

Touch the Wild

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Red Panda – Photographic Expedition

Singalila National Park

Singalila National Park is a reserved forest area located at the Singalila ridge in Darjeeling district. This is a high altitude park spanning between 7,900ft to about 12,000ft covering an area of 78.6 square kms. This is in fact the highest altitude park in the state of West Bengal. It was initially a wild life sanctuary and later made into a national park in 1992. The whole of Singalila range and the national park has long been part of the trekking route to Sandakhphu and Phalut.

Singalila is one of the best places for the Exotic Red Panda, Apart from this other mammals found here are: Himalayan Black bear, Clouded Leopard, Black Panther, Leopard, Leopard Cat, Serow, Barking Deer, Yellow-throated Martin, Wild Boar, Pangolin, Pika and many more.

Singalila is a Birding Paradise. More than 300 species of birds found here. It has a huge list of exotic birds: Blood Pheasant, Satyr Tragopan, Kalij Pheasant, Brown and Fulvous Parrotbills, Rufous-vented Tit, and Old World babblers like the Fire-tailed Myzornis and the Golden-breasted Fulvetta, Rosefinchs, bull finches, Wren Babblers, Laughingthrushes, Nuthatches, Treecreepers, Yahunas, Minivets, Partridges and many more.

One of the best places to see sunrise and sunsets, Sandakhphu top is the highest peak in West Bengal and offers the best view of Kangchenjunga also known as "Sleeping Buddha" or Sleeping Shiva".

I will be leading a small group tour of 4 photographers for a one off expedition starting on 22nd October. The trip will be for 7 nights and 8 days.

The Singalila Experience

The whole Singalila tour will be an experience of a life time. Four of the five highest peaks in the world can be seen from this park which are Mount Everest, Kangchenjunga, Lhotse and Makalu. And seeing a Red Panda in a place like this is just mind-blowing, A dream for any photographer. We will have a team of porters to help us with our equipment during trekking. Not sure if you can trek? Don't worry, there will be safari cars going with us. You can hop on any time you want. The safari cars used here are the historic Land Rovers. These cars are alive only here in the world, a heritage indeed.

We will be staying in pristine locations, relishing magical sunrise / sunsets. The location being remote, accommodation and facilities will be basic, clean and hygienic.

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Tour Itinerary

Day 1

Pick up will be from Bagdogra Airport at 1:30pm and transfer to Manebhanjan. We will have lunch enroute. Once at Manebhanjan we will stop for evening tea and then will meet the porters, landrovers and all the relevant documents and then make our way to Base Camp at Kaikata. We will check in to the resort and spend the evening relaxing.

Day 2 to 7

The next 6 days will consist of daily trekking for the red pandas, combined with bird photography (including our own hide set up at the resort). Our Trekking Team will go to different known Red Panda territories daily and will notify us of any sightings. If anything is seen we will go to the locations and trek. We will also do our own daily treks to search different areas. Every night we will return to the resort for dinner and overnight.

Day 8:

Check out from the resort after breakfast around 8am. We will reach Bagdogra Airport by 2pm.

Resort & Facilities:

The Habre's Nest Resort, Kaiakata

- Double Bedded Rooms with Attached Western Toilets & Balcony
- Every Balcony is a Sunset Point.
- Room Heater.
- Running Water.
- Hot Water.
- Room Service.
- Mini Bar cum sitting area with a fire place.
- Power supply (Generator) from 5pm to 8am.
- Perfect Blend of Local Food with a western touch.
- Toiletries.
- In house Bird Studio with a hide.

Tour Dates (8 Days & 7 Nights): 22/10/2016 – 29/10/2016

Group Size: 4 Guest

Additional Naturalist & Photography Escort: Shivang Mehta & Shantanu Prasad

The cost of the above safari is **£2500** per person for all details as described above or **£3000** per person if the Delhi to Bagdogra internal flight and accommodation in Delhi before and after the safari is required.

To book a place on this trip we will require an £800 deposit at time of booking. Places are limited and will fill up extremely quickly.

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Cost Includes:

- * Pick up & Drop from Bagdogra
- * Your stay & food as mentioned above.
- * Naturalist service.
- * Porters & Safari Landrover Cost.
- * Permit cost.
- * Still camera permits.
- * Bottled Water.
- * Red Panda Tracking.
- * Nepal Permission.

Cost Excludes:

- * Any other food or beverages other than mentioned above.
- * Laundry service.
- * Alcohol.
- * Anything not mentioned above.

PLEASE NOTE: We may change the above plan according to the sighting but services will remain of the same quality only the places of stay may change. We may also go to adjacent part of Nepal for Red Panda with proper permission.

NEPAL VISA: For every Foreign guest the Nepal Visa is must. The Required details for the visa application is as follows,

- Visa Type: Online
- Visa application Dates: 2 days before the trip starts, guest needs to apply online.
- Entry point to Nepal: KAKARBHITTA, JHAPA
- Address in Nepal: The Habre's Nest Resort, Kaiakata, Ilam District, Nepal.