

Trip Details

Sunday 15 to 29 Nov 2026

How to get to the trip

Fly into any major Indian city, though Kolkata (Calcutta) is the closest to our area, stay in an airport hotel if you don't want the city experience. The next day fly to Bagdogra.

Day 1

You'll be met at Bagdogra Airport with transport to take you 10 minutes to our hotel. We'll meet at 6pm for welcome drinks, an intro session and dinner. The temperature will be around 13-20C.

Day 2

Today you'll ride the historic Darjeeling Himalaya Railway from New Jalpaiguri to Kurseong. Our train will climb up to the hill town of Kurseong, passing through villages on the way - a beautiful introduction to the Himalayan foothills. Here we'll stay in an historic colonial hotel for 4 nights.

Days 3 - 5

Each day we'll enjoy singing classes with Kavisha accompanied by 1-2 hour local walks, a wander through the extensive local market, a visit to a monastery and a tea plantation where we'll taste all the teas and have lunch.

Day 6

A 3hr drive to Chitrey in the Singalila National Park where we'll have lunch in a homestay, then one of my favourite 2 hour walks to Megma where we'll then drive 15 mins up to Tonglu where we'll spend 2 nights.

Day 7

From Tonglu we'll experience sunrise over the Himalayas with later a 2 hour return walk to Tumling where we'll have a singing class and lunch. Walks around Tonglu can be extended for the keen.

Day 8 & 9

We now walk and drive to our homestay in Sandakphu, a welcoming village with little Tea Houses and a truly spectacular 180 degree view of the Himalaya range including Everest. Here we'll see an extensive dawn view over the Himalayas that you will NEVER forget, enjoy a singing class and jam session one night with some locals, a 1 - 4 hour walk along part of the Singalla Ridge trek and time to just hang at a cafe.

Jo Cresswell
music art events

www.jocresswell.com
e: jo@jocresswell.com
m: 0420 769 449



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Day 10

The opportunity, for some, of a 1 hour spectacular but steep walk down from Sandakphu, then a drive to Tonglu where we'll walk 2 hours down to Dhotrey for lunch. A 1.5 hour drive to Rimbick, where we'll wander through the bazaar, then up to our accommodation in a Tibetan Buddhist monastery and adjacent homestay. Here we'll be greeted by our friend Lama Kunsang and his delightful French wife Petunia.

Days 11 & 12

These 2 days will include meditations and singing in the monastery and its beautiful community hall, a 2 hour forest walk and lunch at a trekkers Tea House. Keener walkers have the option to add a further 2 hour walk.

Days 13 & 14

We'll drive 4 hours to our homestay in Darjeeling looking out over the tea gardens. We'll do some local walks, pull together all the singing repertoire we've learnt, enjoy a Nepali singing concert, and visit the Tibetan Refugee Centre with it's museum, weaving studio and shop OR the Himalayan Zoo & Mountaineering Institute.

Day 15

This is your departure day where you may choose a transfer to Bagdogra airport to leave OR you're welcome to book more nights at a beautiful colonial hotel in the top of Darjeeling handy to markets, shopping, and a walk around Observatory Hill with its sensational views of the Himalaya. . .

GENERAL INFORMATION

Temperature

On average we'll have lows to 6C and highs to 19C, however at Megma/Tonglu lows could be to 1-2C and highs of 15/16C. I'll provide a packing list to help judge your clothing.

Accommodation

1 night in an International hotel and 4 nights in comfortable colonial hotels. In these hotels you'll have the choice of single rooms. We have 9 nights where we will enjoy the traditional lifestyles of the mountain villages. Our hosts will be local families who offer comfortable accommodation with basic facilities. Depending on where we are in the tour you may have a twin/double room or be sharing a 4 bed room - all with ensuites. The highlight of our stay will be our warm interaction with our hosts and their simple way of life.

Meals

Our hotel accommodation offers a choice of Indian or western menus. They are used to dealing with preferences/allergies so let Jo know if you have particular needs. During our 9 days out in the Himalayas, our cooks are also able to manage food issues though the cooking will be more simple and traditional.

Group Size

We'll have small groups of 12-15 people.

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Walking
Days will have walks of 1 - 2 hours with many opportunities to extend by another 2 hours. For the walks you will only be carrying a day pack. Luggage is transported for you.

Walk Fitness
We are in the lower Himalayas so you will need to be comfortable that at times we are walking up and down hills, and on rougher surfaces. Expect compacted dirt in the form of goat tracks and 4 wheel drive tracks. Walks will be 3 -8 kms to an altitude of 2,800metres (9,000ft).

Vaccinations
Talk to your Doctor about these. Allow for vaccinations to happen 6 weeks before arrival in India.

Visa
You'll need a visa. It's easy to do electronically 30 days before travel or you can apply by snail mail.

Price
The price for the trip is $5,000 for a person sharing a twin/double room. Singles are available for 5 nights of the trip and attract a further $500.

REGISTER ONLINE

https://jocresswell.com/registration-overseas-trips

Cancellation Conditions
If you must cancel your reservation the following criteria apply:

46-60 days 50% retained by us
32-45 days 75% retained by us
31 days or less no refund (Your travel insurance should cover this)

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