

# In Search of the Snow Leopard

## Trip Details

**Date** 1-12 February 2027 (12 Days 11 Nights)

**Accommodations & Meals:** As below

**Group Size:** 14 Traveler Limit

**Difficulty:** Moderate to Strenuous

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### **Accommodations**

Hotels in Delhi & Leh are very similar to western standards, however, in Rumbak we will stay at very simple and rustic homestays run by the local people. Although these are clean and pleasant they often have limited accommodations and amenities due to their remote location. Nevertheless, treated to traditional food and warm hospitality the homestay cultural experience is truly one of the trip highlights for guests.

### **01 February – Arrival to Delhi, India**

- Arrive to Delhi by the afternoon on this day to meet with the rest of the group. If you are interested in an earlier arrival to Delhi or an optional PreTrip (tour visiting Delhi, Taj Mahal or both) this is available upon request.
- Upon arrival in India staff will meet you upon arrival for transfer to hotel. (Rooms will be available from 1400 Hrs).

**Accommodation:** Hotel Welcomhotel By ITC or similar

**Meals included:** None

### **02 February – Delhi to Leh**

- Breakfast & Transfer to airport in time for flight to Leh (Appx. 1.5hr flight).
- Take an hour spectacular flight to Leh over the Trans-Himalayas and Zaskar ranges into Leh. The airport is at 11,500 ft above sea Level. Transfer into Leh Hotel.
- Rest of the day at leisure for acclimatization, afternoon stroll around Leh market.

**Accommodation:** Hotel Singge Palace or similar

**Meals included:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

### **03 February – Explore Leh**

- Today we will visit the Ladakh most famous monasteries, (Shey-Thiksey-Hemis), Shey used to be the capital of Ladakh until 16th century. Visit the most Popular 12 mtrs high Copper gilded statue of Buddha built in 1640. Continue to Thiksey monastery belongs to yellow hat school of Tibetan Buddhism. It is the largest Monastery in Ladakh, about 90 monks live here. The Morning Prayer held with sun rise by all monks is a peaceful and soothing atmosphere never to be missed. From Thiksey drive to Hemis monastery, located at the southern bank of Indus River.

- Hemis is the largest and most famous monastery of Ladakh, there are many interesting statues and paintings to see inside the chapel and the newly open museum has the thousand-year-old collection of frescos and statues.

**Accommodation:** Singge Palace or similar

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### 04 February – Explore Leh

- Today we will visit **Spitok Monastery**; oldest part was founded in the 15th CE. The Monastery belongs to Yellow Hat School of Tibetan Buddhism. There are about 30 monks reside in the monastery. You could visit several temples, which dedicated to different Deities. Most famous ones are Crown Buddha and 21 Taras which was brought from Tibet. Later, drive further to **Stakna Monastery**, founded in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century by the Bhutanese scholar and saint Chosje Modzin. Stakna, also known as “Tiger’s Nose”, for its hilltop location, houses approximately 30 monks.
- In the afternoon enjoy a gradual hike to the **Shanti Stupa** on hill top located in Changspa built by Japanese in 1984. You can get a good orientation and ideal for picturing the Leh valley and the Ladakh range.

**Accommodation:** Singge Palace or similar

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### 05 February – Leh to Rumbak Village

- Breakfast and depart hotel towards Rumbak Village along the scenic Indus River. Depending on snow conditions and road access near Zingchen, continue by vehicle or trek to Rumbak — a journey taking us through pristine Himalayan terrain.

**Accommodation:** Homestay in Rumbak

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### 6 to 9 February – Rumbak Village - Search For Snow Leopard

Rumbak Village will be the base for our snow leopard search. Nestled within the Hemis High Altitude National Park, this region will serve as our base for the next four days as we search for the elusive snow leopard. The park spans 3,200 sq km and is home to Blue Sheep, Tibetan Argali (Great Tibetan sheep), Ladakh urial (wild sheep akin to the Marco Polo sheep), golden eagles, lammergeyers, snow cocks, partridges, and finches. Tibetan Argali (Great Tibetan sheep) and, occasionally, the Tibetan wolf and Himalayan Lynx also inhabit this area. Expert wildlife trackers will guide you through the terrain, interpreting signs and sharing insights into the ecology of the region.

Day to Day – Depending on weather conditions, animal activities patterns (any reported snow leopard sightings) we will take daily hikes exploring into different valleys of the area each day (Husing, Tarbung, Kharlung, Rumbak Sumdo, and Yurutse).

Rumbak village host trekkers in their traditional homes outfitted as homestays. The increase in household income has allowed families to send their children to better schools and to invest in improved livestock care. These herders-turned snow leopard stewards now voluntarily head outside in the dead of winter to report snow leopard tracks, kills and activity to tour groups, knowing that their families and community members will benefit from such sightings. Instead of seeing Snow Leopard as a threat to their livelihood (snow leopards will occasionally hunt domestic sheep’s) they are now seen as a benefit to the community.

**Accommodation:** Homestays in Rumbak

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### **10 February – Rumbak Village to Leh**

- After breakfast, descend to Zingchen via the same trail or drive if road conditions are good and continue drive back to Leh.
- Upon arrival, check in to your hotel and enjoy a well-earned afternoon of comfort and reflection.
- In the evening – free time to explore the Leh markets.

**Accommodation:** Singge Palace or similar

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### **11 February – Leh to Delhi**

- Morning transfer to the airport to board your flight back to Delhi. (Appx. 1.5hr flight).
- Upon arrival, transfer to your hotel for an overnight stay.
- Dinner & Overnight at the hotel in Delhi.

**Accommodation:** Hotel Welcomhotel By ITC or similar

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### **12 February – Delhi Departure**

- After breakfast, in time transfer to the airport for your flight back home or to your onward destination. (Rooms will be available till 1200 hrs only)

### **End of Services**

Note: The best time to witness snow leopard in Ladakh will be in the month of January, February and mid-March. These are the coldest months in Ladakh with very cold temperatures. Our trips are specially planned to optimize your chances of seeing snow leopards, namely when they are lower down in the valleys following the domestic flocks and prey. At these months most passes will still be snow bound, the nights are very cold and even during the day the temperature drops when out of the sun.

### **Airfare Supplement:**

Delhi / Leh / Delhi USD \$375.00 per person in economy class

Airfare cost is subject to change.

### **This Trip Includes:**

- Accommodation on twin-sharing basis.
- Daily breakfast in Delhi, half board on the last night in Delhi, and full board in Leh & Ladakh.
- Non-AC Toyota Innova's in Leh & Ladakh.
- Services of a Leh based English-speaking tour guide for Leh & Ladakh portion only, including for the Snow leopard trek portion.
- Monument entrance fees as per the program.
- Specialist naturalist in Rumbak with spotting scope (1 up to 9 guests; 2 for 10+ guests).

- All meals at homestays + tea/coffee with cookies twice daily.
- All entrance fees, wildlife permits.
- Binocular & spotting scope as per group size.
- Oxygen cylinders & first-aid kit.

**This Trip Excludes:**

- Any airfares.
- Any natural crises, road blockages, or flight delay charges.
- Personal expenses: drinks, tips, laundry, phone calls, etc.
- Any new government taxes.
- Any optional activities mentioned in the program
- Warm jackets, gloves, thermal wear, sleeping bags, and trekking shoes (guests must bring their own).