. Birdlife is equally diverse and among the bird species found here is an exceptional range of waterbirds – cormorants, herons, egrets, storks, geese, ducks, waders, terns and birds of prey. Other regional specialties include Swamp Partridge, Bengal Florican, Abbott's Babbler, Sultan Tit, Black-breasted Thrush, Bristled Grass Warbler, Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker and Little Spiderhunter. It really is a wonderful place to visit.

**Accommodation:** Infinity Resort  
**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



### Day 5: Drive Kaziranga NP - Manas National Park (110 m | 290 km | 6.5 hrs)

We will leave Kaziranga today then travel the whole day by road to Manas National Park via Guwahati. The long drive interrupted by several stops and the landscape is fascinating before you reach Manas Park.

We will be based in simple but comfortable accommodation – The Bansbari Lodge – for three nights, which is conveniently situated near the entrance to the national park. The twin-bedded rooms

# North-East India Wildlife Highlights | 15 Days

have private bathrooms and also have electricity (though please note that power cuts occur quite frequently).

Manas National Park which is a World Heritage Site is nestled right beneath the Bhutan Himalayas; it has sub tropical vegetation and is fed by the Manas and the Beki rivers and a few more streams and rivulets. Mathanguri, at its northern end has a spectacular sight of the Manas river gushing down and the forested mountains on the Bhutanese side. This is the Indo-Bhutan international border – and a chance to spot the rare and endangered Golden Langur. Because of its elevation and forests and grasslands the bird life is very interesting with the Great Indian Hornbill making an occasional appearance. The park home to a great variety of wildlife including many endangered species. The Tiger Project Reserve extends over an area of 2,837 square kilometres with a core area of 500 square kilometres.

**Accommodation:** The Bansbari Lodge  
**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



### Day 6-7: Explore Manas National Park

Early morning, we will take an elephant safari for about an hour looking for Wild Gaur/Wild Water Buffalos and the rare Bengal Florican frequently seen in the grassland. Return to lodge for breakfast.

Mid morning, we will visit on foot a nearby tribal village walking alongside a tea garden observing some low land bird species. We may visit a school in the village.

Lunch at the lodge. Then we go to the river to see elephant bathing and feeding. PM go for another jeep safari inside the park. We will drive right up to the Bhutan border where we can see a gushing river coming down from the Bhutan Himalayas. Sip a hot cup of Assam tea as you see the spectacular sight of the sun going down. Return to the lodge in the dark, this time our naturalists accompanying you will have spot lights ready to gaze at the wild life that might be present in the vicinity.

**Accommodation:** The Bansbari Lodge  
**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

### Day 8: Drive to Guwahati airport (137 km | 3 hrs) | Fly Bagdogra | Drive Darjeeling (2,100 m | 68 km | 3 hrs)

After our early breakfast in Manas we'll then make the 3-4 hour drive to Guwahati airport to catch our flight to Bagdogra. On arrival we will be transferred by road to Darjeeling in the state of West Bengal, north-east India.

Darjeeling is a small town which the British tea planters and the Raj used as a summer capital to escape the searing heat of the plains lower down in Kolkata. The season promised frequent tea parties and discussions around polished tables in quaint and beautifully located bungalows where life had its own rhythm. It is still possible to experience this relaxed style of life in Darjeeling.

We will stay in the Elgin Hotel for two nights. This elegant hotel combines tradition with modernity and was once the residence of the Maharaja of Cooch Bihar. The building itself dates back 120 years. Guests are greeted by draping a silken Khada around the neck in typical Himalayan tradition and the decor is of oak floorboards and panelling, fireplaces and antique Burma teak furniture. The en-suite rooms are very comfortable and offer a wide range of facilities. Authentic Indian and continental dishes are served here as well as many local recipes.

**Accommodation:** New Elgin Hotel  
**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

# North-East India Wildlife Highlights | 15 Days

## Day 9-10: In Darjeeling

With a backdrop of mighty snow-clad Himalayan peaks, Darjeeling is the most important hill resort in eastern India. The mighty Kanchenjunga peak overlooks the town and, with luck, we will also see the world's highest peak, Mount Everest, from near the town. There is a great deal to interest visitors here. We will visit Tiger Hill which offers views of the Kanchenjunga and we will also be exploring Darjeeling on foot, enjoying the colonial style buildings of the British Raj and visiting some of the town's attractive locations, such as Observatory Hill (known as 'The Mall') and the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute (HMI). The Mall is a hill near the main square in Darjeeling, Chowrasta. There are wonderful views of the Himalayas from The Mall. Situated at an elevation of 2,100 meters, the HMI was founded in 1954 after the historic conquest of Everest on the 29th May 1953 by Tenzing Norgay (a Sherpa) from Darjeeling and Sir Edmund Hillary, from New Zealand.

Darjeeling Himalayan Railway or the 'Toy Train'- The Toy Train is one of the most famous narrow gauge trains in the world. Highlights of a trip on this train include the Batasia Loop with its spectacular views down into Darjeeling and of the surrounding high peaks, Tiger Hill – the highest station on the line and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Gurkha War Memorial and the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute.

Narrow gauge steam engine trains still operate with their original steam engines and the loops and the zigzags along the route are remarkable feats of engineering. We will take a short ride from Darjeeling town to Ghoom, the nearest station. It is a joy ride in itself. The Toy Train is considered an engineering marvel and railway enthusiasts regard it as one of the wonders of the world, worth preserving forever.

Darjeeling Zoo: This is a 67.56 acre (27.3 ha) zoo in the town of Darjeeling. The zoo was opened in 1958, and an average elevation of 2,134 m, is the largest high altitude zoo in India. It specializes in breeding animals adapted to alpine conditions, and has successful captive breeding programs for the snow

leopard, the critically endangered Himalayan wolf and the red panda.

Himalayan Mountaineering Institute: This was founded in 1954 after the historic conquest of Everest on the 29th May 1953, when two people reached its summit. They were the Sherpa Tenzing Norgay, from Darjeeling and Sir Edmund Hillary, from New Zealand. As an honor to the great Sherpa this institute was formed with the aim of imparting mountaineering skills to enthusiasts. Tenzing Norgay was one of the founding members of HMI and also served as field director of the Institute. HMI also houses a museum which holds a rare collection of mementoes from various Everest expeditions.

**Accommodation:** New Elgin Hotel

**Meal:** Breakfast



## Day 11: Drive Darjeeling - Pelling (2,000 m | 73 km | 3 hrs)

Today we leave Darjeeling and proceed to Pelling where we will settle into the resort "The Elgin Mount Pandim". It offers a unique and personal tryst with the Himalayas and revokes the old world charm created by its first owners - the royal family of Sikkim and offers a peaceful retreat.

For bird lovers the resort offers an excellent vantage point for watching rare birds including the Green-tailed sunbirds, Rufous-gorgeted Flycatchers, Scimitar Babblers and Laughing thrushes and many more.

Pelling is about 73 km away from Darjeeling and 115 km from Gangtok, the capital of Sikkim. The placid

# North-East India Wildlife Highlights | 15 Days

town pulls most of the visitors for its representative status in history, nature and culture of the state of Sikkim. More precisely Pelling is famous for magnificent views of the snow-capped Kanchenjunga range, the third highest peak in the world.

**Accommodation:** The Elgin Mount Pandim

**Meal:** Breakfast



## Day 12-13: In Pelling

Sun, cloud or fog? This is the key question in the morning when we wake up directly in front of the 8,686m third-highest mountain in the world, Kanchenchunga. Situated at an altitude of 2150 m, Pelling offers breathtaking view of the entire Kanchenjunga mountain range including Koktang, Kumbhakaran (Jannu), Rathong, Kabru, Kabru Dome, Kanchenjunga, Pandim, Siniolchu and others. This is as close as you can get to the Kanchenjunga range without leaving the material comfort of good hotels. There is a great deal to interest visitors here.

We will spend our two full days here exploring by jeep and hiking around. We will take time to explore the town, meet the local people and get an insider's perspective on the local culture. We will visit many places of interest that fit the best to all of us.

**Pemayangtse Monastery:** Pemayangtse literally means 'Perfect Sublime Lotus'. This is one of the oldest and most important monasteries of Sikkim. Founded in 1705, this monastery belongs to the Nyingma-pa sect. The three-storied building of the monastery houses a good collection of wall paintings and sculptures. On the third floor of the monastery, there is a seven-

tiered painted wooden model of the abode of Guru Rimpoche, complete with rainbows, angels and the whole panoply of Buddha and bodhisattva. In January/ February every year, a religious dance called 'Cham' is performed in Pemayangtse.

Sanga Choeling Monastery is located on the top of the mountain behind the town of Pelling. The distance to the monastery from town is about 3 km. The road is not motorable and one needs to take a 45 minute walk through a quite path to reach the monastery. As a result a visit to Sanga Choeling Monastery is not part of any of the regular itinerary. But if you have time and energy, the effort of the uphill walk is well rewarded with great views of Pelling and surrounding hills including great views of Mount Kanchenjunga that can be seen from the monastery compound.

Built in 1697 the Sanga Choeling is one of the oldest monasteries in Sikkim. Sanga Choeling means 'the island of esoteric teaching'. This Gompa is another of Lhatsun Chenpo's creations, and is highly venerated among the Nyingmapa. Gutted by fire, it has been rebuilt and houses some of the original clay statues. This monastery is the second oldest in Sikkim. Since the place can only be reached on foot, even during high tourist season, the monastery is not crowded. One can still enjoy the great views among tranquillity.

**Khecheopalri Lake:** Khecheopalri Lake is considered one of the most sacred lakes of Sikkim. The lake remains hidden under rich forest cover. It is believed that birds do not permit even a single leaf to float on the lake surface. Our visit to Pelling would be incomplete without a tour to this lake.

**Rabdentse Ruins:** This was the second capital of the erstwhile kingdom of Sikkim after Yuksom and till the year 1814 A.D., the king of Sikkim ruled the state from this place. Today, Rabdentse ruins lie hidden from the main road at a walking distance from Pelling and the Pemayangtse monastery. It can be approached by following a footpath which branches off the main road. The scenic view from the top of the ruin scanning across deep valley to the mystic heights of Kangchenjunga ranges is something to be cherished and etched in memory.

# North-East India Wildlife Highlights | 15 Days

**Accommodation:** The Elgin Mount Pandim

**Meal:** Breakfast



## Day 14: Drive Pelling - Kalimpong (1,250 m | 91 km | 3.5 hrs)

Getting up early is rewarded by a beautiful sunrise, as if the Himalayas opening its unique light theater. Around the Hills sky and earth suddenly seem to melt. Glowing, the sun awakens the mountain gods of the highest Himalayan summits.

After our leisurely breakfast we are set for a beautiful and scenic journey to Kalimpong (1250 m) for overnight stay at The Elgin Silver Oaks, Kalimpong. The Elgin Silver Oaks Kalimpong, was the home of a famous Jute magnate. It is now converted into a luxury Elgin boutique hotel in the Himalayas.

**Accommodation:** The Elgin Silver Oaks

**Meal:** Breakfast

## Day 15: Drive Kalimpong - Bagdogra (78 km | 3 hrs) | Fly to Kolkata or Delhi | Connect to flight back home

We will leave Kalimpong today and drive to Bagdogra airport where we will board our flight to Kolkata or Delhi.

On arrival in Kolkata (or Delhi) where we'll spend our final day in India. The remainder of the day is free for individual shopping or sightseeing. Evening Farewell dinner in a local restaurant followed by transfer to airport to connect flight to onward destination.

**Meal:** Breakfast

**Bhutan extension:** An extension trip to Bhutan is highly recommended not only because of its close proximity but being one of the few last remaining Shangri-La of the Himalayas!

### Includes

- Airport (pick up/drop off) transfers by private A/C vehicle
- Twin-Sharing accommodation in all Hotel/Resort/Lodge as mentioned
- Daily breakfast throughout the trip, other meals as mentioned in the itinerary
- Guided Sightseeing, all activities and day excursions as per itinerary
- Entrance fees (national parks/conservation areas/monuments etc.)
- 3 Jeep Safari's in Kaziranga National park with Entry fee (5-6 persons sharing a Jeep)
- 3 Jeep Safari's in Manas National park with Entry fee (5-6 persons sharing a Jeep)
- All sightseeing and long-distance transportation in a private air-conditioned vehicle (cars/SUVs or mini/micro-van etc. depending on group size). This includes toll taxes, parking, allowance for the driver, outstation overnight charges for the driver
- Experience Tour Leader
- All applicable government taxes

### Excludes

- International flight tickets
- Visa fee
- Travel insurance
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Personal clothing and equipment
- Tips for trip leader/guide, driver, hotel staff and porters
- Items of personal nature such as alcoholic beverages, soft drinks, laundry, and other unforeseen expenses
- Items/services not listed in "included"

# North-East India Wildlife Highlights | 15 Days

- Extra expenses/payment for 'Optional' activities/programs if participated

## Accommodation

### The Oberoi Grand, Kolkata

Fondly referred to as the Grand Dame of Chowringhee, our 5 star hotel: The Oberoi Grand has been an icon on the landscape of Kolkata for more than a century; with a reputation for taking care of its guests that befits the best hotel in Kolkata. The sense of calm that pervades the outdoor space is carried into the classically appointed rooms and suites that encircle the courtyard.

### Infinity Resort, Kaziranga

Our guests are drawn to the magic of nature, to the slow pace of life, closeness to the natural world and to the relief from the pressures of modern living. The ethos of Infinity Resort is founded on super luxury, afforded by an exceptionally great location which is harmoniously blended with its natural environment. A completely a zen experience for our guests!



### The Bansbari Lodge, Manas

One of the oldest lodge in Manas National park, Bansbari Lodge is located in a very scenic location close to the main gate. It is situated overlooking the forest hills of the park on one side and lush green tea garden on the other side. It offers clean and airy room with a small balcony attached in each room.

### Hotel New Elgin, Darjeeling

One of the most popular luxury heritage hotels in Darjeeling, the Elgin is a 125-year old property, which used to be the summer residence of the Maharaja of Cooch Behar. The hotel offers stunning views as it lies on the altitude of 6000 feet amid the Himalayas. The property has a colonial charm due to its history and architecture.



### The Elgin Mount Pandim, Pelling

The Elgin Mount Pandim Hotel in Pelling offers a unique and personal tryst with the Himalayas. Set in eight acres of virgin forest and landscaped gardens, it revokes the old world charm created by its first owners – the royal family of Sikkim and offers a peaceful retreat about one hundred and fifty kilometers from Siliguri, with a glorious view of the Singalila range.

### The Elgin Silver Oaks, Kalimpong

Lounging in the landscaped gardens in a profusion of colors, one is treated to breath-taking view at The Elgin Silver Oaks, Kalimpong. The natural décor is characteristic in the imposing Kanchenjunga which can be seen on a clear day, blooming petunias and asters, the serrated violet edges of iris, iridescent butterflies flitting through colourful azaleas, drooping geraniums, proud orchids and heaven, temporarily descends on earth.

# North-East India Wildlife Highlights | 15 Days

---

### Group/Individual

On this trip you will be traveling privately with your family & friends. Our representative/tour partner will look after your transfers to and from the airport and will be around to answer other questions you may have about your trip.

### Accommodation - Hotel, Resort

Your accommodation has been selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a fine heritage hotel in another or a family-run guesthouse or lodges in a smaller town. Accommodation in remote areas tend to be basic and may not have western amenities.

### Single Accommodation

Single (room) supplement is provided on request (single supplement charge applies) and are subject to availability.

### Food & Transport

All breakfast, 6 lunches and 6 dinners are included.

Generally, you can eat out very cheaply in India. Where food is not included, you should allow at least 1,800 rupees (approximately Euro 20 & US\$22) per day for lunch and dinner. However, if you choose to dine in fine/expensive restaurants please allocate more than our suggested amount.

Please note, service in restaurants can be quite slow.

For airport, sightseeing transfers, and for long drives we use a private air-con car, jeep, van depending upon group size. Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines.

### Weather

Generally, the best time to visit India is from December to February, when it is warm during daytime and cool at night in most areas of India. December marks the beginning of the peak

travel season with higher-priced accommodation and flights.

It starts to get hot from March and the temperature reaches its average high point of 45°C (113°F) in May. If you can bear the heat, traveling India from April to May, you can expect the benefits of smaller crowds as well as big promotions from hotels and airlines (usually 50% off).

India's rainy season starts from June and lasts until September. North India is less affected by downpours than central and southern parts. You could still enjoy a good experience if you visit north Indian destinations like Delhi, Agra, Jaipur and other Rajasthan areas. Many national parks are closed because of floods and landslides. Goa becomes a "ghost city", with few travelers and many beach resorts closed. Ladakh, located in the far north is cool, and little affected by the rainy season, and it starts to welcome its high travel time from June to August.

Rain starts to ease from the middle of September. In October, most areas of India have dry weather. Though it is still hot, it feels much more comfortable than in May. Traveling in October and November, you'll not be drenched, while enjoying better deals than in December-February.

### Baggage Allowance

At time of writing the standard weight limit is one checked baggage on Qatar Airways is 25kg (55lb) and hand baggage 7kg (15lbs). We recommend packing only one piece of checked baggage. Luggage allowances for both hand and checked luggage are subject to change, we suggest you check the airline's website for the latest information prior to your departure.



# North-East India Wildlife Highlights | 15 Days

## ESSENTIAL/PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### Passport & Visas

All nationalities require a full passport that must be valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information below is primarily for EU passport holders, and other nationalities should check with the relevant embassies. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

Visas are required if you are German and for most other nationalities. Visa information changes regularly for India; for the latest information on applying for a visa please follow these links for more information.

<https://indianembassyberlin.gov.in/pages?id=Mg,,&su bid=MTQ>,

**Please note:** Visa regulations can change without notice, therefore please check the current regulations or contact us.

### Vaccination & Health

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad.

There are no mandatory vaccination requirements for this trip. Recommended vaccinations for this trip are: Polio, Tetanus, Diphtheria, Typhoid, Hepatitis A. The risk of malaria on this trip is slight, but you may wish to consult your GP/Family Doctor or travel health clinic for further advice. Dengue fever and/or Chikungunya are known risks in places visited on this trip. Both are tropical viral diseases spread by daytime biting mosquitoes. There is currently no vaccine or prophylaxis available for either, and therefore the best

form of prevention is to avoid being bitten. We recommend you take the usual precautions to avoid mosquito bites. The above information can change at short notice; as we are not qualified to answer all your questions about travel health we strongly recommend you contact your Medical Professional or a Travel Health Clinic prior to departure for up-to date information.

### Local Time

GMT + 5 hours and 30 minutes

### Electricity

230/240 volts AC, 50 Hz. There are recharging facilities at most of the hotels, the electricity supply is not 100% reliable but it is usually only off for short periods of time.

### Money

The national currency of India is the Indian Rupee (INR), with an exchange rate at the time of publication of approximately 89 to the Euro and 82 to the US\$. It is illegal to import or export rupees. Do not accept torn or (very) dirty Indian banknotes from banks or in change as they will almost certainly not be accepted as legal tender in India. Please ask for low denomination notes of 100, 200 or 500 Rupees as 2000 Rupee notes can sometimes be difficult to use out of Delhi. You can change money back from Rupees into Euro or Dollars at Delhi airport (before going through security), but you must produce an exchange receipt showing that you changed money in India. You are advised to bring most of your money in cash as you may have difficulty changing travellers cheques outside Delhi. It makes no difference whether you bring Euro or US Dollars. You should change your money on arrival at Delhi either at the hotel or airport (please note that the hotel often gives a better rate than the airport). It is possible to change cash in Ladakh. You will need approximately €200-€250 for extra meals and tipping for the whole trip.

### ATM | Credit Cards

There are ATMs in Kolkata and other major cities. We recommend you change most of the money you need

# North-East India Wildlife Highlights | 15 Days

---

for the trip before leaving Kolkata. Please do not rely wholly on ATM machines as often they are broken or run out of cash. Credit cards are accepted in larger shops in Kolkata and other major cities.

### Extra Expenses & Spending Money

You will need to bring some extra money to cover drinks, laundry, souvenirs and any other personal expense, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Though it totally depends on individual but generally an approximate amount of US\$250 per person, per week should be sufficient (more if you enjoy a few beers); however, for those that can't resist a bargain or may wish to participate in all of the optional excursions, consider allocating a higher amount. Or if you are the one frugal with money probably allocating less would also suffice.

India has very good opportunities for shopping, especially for locally made goods, and in Delhi local guides may well offer to take you to emporiums as well as workshops where these goods are made. Many people find this a great opportunity to buy local handicrafts, silk, jewelry, carpets etc. Guides will often assume that visitors will want to go shopping, it is very much part of the culture, however if you do not wish to go, please make this clear to your local guide at the time.

Optional Tours may be offered in some city you visit during your tour. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits and if seats are available. Please ensure you have additional funds available if you feel you may wish to participate in any extra activities. Each optional tour/activity will be arranged locally by our local partner/guide, participation and tipping for optional excursions is completely at your discretion.

### Tipping

Tipping is of course entirely at your discretion, but it is customary in India. Tipping can be an awkward affair especially when you are not familiar with the country. Your leader will help with tipping and will provide a list of suggested tips. This will include tips for drivers, hotel porters and other hotel staff, local sightseeing guides,

and if trekking will include camp staff such as guide, assistants, cooks and pony men. Sometimes your leader will collect a kitty during the trip and sometimes they will collect the tips towards the end of the trip (occasionally for very small groups the leader may need to collect a little more than the suggested amount). We suggest you allow Rs 6,000 (approx. €60 -70 / \$65-75) for this trip. Please try to tip in local currency.

Tipping of the local leader is not included in the above and is at your discretion. However, we suggest around Rs1000-2000 (approx.€11-25 /US \$12-25) per person for the leader depend upon the group size.

### Itinerary Change

In case of some unusual events/incidents the order of programs (sightseeing, excursions etc.) might have to change in order to accommodate the local situations. In these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements while maintaining the overall integrity of your trip.

The domestic airlines may change their schedule frequently and, in such cases, our local partner/guide will inform you about the changes.

### Travel Insurance

We highly recommend to choose/get an insurance plan/policy that covers your needs. And please make sure to keep/carry a hard-copy of your travel insurance documents on your person while on tour. It's prudent to check thoroughly the inclusions and procedure to file claims prior to purchasing insurance coverage. *travel-to-nature Asia* will not be responsible for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to purchase appropriate travel insurance from the date of booking.

### Public Holidays

During major Indian public holidays such as India's Republic Day 26<sup>th</sup> Jan, the Holi (Colors) Festival (generally falls around March), Diwali (sometime in Oct-Nov) etc. some business will be closed and air and ground transportation may be affected. Tourist attractions sites may get overly crowded. But it's a

# North-East India Wildlife Highlights | 15 Days

---

good trade off as you will get to experience India more intimately.

### Dress Code

Though modern-day Indian have become more liberal to dresses they wear, however, as a tourist we advise you to follow dress codes specially while visiting temples or mosques. Just dressing modestly and wearing non-revealing cloths should be fine. Women might also consider carrying a shawl in their daypack (this could be a sarong or light scarf) which you can wear over your shoulders and heads as a courtesy or just show respects. Religious sites and homes throughout India – for Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, Muslims or Buddhists to name a few – require all visitors to remove their shoes to enter.

### Important Information

On all guided trips although our leaders/guides are well trained to deal with different capabilities, if they have any concerns about someone's ability to safely partake in an activity, or their impact on other people's enjoyment, we authorize them to take necessary action which, in some circumstances, may involve asking someone to miss that activity.

---