

Birdwatching & Wildlife: Shingba Rhododendron Sanctuary Tour

Prepared by TourGrids



Destination
Sikkim



Duration
4 Nights 5 Days



Starting from
Rs. 13,600 / person

ITINERARY ROUTE

↖ **Gangtok · 2N**

↖ **Lachung · 2N**

<https://tourgrids.com/packages/sikkim/sikkim-4-nights-5-days-package-1109>

Overview

Birdwatching & Wildlife: Shingba Rhododendron Sanctuary Tour – a curated 4 nights / 5 days Sikkim tour package ideal for families and nature enthusiasts. Explore the spectacular Shingba Rhododendron Sanctuary, enjoy guided birdwatching in high-altitude forests, and witness the dazzling rhododendron blooms and Himalayan vistas. This Sikkim Family tour package balances gentle walks, wildlife viewing, and cultural stops across Gangtok and Lachung, designed as a memorable Sikkim Family Retreat package (4 nights / 5 days). Best time for rhododendron blooms and birdwatching: mid-April to May and September to October.

✓ **What's Included**

- ✓ Accommodation for 4 nights (2 nights in Gangtok, 2 nights in Lachung) on twin/double sharing basis.
- ✓ Daily breakfast and 2 picnic/lunches on field days.
- ✓ All transfers and sightseeing by private vehicle (as per itinerary).
- ✓ Local naturalist guide and birdwatching expert during sanctuary visits.
- ✓ Permits for North Sikkim (where applicable) and park/entrance fees.
- ✓ Welcome briefing, species checklist and basic pair of binoculars per family (shared).
- ✓ All applicable hotel taxes.

✗ **Not Included**

- ✗ Airfare / train fare to Bagdogra / NJP.
- ✗ Meals not specified (lunches/dinners unless mentioned).
- ✗ Personal expenses such as tips, laundry, phone calls, drinks.
- ✗ Travel insurance, emergency evacuation, or medical expenses.
- ✗ Portable oxygen, specialized high-altitude gear (available on request at extra cost).
- ✗ Any entry fees not listed, camera fees, or guide fees beyond itinerary.
- ✗ Any expenses arising due to flight/train delays, weather or other force majeure.

Day-by-Day Itinerary

Day

1

Arrival, Transfer to Gangtok & Evening Orientation

Arrive at Bagdogra Airport / New Jalpaiguri (NJP) and drive to Gangtok (approx. 4–5 hours). Check into the hotel and rest. In the late afternoon take a gentle orientation walk on MG Road, visit the local market, and enjoy a welcome briefing with your naturalist guide about birdwatching etiquette and the Shingba Rhododendron Sanctuary plan. Altitude is moderate; keep hydrated and avoid strenuous activity on arrival.

Day

2

Scenic Drive to Lachung with En-route Stops

Depart early for Lachung in North Sikkim. En route enjoy panoramic views and photo stops — Tashi Viewpoint, Seven Sisters Falls, Bara Pathar viewpoints and the cascading rivers. Check into your mountain lodge in Lachung and attend a short briefing with the local guide about the next day's birdwatching trek in the sanctuary. Carry a light daypack, binoculars, layered clothing and sunscreen.

Day

3

Full Day: Shingba Rhododendron Sanctuary & Yumthang Valley

Spend the day exploring the Shingba Rhododendron Sanctuary and nearby Yumthang Valley — one of the best high-altitude birdwatching and rhododendron habitats in Sikkim. Guided walks on well-laid trails focus on spotting species such as Himalayan Monal, Blood Pheasant, Satyr Tragopan, Himalayan Griffon, and many warblers and finches. Picnic lunch in the valley. Optional short drive to Thangu (seasonal) to witness alpine meadows. Return to Lachung in the evening. Expect cooler temperatures; layered warm clothing and sturdy walking shoes recommended.

Day

4

More Birdwatching or Local Village Walks, Return to Gangtok

Morning birdwatching session near Lachung focusing on early-active species; visit local Lachung village, meet community members to learn about mountain livelihoods and conservation. After lunch, drive back to Gangtok with scenic stops and photo opportunities. Evening free for personal exploration or optional spa/relaxation at the hotel. The morning is the best time for bird activity — be ready before sunrise.

Day

5

Departure: Transfer to Bagdogra / NJP

After breakfast, check out and transfer to Bagdogra Airport / NJP Railway Station for your onward journey. En route stop at Rumtek Monastery or Enchey Monastery (time permitting) for a cultural photo stop and a final view of the hills. Trip concludes with memories and a handover of a quick species checklist from your guide. Allow sufficient travel buffer for flights/trains; road and weather conditions in the mountains can affect timings.

🔍 Frequently Asked Questions

🔍 What is the best time to visit Sikkim?

The prime seasons are March–June and October–November. Spring (March–June) offers clear mountain views, blooming rhododendrons, and pleasant weather with temperatures around 15–22°C in Gangtok. This is peak season for trekking and visiting high-altitude lakes. Autumn (October–November) provides crisp, clear skies perfect for photography and mountain views. Winter (December–February) brings snow to high passes like Tsomgo Lake and Nathula, with possible road closures. Monsoon (June–September) sees heavy rainfall and frequent landslides that can disrupt travel on NH-10. For rhododendron blooms, visit Yumthang Valley between late February and mid-June. Each season has its charm, but spring and autumn offer the most reliable weather and accessibility.

🔍 How do I reach Sikkim from major Indian cities?

The most reliable route is flying to Bagdogra Airport (IXB) in Siliguri, West Bengal, then driving 4–5 hours to Gangtok via NH-10. Major airlines connect Bagdogra to Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, and other cities. By train, New Jalpaiguri (NJP) is the nearest major railhead, about 120km from Gangtok. From NJP/Siliguri, take shared jeeps or hire taxis for the scenic mountain drive through Sevoke, Teesta Bazar, Melli, and Rangpo. Pakyong Airport in Sikkim exists but currently has no scheduled commercial flights as of 2025—always verify before planning. The under-construction Sivok–Rangpo railway may bring rail connectivity to Sikkim by 2027. Road travel during monsoon may face landslide delays.

🔍 Do I need special permits to visit Sikkim?

Indian citizens need permits for certain areas: Nathula Pass, Tsomgo Lake, North Sikkim (Lachen/Lachung), and the Old Silk Route. These can be arranged through registered tour operators 24–48 hours in advance. Bring 2 passport photos and valid ID (Voter ID, Passport, or Driving License—Aadhaar often not accepted). Foreign nationals require a Protected Area Permit to enter Sikkim and can only visit designated areas like Tsomgo Lake, Gangtok, Pelling, and Yuksom. Foreigners cannot visit Gurudongmar Lake, Zuluk, or Nathula Pass. Children under 18 need birth certificates. Permits may be suspended during bad weather or security concerns. Always carry multiple ID copies and extra photos.

❓ **What are the local transportation options within Sikkim?**

Shared jeeps are the backbone of Sikkim transport, connecting all major towns and tourist spots. They're affordable and frequent on popular routes. Local taxis are available for sightseeing and can be hired for full days. Sikkim Nationalised Transport (SNT) runs intercity buses on main routes, though services are limited compared to jeeps. The Gangtok Ropeway offers scenic city views connecting Deorali to Tashiling. Self-driving is possible but challenging due to mountain roads, weather conditions, and permit requirements—hired vehicles with local drivers are more practical. Most hotels can arrange transportation. For North Sikkim trips, tour operators provide vehicles as individual permits and local knowledge are essential. Book transport in advance during peak seasons.

❓ **Where should I stay in Sikkim and what accommodation options are available?**

Gangtok is the main base with options from budget guesthouses to luxury resorts like MAYFAIR Spa Resort & Casino and heritage properties like The Elgin Nor-Khill. MG Marg area offers convenient access to restaurants and shopping. For West Sikkim, stay in Pelling near Pemayangtse Monastery—The Elgin Mount Pandim offers heritage charm with mountain views. North Sikkim requires overnight stays in Lachen (for Gurudongmar Lake) or Lachung (for Yumthang Valley)—try Apple Orchard Resort or Yarlam Resort. Yuksom offers trekking base camps and eco-lodges. Ravangla and Namchi have emerging hotel scenes. Book well in advance for peak season (March–June). Many properties offer package deals including meals and local sightseeing. Homestays in villages like Dzongu provide authentic cultural experiences.

❓ **What are the must-visit attractions in Sikkim?**

Tsomgo Lake, a sacred glacial lake at 3,753m that freezes in winter, is accessible from Gangtok. Nathula Pass on the Indo-China border offers historical significance (Indians only). Yumthang Valley, the 'Valley of Flowers,' showcases alpine meadows and rhododendrons. Pelling features the Chenrezig Skywalk (India's first glass skywalk) and Pemayangtse Monastery. Rumtek Monastery is Sikkim's largest gumpa with stunning architecture. Khecheopalri Lake is considered wish-fulfilling by locals. Buddha Park in Ravangla houses a 130-ft Buddha statue. Gurudongmar Lake at 5,183m is among the world's highest lakes (Indians only). Khangchendzonga National Park, a UNESCO site, offers incredible biodiversity and trekking. Temi Tea Garden provides organic tea experiences. Each destination offers unique cultural and natural experiences.

🔗 What local food and cuisine should I try in Sikkim?

Sikkim's cuisine blends Nepali, Tibetan (Bhutia), and Lepcha influences. Must-try dishes include momos (steamed dumplings), thukpa (noodle soup), and sha phaley (Tibetan meat pasties). Try phagshapa (pork with radish and dried chilies), gundruk soup (fermented leafy greens), and kinema curry (fermented soybeans). Ningro with churpi (fiddlehead ferns with local cheese) represents indigenous flavors. Sel roti is a traditional ring-shaped bread. Tongba, a warm millet-based alcoholic beverage, is perfect for cold evenings. Don't miss Temi tea, grown in Sikkim's only tea estate. Visit Taste of Tibet on MG Marg for authentic momos, 9INE Native Cuisine for traditional Sikkimese plates, and local markets for fresh churpi cheese and organic produce.

★ Traveller Reviews



Vivek Tiwari

★★★★★ 5/5

One of the Best Trips Ever

I can say this was one of the best trips ever. The diverse landscape of Sikkim was incredible!



Meenal Joshi

★★★★☆ 4/5

A Colorful Cultural Tour

Sikkim offers a colorful cultural experience. Glad we opted for this tour, our lives are richer for it!



Prakash Oza

★★★★★ 5/5

Discovering Nature's Bounty

This tour was a wonderful discovery of nature's bounty in Sikkim. Unforgettable trips to lakes and mountains!



Kiran Gill

★★★★★ 5/5

A Suitable Escape for Everyone

Whether you seek adventure or relaxation, Sikkim has it all. Our tour was filled with both!



Deepak Agarwal

★★★★☆ 4/5

Amazing Weather & Scenery

The weather was perfect during our visit to Sikkim, enhancing the beautiful scenery. The whole tour was very enjoyable!

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