

## **In Search of the Red Panda** *Singalila National Park*



*Journey to Himalayan forests of Singalila National Park, on the India-Nepal border, in search of the elusive red panda.*

*Among the rarest mammals in the world, the red panda is found in patchy populations in the mountains of India, Nepal, Burma and China. They thrive in forested regions, particularly tropical evergreen and semi-evergreen montane forests that harbour dense bamboo undergrowth (the panda's favourite food).*

*Remote Singalila National Park, a large swathe of Himalayan forest on India's border with Nepal, is thus the perfect place in which to sight this most elusive of animals, its dense forests providing a natural habitat for the solitary, arboreal creatures. Singalila was the location of the first successful reintroduction of red panda in 2004, as documented in the 2006 film *Cherub of the Mist*.*

*This fully-guided safari will see you spend seven nights in Singalila, accompanied by an experienced wildlife tracker. Besides red panda, you can hope to see a host of Eastern Himalayan birds – including exotics such as satyr tragopan, slender billed scimitar babbler, red billed leothrix, chestnut headed tesia, and blood pheasant. Mammals including Himalayan black bear, muntjac deer, pangolin, wild boar and leopard, can be sighted very rarely.*

*During the expedition, you will stay at Habre's Nest, a quaint home-stay nestled in a region of the park notable for its high concentration of red panda. Habre's in-house naturalists will accompany you into the forests to track the local wildlife.*

### **Your Financial Protection**

All monies paid by you for the air holiday package shown [or flights if appropriate] are ATOL protected by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 3145.

For more information see our booking terms and conditions.

## Day 1: Arrive Delhi

Arrive Delhi, where you will be met on arrival and transferred to the Lemon Tree, a comfortable 4-star airport hotel, for one night.

NB. This is a ground only package. International flights are not included in the tour price. Please ask if you would like us to quote for your flights to/from the UK.

## Day 2: Delhi to Darjeeling region

Depart Delhi on the morning flight to Bagdogra (11:20/13:10), in the Darjeeling region. On arrival, you will be met by your driver and transferred to the Sinclair Hotel in the nearby city of Siliguri.

This afternoon, you will be met by your chief guide for a short nature walk and orientation tour, followed by a briefing on the itinerary ahead.

## Day 3: To Singalila National Park

Depart Siliguri early this morning with a packed breakfast and transfer 3 hours to Manebhanjan. At Manebhanjan, you will change vehicles, boarding a 4x4 land rover before entering the park. You then have a leisurely and scenically spectacular drive to Habre's Nest, your home for the next 6 days. Expect to arrive at Habre's Nest in time for lunch.

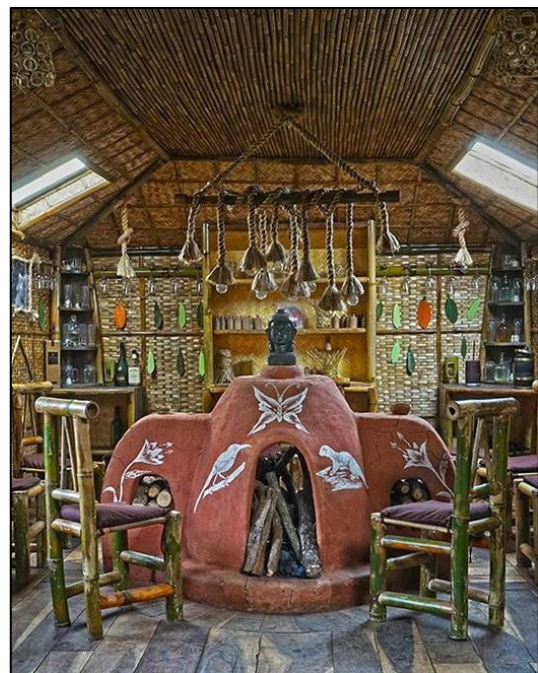
### Habre's Nest

*Habre's Nest is a cosy guesthouse situated on the Singalila Ridge, the border line separating Nepal and India. Occupying a high perch 2,900m above sea level, it provides a fabulous location from which to survey this remote and beautiful region of the Himalayas, overlooking the forests of Singalila in all directions from its privileged vantage point.*

*Taking its name from the Nepalese name for the red panda, Habre's Nest is positioned in a region of the Singalila that is notable for its comparatively high occurrence of these rare and endangered creatures. For most visitors to the lodge, red panda tracking is the primary attraction, though a small minority also come with the intention of trekking to nearby Sandakphu Peak.*

*Constructed from bamboo, wood, and corrugated iron, Habre's Nest has a decidedly rustic charm. Its four double bedded rooms are made up with bamboo and wood furnishings, and open onto en-suite toilets (western) and private balconies. Each room has a heater, hot and cold water, and drinking water. Power is supplied by a generator from 5pm to 6am.*

*Public areas include a small library, dining room, and bar & lounge with open fire place. The meals served are a delightful blend of local dishes with a western touch. Separate to the main house, there is a bird studio and viewing hide on the grounds. Trained naturalists and field biologists are on-site at all times.*





After a short briefing from the trackers and some time to settle into your room at Habre's Nest, you'll head out on a nature walk in the vicinity of the lodge.

It will be a short walk this afternoon, returning to the lodge in time for supper, after which you are free to retreat to your room or relax on the lodge verandah and take in the marvellous views of the Singalila Ridge as the sun sets.

### Days 4-7: Red Panda Tracking

Each day you will start your wildlife activities from Habre's Nest after breakfast at around 8am. Your wildlife-viewing will centre on the search for red panda, but there will be plenty of time to track other wildlife, particularly the region's rich birdlife, which numbers over 300 species.

Though Singalila is among the best places in the world to see wild red panda, sightings are not guaranteed. Little larger than a domestic cat, and equally solitary, the red panda is a difficult mammal to track.

Your chances of seeing the red panda will depend greatly on the conditions in the mountain. In dense fog and rain, opportunities for good sightings will be limited. Mar-May, when rainfall is lower, affords the best opportunities for sightings.

Tracking will be on foot and by 4x4. The terrain is steep and hilly, and while you will not be expected to cover long distances on foot, a reasonable level of fitness will be helpful.

A picnic lunch will be provided during the game-viewing activities, while dinner will be served at the lodge on your return each evening.

### Day 8: Homeward

Transfer back to Bagdogra airport and check in for the flight to Delhi (17:00/19:20), to connect with your international flight home/onward travel arrangements.





**Price Guide:**

The cost of this itinerary is **£2,768 per person**, based on a group size of four in shared twin/double accommodation and subject to availability at the time of booking. For alternative group sizes, please [contact us](#).

**Includes:**

- Domestic flights
- Accommodation as described (full-board basis)
- 6-days red panda tracking with an experienced naturalist guide
- All transfers as outlined
- Permits and Nepal Permission
- Still camera permits
- All other currently applicable taxes

**Excludes:**

- International flights
- Optional single supplement (£870)
- Drinks with meals
- Laundry service
- Nepal visa – can be obtained online
- Gratuities
- Travel insurance – ask us for a quote