

HIMALAYAN VALES AND DESERTS, HIMACHAL PRADESH

TRIP 1: JUN 29- JUL 09, 2014

TRIP 2: OCT 2-12, 2013

10 NIGHTS 11DAYS



Let Banjara lead you into a world full of mysteries and unknown places where time has stood still for thousands of years untouched by man. Your journey begins from where the story of apple in India begins. Thanedar (ahead of Shimla) is a lovely little hamlet where Mr. Stokes brought first apple sapling into India from Philadelphia. This is your first destination from where you will be entering into the unknown world free from all the daily routine of our city life. Explore the forests around Thanedar. From here, we go on to the amazing valley in Sangla where we get some of the most beautiful apples in the country and probably the world. Sangla valley opens for 6-7 months before going into hibernation for the winter beneath layers of snow. The place boasts some of the most beautiful flora and fauna and a simply breathtaking setting beside the Baspa River and with views of towering snow capped mountains.

Revel in the lush green beauty of the valley before moving onto the barren landscape of Spiti known as a forbidden country a few years back. Visit the 1008 years old monastery in Tabo or drive to the highest village Gete near Kaza or drive to the serene lake of Chandratat that changes its colours with changing sun position during the day. Experience the feeling of being on top of the world, literally, before descending to Manali for a slice of civilization albeit very briefly. We climb once again toward Jalori pass and stay at Sojha to unwind in the vicinity of Great Himalayan National Park before getting ready to face the world back home.

Dates:	Trip 1: Jun 29- Jul 09, 2014 Trip 2: Oct 2-12, 2014
Start from:	Delhi/ Chandigarh
End at:	Chandigarh/ Delhi
Distance covered:	1800 kms ex- Delhi
Maximum altitude reached:	Kunzum La (4551M)
Best time to Visit:	Mid- June to Mid- October
Meals:	Lunch on day 1 to day 11
Min/ Max group size:	8- 20
Permits:	Foreigners require permit for crossing over to Tabo
Booking deadline:	1 month prior to departure

ITINERARY:

Day 01: Chandigarh- Thanedar- 195 kms/ 6-7 hrs

Meet at Chandigarh railway station at 1130 hrs. Drive to Thanedar via Barog, Shimla and Narkanda. Reach Thanedar in the evening. Depending on your travel time, you will be able to see either apple blossoms or apples. Evening around bonfire. Night stay in Banjara Retreat.

Day 02: Thanedar – Sangla- 165 kms/ 6 hrs

Visit Hatu peak early in the morning. The peak offers excellent views of Shrikhand Mahadev peaks. Back to Thanedar for breakfast, Leave for Sangla around mid-morning. We drive down towards Sutlej River. We drive along the river till Karcham from where once again, we start climbing up the mountains to reach Sangla. Reach Banjara camps situated ahead of Sangla. Evening around a bonfire. Overnight stay at the camp.

Day 03: Sangla Visit Chitkul (3,450M) - 20kms

A day visit to the Chitkul village. This is the last village on the old Indo-Tibetan trade route. From here, we can hike up to Nagasthi, the last border outpost that civilians are allowed to. It is a lovely 2.5 kms walk along a stream. Lunch along the glacier fed mountain stream. Drive back to Camp in the afternoon. Rest of the day at leisure. You could also try your hand at rappelling, rock climbing or river crossing. Evening around a bonfire. Night stay in tents.

Day 04: Sangla-Hike to Rakcham

Today, we go for the signature walk of the valley. Drive to Rakcham village where we cross the river and begin our hike back to the camp. This is a 6-7 kms long hike through thick forests, open skies, streams and walk by the river. Reach back early afternoon. Lunch at camp. Rest after lunch else, try your hand at Rock climbing, rappelling or river crossing. You could also go for a short walk in the surrounding hills. Night stay at Banjara camp and Retreat.

Day 05: Sangla – Tabo – 200 km / 10 hrs

Today, we leave behind verdant, forest clad mountains as we go over the tree line towards the Spiti region. Stop briefly at Rekonig to enjoy the fantastic views of Kinner Kailash peak. After driving for about 5 hrs on NH 22, just short of Yangthang, we take a detour, to visit the picturesque Nako Lake and have a picnic lunch by the lakeside. Post-lunch we drive on through breath taking, mountain desert terrain to reach Tabo. Night stay in a guest house.

Day 06: Tabo- Rangrik via Dhankar-

Visit Tabo monastery early in the morning. Participating in the morning prayers is an experience in itself. Post-breakfast drive down to Dhankar Monastery. Dhankar, the traditional capital of Spiti, sits pretty on a hilltop. The fort here overlooks the Spiti valley and it was used as a jail in olden days. Today, more than 160 lamas reside here. A statue of Dhyana Buddha where four complete figures of Buddha sit back to back is the main attraction of this more than seven-century old monastery. Move on to visit the glorious Tabo Gumpa; reputed to be the oldest (an inscription on a wall here indicates, it was founded in AD 996) continuously functioning Buddhist monastery in India and the Himalayas, with its original decoration and iconographic program intact.

Carry on to Rangrik we stay for the night.

Day 07: Rangrik- Ki Gumpa – Kibber – Gete – Rangrik

After breakfast, visit Ki monastery and Kibber village. Ki gumpa is a Gelugpa sect monastery. Its hilltop position points to a post-thirteenth century construction. The three storied structure consists largely of storage rooms at the bottom level, while the middle floor houses the Dukhang- the assembly hall- and the uppermost floor has another temple and the head Lama's quarters, on one side of an open terrace. The greatest wealth of Ki Gumpa lies in its collection of 'Thangkas' salvaged with difficulty from the devastating raids of the Dogars and the Sikhs in the 19th century.

From here a scenic drive takes you into the pasture country of Kibber. The pastures are spread over hundreds of square kilometers. Kibber is small village and is the take off point for the popular trek to Tso Moriri in Ladakh. Further up six kilometers from Kibber, we drive up to a still smaller village of Gete. Consisting of just six houses, it boasts of being the highest village in Asia connected by road. Drive back to the retreat for a late lunch and spend rest of the day at leisure.

Day 08: Kaza- Chandratal- Manali- 8-9 hrs drive and 2 hrs hike

Leave early today and drive towards Chandratal via Kunzum la. From Batal we take a short detour to drive to Chandratal (depending on weather and road conditions). Chandratal or moon lake is a stunningly beautiful lake situated at a height of more than 14000 ft. The lake changes colours according to sunlight/ daylight reflected from lake. Spend some time by the lake and head back. Hike back to the road and drive back to Batal and on to Manali. Reach Manali in the afternoon. Rest of the day at leisure in Manali. Night stay in hotel.

Day 09: Manali- Sojha- 4-5 hrs

A lazy and leisurely morning. After breakfast, we head out to Sojha via Naggar castle. Visit the castle and Roerich's art gallery. Roerich was a famous Russian artist and was married to our very own actress; Devika Rani. Reach Sojha in the evening. Settle in to your rooms and enjoy views of thick forests and snow capped mountains once again. Evening around a bonfire.

Day 10: Sojha

Sojha is another stunningly beautiful hamlet flanked by Oak and Cedar forest. You could choose to relax at retreat, read, go for a short hike to the village else we drive up to Jalori pass (a short 5 km drive) and hike up to Raghupur fort (3 kms). Raghupur fort offers fantastic views of the valley. Hike back in time for lunch. Rest of the afternoon at leisure.

Day 11: Drop at Chandigarh- 8-9 hrs

Cost per person on twin share: INR 54,000/-

Cost includes:

1. Accommodation on twin share with meals (morning tea, breakfast, lunch, evening tea and dinner)
2. Transport from Delhi- Delhi in Innova or similar.
3. Services of a guide for walks as per itinerary.
4. Wall climbing/ River Crossing/ Burma bridge in Sangla.

5. Service of a Banjara escort.
6. Service charges.
7. All applicable taxes.

Cost does not include:

1. Any beverages except those served on buffet table.
2. Any En route/ personal expenses.
3. Any expenses incurred due to factors beyond our control like a natural calamity/ man-made calamity.
4. Any air/rail fares.
5. Bottled mineral water (Aquaguard purified water is served free of cost at all our properties).

TOUR NOTES

Accommodation:

Thanedar:	Banjara Retreat
Sangla:	Banjara Camp
Rangrik:	Grand Dewachen or similar
Manali:	Johnsons hotel or similar
Sojha:	Banjara Retreat

Food & Hygiene:

Food is a mix range from vegetarian/ non- vegetarian meals to good food with a choice of Indian, Continental & Chinese food. All meals are buffet meals. There is no room service.

Fitness:

You should be in decent health if you wish to hike. We advise jogging and breathing exercise. Please note that you will have to climb down about 90 odd steps to reach the retreat.

Tipping & Porterage:

We charge a service charge of 5% for the rooms. Tipping/ service charge is already taken care of in this trip.

Photography:

The retreat is at 7500 ft. and we will travel up to about 15000 ft. If you plan to take photos then please keep sunlight according to this altitude in mind. Please ask your guide before taking photographs inside any temple and if you plan to photograph any locals, please take their permission before doing so. You could charge your camera at the retreat.

Medicine:

There is a doctor in the town. We also keep a first aid kit. It would be anyway a good idea to bring your own basic first aid kit with medicines for motion sickness, nausea, some painkillers etc. Please carry sun block and chapstick. Keep your face, feet and hands well protected. Request your doctor to prescribe effective medicines to cover the following: Fever, Body and joint pains, Cold, Cough, Sore throat, Headache, Acidity, Stomach cramps, Vomiting, Dysentery, Constipation, Diarrhea, Swelling, Muscle Pulls & Sore eyes. We do carry a first aid box though. In case you have any illness of any sort, please do inform us in advance so that we can take necessary precaution. You could also carry vaseline, Band Aid, Cotton, Badge roll, Dettol, Mouth freshener, Nose inhaler, Cough drops, Lip balm, Vicks, Elastoplasts, Adhesive tape, 4" crepe bandage.

List of things to bring:

1. Duffel bag (avoid suitcases if you can)
2. A small day backpack to carry water, food, jacket and camera
3. Hiking shoes- you need good traction in shoes and these should be at least water resistant. Forclaz 500 is a good. Your shoes should be well broken-in and not new. Otherwise, your regular sports shoes will also do.
4. 2 pairs of lowers.
5. 4-5 full sleeves T-shirts
6. A fleece jacket
7. A full sleeve thick jacket
8. Underclothing
9. 1 pairs of thermal inners
10. 2-3 pairs of sports socks. 2 pairs of woolen socks
11. Woolen cap/ balaclava that covers the ears
12. Gloves
13. Sun glasses
14. Lip balm
15. Cold cream and sun screen lotion (SPF 40+).
16. Water bottle.
17. Flash light
18. Personal toilet kit.
19. Personal medicine
20. Small repair kit consisting of safety pins, needle, thread and string.
21. Camera, memory-cards, batteries etc (carry enough spare batteries. Electricity is not available on the slopes.

PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU MAY NOT HAVE TO USE A LOT OF WOOLENS LISTED ABOVE BUT, WEATHER IN THE HIMALAYAS CAN BE RATHER UNPREDICTABLE HENCE, BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY.

BOOKING, PAYMENT AND CANCELLATION POLICY

CONFIRMATION:

100% advance to confirm booking.

CANCELLATION CHARGE:

- Minimum : 20% of full amount.
Less than two weeks of arrival date (or tour start date) : 50% of full amount.
Less than one week of arrival date (or tour start date) : Full amount.

PAYMENT MODES & METHODS:

1. ONLINE TRANSFER into our **current** accounts in Axis Bank **or** Standard Chartered Bank
2. DIRECT CHEQUE DEPOSIT into our **current** accounts in Axis Bank **or** Standard Chartered Bank at any branch/ ATM in India
3. DIRECT **CASH** DEPOSIT, into our **current** account at any branch in India
4. By CASH or CHEQUE handed over personally (or by your rep) AT OUR DELHI OFFICE
5. OUTSTATION CHEQUE payments are acceptable **only if** they are delivered (or we get a scan of the bank deposit slip) at least 4 working days before the payment due date.
6. OUTSTATION PAYMENTS by a **Payable at Delhi** DD sent to our Delhi Office by courier/post.

IMP: CHEQUE / DD to be made in **favour of "Banjara Camps & Retreats Pvt. Ltd."**

AXIS BANK:

- A/c name : Banjara Camps & Retreats Pvt. Ltd.
- A/c no. : 015010200017806
- Branch address : K-12; Green Park Main; New Delhi – 110016
- Branch Code : UTIB0000015 (for direct cheque deposit)
- IFSC Code : UTIB0000015 (**for online transfer**)

STANDARD CHARTERED BANK:

- A/c name : Banjara Camps & Retreats Pvt. Ltd.
- A/c no. : 525-0-509-319-3
- Branch address : 10 Sansad Marg; New Delhi – 110 001
- Branch Code : SCBL0036027 (for direct cash/ cheque deposit)
- IFSC Code: : SCBL0036027 (**for online transfer**)





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-- Himalayas with Banjara, The Experience that matters --