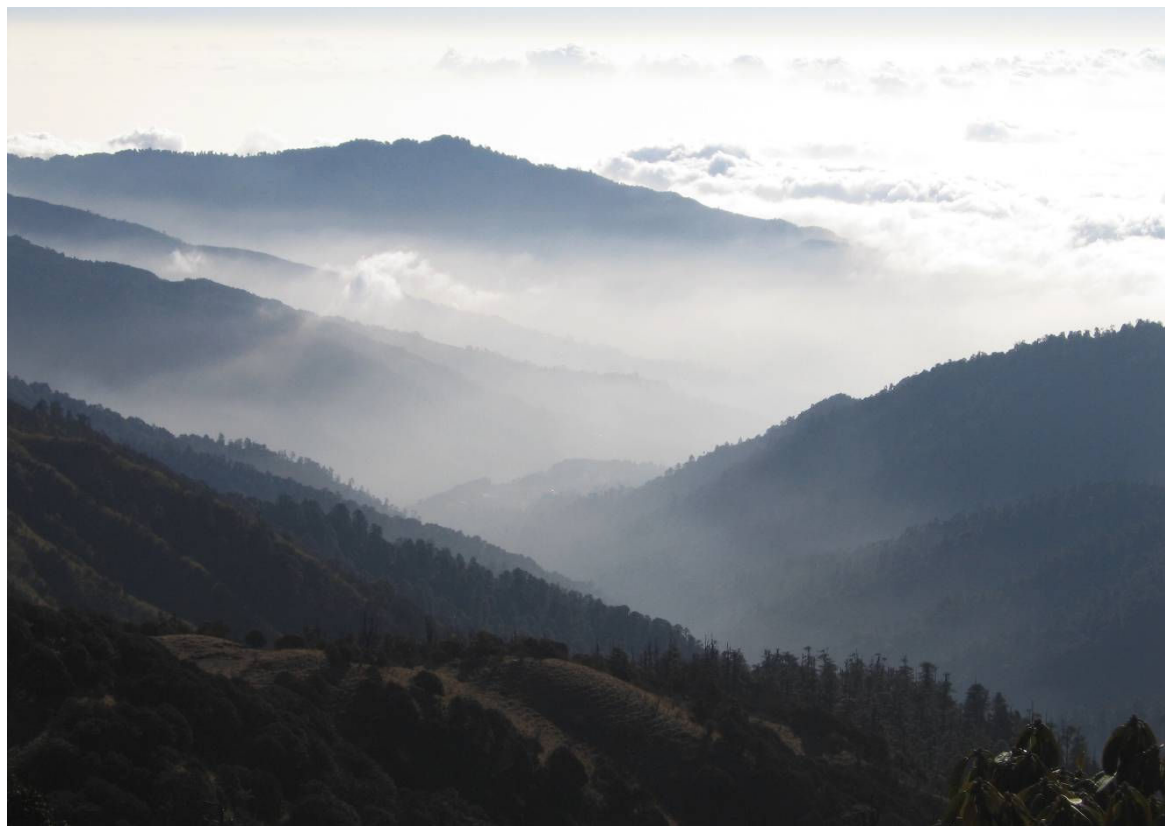




SINGALILA RIDGE, INDIA



On the Singalila Ridge India © Ann Foulkes, trekMountains

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|----------------------|---|--|----------------------------|------------|
| Grade: | Gentle / Moderate | | Land-only duration: | 13 days |
| Max altitude: | 3636m | | Trekking days: | 6 days |
| Dates: | We can run this on dates to suit you for a minimum group size of 1. The 2 main trekking seasons are Spring and Autumn. Contact us at info@trekmountains.com with your preferred dates | | | |
| | | | Price: | contact us |

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Before Nepal was opened up to the rest of the world, all Everest expeditions started from Darjeeling. There is a rich mix of Indian, Nepalese, Tibetan and Bhutanese cultures. You are likely to meet the Gurkhas of East Nepal, Gurungs from Western Nepal, fair-skinned Sikkimese, Bhutanese as well as Tibetan lamas in yellow robes and Tibetan women in striped aprons and brocades.

This trek follows the famous Singalila Ridge, a prominent spur of high ground that lies at the southern end of a long crest, which runs down from the Kangchenjunga massif and forms the border between West Bengal and Nepal. It is a very scenic trek and as you pass through small settlements you will enjoy breathtaking panoramic views of Kangchenjunga, Makalu, Everest and Lhotse to name but a view of the spectacular peaks in this border region.



On the Singalila Ridge India © Ann Foulkes, trekMountains

OUTLINE ITINERARY

Walking and journey times are approximate

Day 1 Arrive in Delhi, fly to Bagdogra and drive to Darjeeling

Arrive Delhi and connect with the 1-hour flight to Bagdogra at the foot of the Darjeeling hills. The flight runs parallel to the main Himalayan range and weather permitting, we see most or all of the Himalayan giants including Everest, Lhotse, Makalu and then the massive bulk of Kangchenjunga, before we descend into Bagdogra.

Here we meet our local representative and commence our 3½ hour drive, The road that soon leaves the rice fields and coconut palms of the plains for the tea-garden covered slopes of the lower hills, running close beside the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, affectionately known as the Toy Train.

We stop for a break and refreshments half way up at Kurseong, before climbing to Ghoom at 2438 metres and then descending 300 metres to Darjeeling, where we stay for two nights. The evening is free to explore. Overnight Darjeeling.

Day 2 Darjeeling and Tiger Hill

After breakfast we take a tour of the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute. The Institute was founded after the 1st Everest climb of Tenzing and Hillary and Tenzing Norgay was the director of this Institute for a long time. The Indian Climbing history begins here. We can also visit the small zoo beside the HMI which houses interesting Himalayan animal

species including red panda and snow leopard.

We then visit the Tibetan Self Help Centre and the market place.

It is worth exploring the fascinating and colourful bazaars.

Overnight hotel Darjeeling.

Meals included: B,L,D

Day 3 Darjeeling

Today we visit Observatory Hill where we can witness Hindu priests and Buddhist monks sitting side by side chanting prayers. Temple bells chime while Tibetan prayer flags flutter. It's a wonderful harmony of religion and culture.

We then walk through Toong Soong settlement through Alubari with wonderful views of the mountains and valleys below to Ghoom – 3 hour.

Finally we take the toy train back to Darjeeling (subject to availability – if not available we will drive back.

Overnight hotel Darjeeling.

Meals included: B,L,D

Day 4 Darjeeling to Tonglu 3015m

2½ hour drive, 3 hours walking

Our jeep journey brings us to the trailhead at the village of Dhodray (2460m) which offers good views of Kanchenjunga. Here we meet our trekking crew and porters. The trek starts on a nice path through rhododendron forests passing meadows and meeting villagers along the trail. The trail is very gradual, going undulating gently with views of Kanchenjunga along the way. We continue onto camp at Tonglu (3015m). From Tonglu there are particularly good views of Darjeeling town, spread over the ridge immediately opposite and 1000m below us along with wide views of the entire Kangchenjunga range.

Overnight camp.

Meals included: B,L,D

Day 5 Tonglu to Kalpokhari 3100m

5 hours walking

After a relaxed breakfast and time for photographs, we have a short, easy walk to Gairibans which translates as 'the village amongst the bamboo thickets'. The initial level walk with views of Kangchenjunga takes us past a long mani wall to the Nepalese border post in the large village of Jaubari. Kanchenjunga appears at almost every bend making this walk even more delightful. Descend to the village of Gairibas village after which we climb for about an hour to our lunch stop at Kanyakatta.

From Gairibans to Sandakphu the walk is particularly interesting for bird enthusiasts with minivets, flycatchers, finches, redstarts, falconets and a number of other varieties seen from the trail.

Continuing along the ridge on a gentle trail before the final short climb to camp at Kalpokhari. We walk through rhododendrons, some of which are of the large tree variety. Kalpokhari is a fair-sized village scenically located beside a dark, prayer flag lined pond

that gives the village its name black (kala) lake (Pokhari).

Overnight camp.

Meals included: BLD

Day 6 Kalpokhari to Sandakphu 3690m

3 - 4 hours walking

From our camp at Kalpokhari we walk for around an hour with good bird spotting potential till Bikaybhanjang (3346m). It is a further two hours and a steady pull up to Sandakphu. The jeep road winds up steeply and we take the short cuts up this hill.

From camp, there are remarkable sunset and sunrise views of Everest, Lhotse, Nuptse, Makalu, Chamlang and Kangchenjunga and a number of high peaks in Sikkim and Bhutan, including Chomolhari.

Overnight camp.

Meals included: B,L,D

Day 7 Sandakphu to Tar 3300m

5½ hours walking

We wake up early to walk to a platform overlooking Sandakphu with grand views all around. We return to camp for breakfast before setting off on one of the most spectacular sections of the Singalila Ridge. There are ever-changing views of the snow-capped Himalaya to the north and north west. One of the finest day's walking to be found anywhere in the world.

A series of ridges fade away to the Arun Valley in the west, the mountains of Sikkim and Bhutan rise to the north and east while the enormous bulk of Kangchenjunga stands directly ahead. You also have the grazing yaks for company on this trail. We camp at Tar 3300m.

Overnight camp.

Meals included: B,L,D

Day 8 Tar to Lost Valley, Samadeen 2480m

5½ hours walking

Today we trek to Phalut where we can enjoy the views of Kangchenjunga and the eastern Himalaya, as we descend for 5 hours - another beautiful day of walking through rich forests of rhododendrons and magnolias with great birdlife to the Lost Valley near Samadeen (2480m). Our camp is in a beautiful spot with wonderful views.

Overnight camp.

Meals included: B,L,D

Day 9 Samadeen to Rimbic 2020m

6 hours walking

Another wonderful walk as we pass several villages of different nepali ethnic groups – the Rais, Tamangs and Sherpas.

This is a fascinating day as we are walking through untouched parts of the eastern Himalayas, passing neat hillside villages, where we can see the local lifestyle at close hand.

Terraced fields and villages dot the landscape and smiling faces greet us as we pass through the villages. We descend to Sirikhola for lunch. After lunch we cross the river by a suspension bridge and continue through forests and past

villages to the picturesque village and roadhead at Rimbic (2020m).
Overnight lodge.
Meals included: B,L,D

Day 10 Rimbic to Kalimpong 1250m

5½ hour drive

We take an early breakfast and set off on the 5½ hour drive through tea plantations to Kalimpong. We hope to get to Kalimpong in time for mid-late afternoon. Kalimpong has long been an important market town and a meeting place for traders from Tibet, Bhutan, Nepal and the lowlands of Bengal. The Overnight hotel in Kalimpong.
Meals included: B,L,D

Day 11 Kalimpong sightseeing

Kalimpong enjoys a temperate climate, fine mountain views, gardens, a number of gompas and a busy bazaar which all contribute to make this an attractive place to relax
Overnight hotel in Kalimpong.
Meals included: B,L,D

Day 12 Drive to Bagdogra, fly to Delhi

An early start today for the 2½ hour drive to Bagdogra in time to catch the flight back to Delhi. Transfer to our hotel near the airport.
Overnight hotel near Delhi airport
Meals included: B

Day 13 Depart Delhi

Transfer to Delhi International Airport.
Meals included: B

Important Note: Whilst we expect that the trek will run as per the itinerary, participants should accept that there is a possibility of changes being necessary subject to local conditions.

The price includes:

- Accommodation as outlined in the itinerary – hotel nights are in shared rooms with shower and wc and inclusive of breakfast.
- Camping is on a twin-shared basis in spacious, 3-person tents with mattresses.
- All transport as described in the itinerary.
- Meals as described in the itinerary
- Participation in the trek as per itinerary inclusive of full board, camping equipment (not sleeping bags), services of porters (15 kg load per participant); Sirdar (head guide) and kitchen staff; trekking permit; all park/ camping fees and entrance to monuments
- Sightseeing in Darjeeling with English speaking guides
- Transfers between Delhi airport and hotel accommodation

Not included:

- International flights and airport taxes
- The Delhi – Bagdogra – Delhi flight and airport taxes. These flight prices vary in cost according to availability at the time of booking, so we will quote you for this when you book. The return flight prices are typically from \$200 to \$300 per person. The earlier you book, the cheaper the flights will be.
- Indian Visa (see section on Indian Visas below)
- Lunches and dinners in Delhi – the number of these depends on flight timings
- Travel Insurance
- Additional costs due to changes in the itinerary, for example for reasons such as roadblocks, landslides or finishing the trek early for any reason.
- Tips
- Items of a personal nature such as drinks, laundry, telephone calls and souvenirs

Options:

- **Accommodation** is usually in twin rooms and twin tents with another trekker of the same gender, or with a person you name on your booking form.
- **Single rooms and single tents** are available – please ask us for details.
- **Extra nights** are available in our group hotels – please ask us for details.
- **Sightseeing in Delhi** with English speaking guides
- **Extension trips** can be arranged in Bhutan, India and Nepal. Please see our Himalayan Extensions itinerary for details. Extensions should be arranged to booking international flights.



View from the Singalila Ridge India © Ann Foulkes, trekMountains

Flights:

You are welcome to book your own international flights to and from Delhi for this trip.

We will book the India internal flights for you.

If there is a group of you we may be able to book your international flights for you – please contact us.

No flights should be booked until you have received written confirmation from the trekMountains office that your departure is guaranteed to run.

Indian Visas:

We will send you detailed instructions on how to apply for your Indian Visa and the relevant permit forms on receipt of your booking. All nationalities require a visa for India. You are responsible for obtaining your own visa. Please refer to <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/visa/tvoa.html> and your country's embassy for latest prices and application procedures as they vary from country to country. Please ensure that you leave plenty of time to acquire your visa. Visa requirements are subject to change without notice. Your passport will need to have 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay.

Our pricing policy This trek is advertised based on a 4 person price. It can, however, be run with fewer. If there are less than 4 participants, we will offer you the choice to guarantee the trek at the appropriate price for the number of participants who have booked, and should that number increase we will decrease the final balance that you will owe us accordingly. This means that flights can be arranged at the best possible price without having to wait for more bookings.