



SINGALILA RIDGE TREK FROM SANDKPUR AND KANGCHENDZONGA TREK

- Day 1** Fly from London to Calcutta.
- Day 2** Day in Calcutta
- Day 3** Fly from Calcutta to Bagdogra. Drive to Darjeeling possibly taking the train for some of the route. Overnight at Hotel TBA.
- Day 4** Day free to relax in Darjeeling. Visit the orchid farm and the Tibetan refugees self help centre. Tiger Hill for spectacular views of Kanchenjunga. Visit the snow leopard breeding programme. Best time for viewing them in the afternoon and during the breeding season visits are not allowed. Trek briefing.
- Day 5** Commence Singalila ridge trek. We will drive from Darjeeling to Manobhanjang and trek up to Tonglu. Trekking distance 14 km taking about 5 hours. First part of trek is steep and then the trail evens out. Overnight in trekkers hut at 3070 metres.
- Day 6** Singalila ridge trek. Trek from Tanglu to Sandkpuy altitude 3636m. This is about 21 km. Very interesting foliage along the route which starts off as fairly even terrain. There is quite a steep section at the end of the day's trek up to trekkers' lodge at Sandakpu.
- Day 7** Sandkpu to Molie (altitude 3000 m). This is about 5 hours trekking, about 19 km distance. The view of the mountains opens out here with spectacular effect. Overnight under canvas.
- Day 8** Molie to Gorkey (altitude 2000m). This is an easier trekking day as it is mostly down hill and 9 km in length. There is another option for the more energetic, which is to walk up to Phalut at 3600m and which commands great views before descending to Gorkey where there is a trekker's hut.
- Day 9** End of Singalila ridge trek – Gorkey to Yaksom by jeep. En route visit Khichephri Lake, beautifully located in a depression surrounded by forest, the lake is considered sacred by the Sikkimese. Overnight under canvas. This is a big jeep driving day, but no walking. Overnight in tents or in trekker's huts.
- Day 10** Dzongri trek begins: Yaksom – Tshoka. This is an 18km trek and should take about 7 hours walking including a stop for lunch. The trek begins by crossing the cultivated mountainside until we reach the deep forest cover undulating past waterfalls and crossing over small bridge before arriving at the Parekh Chu. The forest here consists of oak, alder, walnut and cedar. There is then quite a steep climb for 2-3 miles to the forest house at Bakhim. The forest opens out here and we will climb about 1000 feet further up to the more favourably located campsite at Tsoka (altitude 3048m).

- Day 11** Full day in Tshoka for acclimatisation. Tshoka consists of about 15 or so wooden houses perched on the forested hillside. It is populated by Yak herders. There is a small gumpa strewn with Tibetan Buddhist prayer flags. It is a good idea to get used to the altitude today, but there will be a short trek organised as well.
- Day 12** Tshoka-Zamligaon-Tshoka. Days trek up to some spectacular viewpoints looking over Kangchedzonga to the north-west and back down the valley to Yaksom and in the distance Darjeeling can be seen.
- Day 13** Tshoka – Dzongri (4200m). The trek here is about 16km long and takes 5-6 hours. There is a wooden plank path which leads through ‘a wonderland of tangled rhododendron branches and misshapen firs draped in wisps of Spanish moss.’ We make our lunch stop at Phedang Meadows and will then descend slightly to Dzongri.
- Day 14** Dzongri-Thangsing (3990m). Early risers can get up before dawn and climb Dzongri peak to see sunrise over Mounts Padim, Kabur, Tinchengkhang Kabru and the rest of the Kangchendzonga range. The days trek is of about 14km and should take around four hours to complete. The trail descends in this the only major elevation loss of the whole trek into a rhododendron forest, crossing a bridge and continuing through woods to the trekkers hut at the end of a glacial valley. This where we will camp.
- Day 15** Thangsing – Samithi Pokhri (Samiti Lake – 4500m). Today’s trek is relatively short, 10km, 4 hours, but involves a reasonably steep ascent. The first half is a gradual climb alongside a stream before the trail begins to follow the lateral moraine of a giant glacier. It then crosses high grasslands strewn with lichen covered boulders. The campsite is beside emerald coloured Lake Samiti.
- Day 16** Samithi Pokhri – Gocha la - Thangsing.
This is the climax of the trek ascending to the pass and then returning to Thangsing. It is also the most difficult day of the whole trek. The walk up to the pass takes about 4 hours and the descent back to Thangsing about the same amount of time.
Early morning we will walk up to the Gocha La pass (4943m).
The trail follows an ascent along a gully and will entail some difficult boulder strewn terrain, passing glacial lakes en route to the pass. Kangchedzonga South face is only 8 miles from here – one is truly in the shadow of the mighty mountain. To the left glaciers tumble off the Kumbro Dome. To the south is the silhouette of Mount Pandim (6695m) Directly above the pass is the imposing Gocha Peak. Gocha literally means *padlock* peak and is believed to be the gateway to a legendary new world hidden somewhere in the Himalayas by Guru Padmesambawa. This new world is a place where happiness and serenity exists, people live in peace and harmony, and sickness, old age and death are unknown.
After lunch we will descend to Thangsing where we will camp.
- Day 17** Thangsing – Tshoka. Retracing our route but with a much easier trail due to our ascent.
- Day 18** Tshoka – Yaksom. There will be an opportunity to visit Dubde, the oldest monastery in Sikkim. Dubde was also the residence of Gyalwa Lachen Chenpo, the monk who introduced Buddhism to Sikkim in 1614 AD. Overnight in tent.
- Day 19** Extra day. There will be the possibility to visit the famous Pemayangtse monastery.
- Day 20** Yaksom – Gangtok by jeep. En route visit Tashiding monastery. Overnight at hotel in Gangtok.
- Day 21** Morning sightseeing in Gangtok. Overnight Kalimpong. Optional white water rafting day on the Teesta river.
- Day 22** Kalimpong – Bagdogra by road and fly to Calcutta.

Day 23 **Fly back to the UK.**