

Land of the Snow Leopard



This tour will take you deep into the Hemis National Park, Ladakh, in search of the legendary Snow Leopard. A solitary, rarely-sighted creature, the Snow Leopard is severely endangered due to gradual loss of habitat and over-hunting. Efforts to save the Snow Leopard have increased in recent years, and it is partly through tourism that these conservation efforts are funded.

This is an adventurous tour, and you will need to be flexible in the way you approach it. You will be visiting the region during winter, when Ladakh is cut off from the rest of the world by road and temperatures drop well below zero. The weather conditions are exceptionally tough at this time of year, and although your hotel in Leh is comfortable, water pipes can freeze in winter and water (both hot and cold) may be provided to you in a bucket.

The trek conditions will be basic, either camping in sub-zero temperatures or staying in local Ladakhi houses. The tour is designed to maximise the chance of spotting a Snow Leopard, and this may mean that the itinerary needs to be adjusted at short notice should snow conditions or other adverse or local conditions deem it wise to do so.

It is the weather conditions above all that make this trip a challenge. The walking distances each day will be moderate. Much of the walking will be optional, dependent on your enthusiasm for tracking animals each day.

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.

Internal flights to Leh are operated throughout the winter when the weather is clear, though delays and cancellations cannot be ruled out.

If you are prepared to be flexible and patient and have a spirit of adventure, then this is a magnificent trip into one of the world's best kept secrets!

Day 1: Arrive Delhi

Arrive at Delhi Airport where you will be met and transferred to your hotel for the evening. Depending on your arrival time, enjoy an afternoon's sightseeing of Old and New Delhi.



Day 2: Delhi – Leh

A very early start for the flight to Leh. Depart the hotel at around 3am and drive to the airport for the spectacular flight over the Himalaya to Leh. This region is incredibly beautiful in winter, as you fly over the huge expanse of snow-capped peaks. Landing in Leh, the temperature will drop dramatically and you will need your down jackets at the airport. If the weather is good and the flight goes on time you should be in Leh for breakfast.

The rest of the day is free to relax and acclimatize to the altitude (3,500m). In the morning you will rest and catch up on some sleep and in the afternoon there will be a gentle orientation walk of Leh and its bazaars.

Day 3: Indus Valley

Today you will visit some of the most important monasteries in the Indus Valley. First you will drive just over half an hour to Shey, once the residence of the Ladakhi royal family. Below the old palace ruins is a small temple containing a two-storey gilded statue of Buddha. From Shey you can either drive or walk across the fields to Tikse. Set on a hill it is one of the most impressive gompas in Ladakh; it has several temples, one of which contains a superb statue of the Future Buddha. You will then drive on to Stakna, a small but friendly monastery perched atop a huge rock. In the late afternoon you return to Leh.

Day 4: Husing

Today you depart Leh and drive across the Indus towards Jinchen. You will follow the trail from Phe to the entrance of the impressive Rumbak Gorge. The trail will take you up into the narrow gorge where you will start your search for evidence of Snow Leopard and Blue Sheep.

Camp tonight at the base camp at Husing (3,700m).



Day 5 – 11: Rumbak Valley

The next seven days will be spent in and around the Rumbak Valley in the Hemis National Park. There will be no fixed itinerary and your days will be decided on by the expert wildlife guide - this is to maximise the chances of seeing a Snow Leopard.



Your days will be spent searching for Snow Leopard and other animals which inhabit this area. The extreme cold of winter forces the Snow Leopard and other animals down from the high altitudes they normally inhabit. The Hemis National Park is situated at an altitude range of 3,300m - 6,000m and hosts an incredible amount of wildlife. It is full of endangered species including Snow Leopard, Tibetan Ibex, Bharal (Blue Sheep), Wolf, Red Fox, Ladakhi Urial and Pallas's Cat. You will spend most

of the time at the base camp at Husing (3,700), which is on a major Snow Leopard corridor. Day walks will take you into both the Husing and Tarbuns Valleys, both well-known haunts of the Snow Leopard.

A good pair of binoculars is recommended to scan the slopes in and around camp. The wildlife guide will carry a spotting scope which he will set up at camp and on ridges on the day walks. He will also go out in the early mornings and late evenings to search for evidence of any animal movement. You will have the chance to explore the area around Rumbak Sumdo and Yurutse (4,400m), well known for its sightings of Argali Sheep.



Overnight a mixture of camping and home stays will be used. One night will be spent in Rumbak village, where you have a Ladakhi home stay – a basic Ladakhi house. The other five nights will be spent camping. You will have a full trekking crew including guides, assistant guides, cook, kitchen assistants and porters.

Day 12: Leh

Today you will trek back to Jinchen, where you will meet the transport to take you back to the relative comforts of your hotel in Leh.

Day 13: Leh

A free day in Leh, for sightseeing and/or gift shopping.

Day 14: Delhi

An early start for the flight back to Delhi. The rest of the day is free in Delhi for individual shopping or sightseeing.

Day 15: Homeward

After breakfast you will be transferred to the airport for your flight back to London.

Price Guide

*The cost of this itinerary is from **£1,795 per person**, based on twin share and subject to availability at the time of booking. For more information, or if you would like to enquire about a tailor-made holiday combining part or all of the above itinerary, please [contact us](#).*

Includes:

- Domestic flight to/from Leh
- All accommodation on twin sharing basis
- Transfers
- English-speaking guide
- National Park and monument entrance fees
- All trekking equipment / 1 cook / 3 helpers / Mules while trekking
- Service Tax

Excludes:

- Lunch and Dinner in Delhi
- Expenses of personal nature i.e. drinks, laundry, phone calls etc.
- Travel Insurance
- International flights

