

# Lakes & Legends: Gurudongmar, Tso Lhamo & Local Folklore Tour

Prepared by TourGrids



Destination  
**Sikkim**



Duration  
**7 Nights 8 Days**



Starting from  
**Rs. 42,750 / person**

## ITINERARY ROUTE

↗ **Gangtok · 2N**

↗ **Lachen · 2N**

↗ **Lachung · 3N**

<https://tourgrids.com/packages/sikkim/sikkim-7-nights-8-days-package-1130>

## Overview

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Lakes & Legends: Gurudongmar, Tso Lhamo & Local Folklore Tour — a carefully curated 7 nights / 8 days Sikkim tour package that blends high-altitude pilgrimage lakes, sacred monasteries and living local folklore. This Sikkim Pilgrimage tour package visits the iconic Gurudongmar Lake and the remote Tso Lhamo (Thangu) while offering cultural experiences in Gangtok, Lachen and Lachung. Ideal for travelers seeking spiritual landscapes and authentic Himalayan village life.

### Highlights:

- Gurudongmar Lake: One of the highest sacred lakes in Sikkim
- Tso Lhamo (Thangu): Remote high-altitude lake with panoramic vistas
- Yumthang Valley & Zero Point: Rhododendron meadows and snow fields
- Rumtek Monastery & Enchey Monastery: Key Buddhist pilgrimage sites in Gangtok
- Local folklore experiences: Village visits, folk music, and traditional Sikkimese cuisine

This package is designed as a pilgrimage-style high-altitude itinerary. Guests should be prepared for early starts, long drives, and altitude changes. Acclimatization, medical clearance for high altitude, and warm clothing are recommended.

### ✓ What's Included

- ✓ Accommodation in standard / deluxe hotels and mountain guesthouses (7 nights).
- ✓ Daily breakfasts, 4 dinners (as per program).
- ✓ All transfers and sightseeing by private vehicle (as per itinerary).
- ✓ Experienced local guide for North Sikkim excursions and folklore sessions.
- ✓ Inner Line Permits / Protected Area Permits for North Sikkim (Gurudongmar & Tso Lhamo) — subject to Govt. rules and ID checks.
- ✓ All road taxes, parking and toll charges.
- ✓ Emergency oxygen cylinder and basic first-aid kit on vehicles.
- ✓ Cultural interaction sessions and village visits as specified.

### ✗ Not Included

- ✗ Airfare / train tickets to Bagdogra / NJP and return.
- ✗ Travel insurance and personal medical expenses.
- ✗ Meals not mentioned in inclusions, alcoholic drinks and bottled drinks.
- ✗ Personal expenses, laundry, phone calls and tips to driver/guide.
- ✗ Any extra accommodation, sightseeing or transport due to flight delays, natural calamities, strikes or roadblocks.
- ✗ Entry fees for special photography permits or additional camera fees (if applicable).
- ✗ Any cost arising from medical evacuation or specialized treatment.
- ✗ Items of personal nature and optional activities not mentioned in itinerary.

## Day-by-Day Itinerary

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Day

1

### **Arrival, Transfer to Gangtok & Orientation**

Arrive at Bagdogra Airport / NJP Railway Station and drive to Gangtok (approx. 4–5 hrs). Evening walk on MG Marg to soak in local life, browse handicraft shops and sample Sikkimese snacks. Short orientation by the guide covering permits, altitude precautions and the flow of the pilgrimage days ahead. Rest early to acclimatize.

Day

2

### **Gangtok: Monasteries, Viewpoints & Local Culture**

Full day of sightseeing in and around Gangtok. Visit Rumtek Monastery, the spiritual seat of the Karmapa; Do Drul Chorten & Namgyal Institute of Tibetology for Buddhist art and scriptures; Hanuman Tok and Tashi Viewpoint for sweeping panoramas. Evening is reserved for a folk-culture session with a local artist group – songs, tales and cuisine sampling. Carry a light jacket for early morning views.

Day

3

### **Drive to Lachen via Mangan – Scenic River Valleys**

After breakfast, drive northwards through terraced valleys and pine forests to Lachen, the gateway to North Sikkim (approx. 6–7 hrs). En route, brief photo stops at river confluences and ridge viewpoints. Check into the guesthouse/hotel and attend a short briefing about the Gurudongmar and Tso Lhamo excursions. Hydrate well and avoid heavy meals at night.

Day

4

### **Gurudongmar Lake Excursion – Sacred High-Altitude Visit**

An early-morning drive to the legendary Gurudongmar Lake (alt. ~5,430 m). Witness the ethereal turquoise waters framed by snow-capped peaks – a revered pilgrimage site for Sikhs, Buddhists and Hindus. Spend time absorbing the silence, taking photographs and offering respects. Return to Lachen in the afternoon. This day involves high-altitude exposure; follow guide instructions and limit physical exertion.

Day

5

### **Lachen to Lachung via Thangu & Tso Lhamo (En Route Visit)**

Drive from Lachen towards Thangu for a controlled stop and then an escorted visit to Tso Lhamo area (subject to permits and road conditions). Enjoy stark, high-altitude landscapes and panoramic views. Continue to Lachung in the late afternoon. Evening cultural exchange with Lachung villagers – learn local folktales and traditional practices. Permit-dependent day; the itinerary may be adjusted due to weather or permit windows.

Day

6

### **Yumthang Valley & Zero Point — Meadows and Snow Fields**

Excursion to Yumthang Valley (the Valley of Flowers) and onward to Zero Point / nearby snowfields (season and road conditions permitting). Explore rhododendron forests, alpine meadows and pastoral life. Return to Lachung for a folk music evening where local performers share songs, dances and legends of the mountains. Weather and road conditions can affect Zero Point access.

Day

7

### **Lachung Village Visit, Folklore Workshop & Return to Gangtok**

Morning dedicated to an immersive village experience — meet elder storytellers, observe traditional weaving and sample home-cooked Sikkimese dishes. After lunch, depart for Gangtok with scenic stops en route. Evening at leisure in Gangtok for last-minute shopping and a relaxed farewell dinner. Keep cameras ready for landscape vistas during the drive.

Day

8

### **Departure**

After breakfast, transfer to Bagdogra Airport / NJP Railway Station as per your departure schedule. End of the Lakes & Legends pilgrimage. Carry forward memories and collected stories; consider travel insurance for mountain trips.

## **? Frequently Asked Questions**

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### **? 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.

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## ❓ **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.

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## ❓ **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.

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## ❓ **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.

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## ❓ **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.

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## ❓ **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 gompa 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.

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## ❓ **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.

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## ★ **Traveller Reviews**

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**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!

## ⚡ Why Choose TourGrids?

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