

10 February – 1 March 2025

Ride on the enchanting 2ft and 2ft 6in Mountain Railways of India situated in the Himalayan ranges extending from east to north-west India! Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR) & Kalka Shimla Railway (KSR) are two UNESCO World Heritage Mountain Railways along with the Kangra Valley Railway (KVR) on the tentative list of UNESCO await you! An added bonus of a broad-gauge steam on the mainline from Delhi to Rewari. A visit to Delhi's National Rail Museum. Cultural & heritage sightseeing tours.

The ever-present background of snowy peaks and rural India run parallel. A journey of a lifetime!

Tour highlights

- Amritsar – The Golden Temple is unbelievable! Indo-Pak border exuberating gate closing ceremony.
- Ride the Kalka - Shimla line: the first 14 booked get to ride a chartered railbus
- Three days on the magical Kangra Valley Railway.
- Visit the Dalai Lama Temple in Dharamsala.
- Visit the National Rail Museum.
- Chance to ride on the steam on broad gauge on mainline.
- Visit the Rewari Steam Centre Shed & Workshop housing various locos of all gauges. Some in steam!
- Cycle rickshaw ride through Delhi's famous bazaar, Chandni Chowk.
- Gratifying visit to The Viceregal Lodge; Darjeeling Tea Estate and a Buddhist Monastery.

Please note all times are based on current timetables at April 2024 and are subject to change.

Monday 10 February

We'll check in for our overnight flight to Amritsar

Tuesday 11 February

....Arrive **Amritsar** international in the early morning hours. After clearing immigrations and collecting your bags, we will meet you in the arrivals lounge with a 'Darjeeling Tours' welcome paging board. We will transfer to our hotel.

Amritsar is the second largest city in the state of Punjab on the northwestern part of India and is the economic capital of Punjab. It is a major tourist centre with nearly a hundred thousand daily visitors.

The fourth Sikh Guru Ram Das ji founded this city in 1574. Famous for it's finger licking cuisine, buttermilk (lassi) and phulkari embroidery work textiles, leather embroidered juttis (footwear for men & women).



Darjeeling Tours

We will venture out in the city in the afternoon to visit the 100-year-old British, Mughal & Sikh architectural design of **Khalsa College building** followed by **the Partition Museum**, which aims to become the central repository of stories, materials, and documents related to the post-partition riots that followed the division of British India into two independent dominions: India and Pakistan. (B, D)

Wednesday 12 February



We will spend our day in Amritsar visiting the **Jallianwala Bagh**, massacre gardens during the British Raj followed by the breathtaking & calming **Golden Temple**, where a 'free canteen' policy produces many thousands of meals a day – help produce the chapattis if you wish!

Then we will visit the border flag ceremony at the India-Pakistan border, an amazing bit of theatre! (B, D)

Thursday 13 February

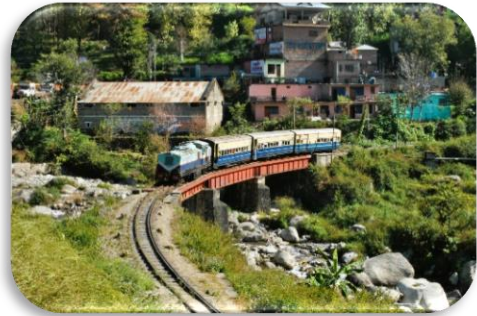
We set off from Amritsar to catch the morning **DEMU** service to Pathankot. The fun & adventure will be travelling in an all-unreserved train, chatting with the local commuters and enjoying the countryside to arrive in Pathankot Junction at midday.

Our coach will run us the short distance from **Pathankot** to **Nurpur Road station**, next station ahead of the damaged Chakki viaduct where we aim at catching our first narrow gauge ride on the wonderful KVR to Palampur station, subject to train timings! We will update in due course.

Luggage will be transported from Amritsar to Palampur by road in vans. (B, D)

Friday 14 February

We continue our Kangra Valley Railway from **Palampur** at 1054 hrs to **Bajinath Paprola** station arriving at 1200 hrs, where this service terminates. The scenery becomes more impressive with a short ride at 1300 hrs heading to **Joginder Nagar** arriving at 1435 hrs, the outer terminus of the Kangra Valley Railway.



From there, we will break for a well-deserved lunch stop before making our way back to Palampur.

Enroute, we visit an ancient 13th Century Lord Shiva's **Bajinath Temple**. (B, D)

Saturday 15 February



We have an excursion to **Dharamsala**, the home of the **Dalai Lama**, driving through fabulous Himalayan scenery.

We visit the famous Dalai Lama Temple, take the mesmerising **Kora' walk**, **McLeodganj Market** and the **St John's Church** in the wilderness! (B, D)

Sunday 16 February

Free day in Palampur to explore the **Kangra tea gardens**, chase the train from Palampur down to Jwalamukhi Road or just relax gazing the mighty Himalayas. (B, D)

Monday 17 February

We will head out to **Dharamsala** airport to catch the morning direct flight at 1000 hrs to arrive Shimla at 1105 hrs. On arrival, transfer to our hotel for the next three nights. (B, D)

Tuesday 18 February

We have requested a steam charter train from Shimla down the line to Kathleeghat but we understand there are problems with the locomotive: if it is steamable, it may be in steam for us at Shimla but if it is unfit for the charter then, we will have fun on the KSR riding on the service departing Shimla at 1055 hrs down the line to **Solan** (at 1402 hrs). Not to be missed the charming town markets of Solan also famous for its Indian red rum, The Old Monk, distilled and bottled in Solan Brewery.



We will then drive back in our vans to Shimla. Enjoy a lovely sunset in the bar over Shimla Hills. (B, D)

Wednesday 19 February

Explore this beautiful Hill Station, the summer capital of India in the days of the Raj with a guided tour, commencing with a visit to the boastful & majestic Indian **Institute of Advanced Studies (IIAS)** building which was the former Viceroy's residence during the British Raj, stroll up **The Mall Road** where we start will stop at **The Gaiety Theatre** with a visit inside it and sharing experiences from their in-house curator and the mini picture museum. Further walk up **to The Ridge, Scandal Point** and **The Christ Church**. Return to hotel late afternoon with rest of the day to relax. (B,D)

Thursday 20 February

We will take our chartered journey in one of the Railway's iconic Railbuses, *but accommodation is limited, and this is open to the first 14 applicants only*. The rest of the journey will be on the **Shimla Kalka Express** in first class. We should arrive in Kalka by 1635 hrs. We then switch over to the broad-gauge platform to board India's first express day service, the New Delhi **Shatabadi Express** at 1745 hrs to arrive in New Delhi station at 2150 hrs. A well-prepared dinner (Indian cuisine) is served on board and is included in your ticket price. (B, D)

Luggage will be transported by road.



Friday 21 February

We can offer a choice – spend the day relaxing at the hotel, or take a coach tour of the city. We will cover **India Gate**, **the Indian Parliament building**, a **cycle-rickshaw** ride through **Chandni Chowk** bazaar, **Rajghat** – resting place of Mahatama Gandhi.

Afternoon, we visit the **National Railway Museum** to see the cream of India's railway treasures. (B)

Saturday 22 February

We'll take the train for the ninety-minute journey to **Rewari**, the new outpost of the National Railway Museum where they keep their operational steam locomotives. There is the possibility that the train may be steam hauled for the outward journey with a steam locomotive. Sorry, no guarantees! There will be time to look round the National Railway Museum's outpost here with metre and broad-gauge locomotives before taking the regular service train at 1545 hrs back to Delhi Cantonment station to arrive at 1648 hrs.



We will transfer to our hotel for overnight stay. (B)

Sunday 23 February

Today we will fly up to Bagdogra, the local airport for **Siliguri** and **Darjeeling** which is just under two hours flight in the afternoon. From the airport, coaches will take us to our hotel in Siliguri town. Rest of the day at leisure. (B, D)

Monday 24 February

We'll take a charter steam special from **Siliguri Junction** onto **Kurseong**. As road and rail run together, a coach will accompany the train for those who wish to take photographs, and there are regular opportunities to change between coach and train.

We'll transfer by road to our colonial tea bungalow in Kurseong for the night. (B, D)



Tuesday 25 February



We will have a second steam charter running between **Kurseong** and **Darjeeling**. Again, a coach will run alongside for the photographers. There will be a short break at Kurseong, where we can enjoy the station cafeteria. We then, continue our chartered steam hauled ride to Darjeeling. Don't miss the famous photo shots of the train making it's way out of the narrow Kurseong Bazaar. Our hotel for the next three nights is the iconic **Windamere**, Darjeeling's premier hotel for the last 200 years! (B,D)

Darjeeling Tours

Wednesday 26 February



We'll have a relaxed guided tour of Darjeeling to visit the popular **Himalayan Mountaineering Institute (HMI)**, which houses the memorabilia's of the local legendary Sherpa Tenzing Norgay who along with his Kiwi partner Sir Edmund Hillary Mt Everest in 1953. Further visit the adjoining **Zoo** to witness some the rarest Leopards such as clouded and snow leopards amongst The Royal Bengal Tiger, Red Panda & Sloth Bear! Also visit the **Tibetan Self-Help Centre**.

Gently stroll back on **The Darjeeling Mall** Road through to Observatory Hill for your hotel. There is also the Planters Club, Das Studio's albums of historic photos, fancy cakes at Glenary's, and buy some tea from Nathmull's shop down the Mall to take home.

In the evening, the 'Railway Club', with its library of DHR items will be open, with service from the bar. (B, D)



Thursday 27 February



If you can stand being up for six-thirty and the weather is kind, the view of Kanchenjunga and the Himalayas from Observation Point (200 yards from the Hotel's back door) is nothing short of stunning, and not to be missed.

The day is at leisure. But we'll have an optional 'joy train' ride from Darjeeling up to **Ghum** to visit the Railway's excellent museum, and share a cup of 'chai' with the train crew. If we're lucky with the weather, there will be stunning views of

Kanchenjunga, the third highest mountain in the world, and we'll have the opportunity to photograph the train with the mountain in the background on the **Batasia Loop**. Fabulous!

Or, just sit by and gaze the mighty & mysterious Himalayas and sip your cup of Darjeeling Tea!

We will also aim at visiting a local tea estate where you will be shown the process that takes place to produce the tea that we drink. Subject to weather! (B, D)

Friday 28 February

After breakfast, we will take a 3 hrs road transfer to Bagdogra airport to catch our flight via Delhi to UK....

Saturday 01 March

Arrive UK in the early hours of the morning....

What's included?

- Economy class flights to/from India in our fully inclusive tour price.
- Accommodation in 4–5-star hotels including character hotels.
- Buffet breakfast and dinner (*) daily. Except in Delhi where there are variety of options!
- All transport by deluxe airconditioned vehicles with experienced drivers.
- Charter trains and excursions as set out in the itinerary.
- Train rides in Executive class for Kalka/Delhi and regular / unreserved class for Amritsar/Pathankot and Rewari/Delhi.
- Airfare for the domestic sector of Dharamsala – Shimla, Delhi - Bagdogra – Delhi in economy class.
- Services of a Darjeeling Tours Limited Tour Manager.
- All tips throughout the tour (except for the Tour Manager) are included and will be dealt with on your behalf.
- A lot more fun & untold authentic insight into India!
- Personal and incidental expenses are not included.

Optionals Not Included as may be suggested or mentioned in the programme above.

(*) Dinner is not included in Delhi, where there is plenty of choice, both in and out of the hotel. Food is not expensive, and this allows considerable individual flexibility.

Domestic flight check-in baggage allowance is limited to 15 kgs but we will have you covered up till 20 kgs. Please note that carriers, flights times and train times are subject to change.



On a daily basis, meals provided are shown with the following key: B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner.

Prices

Per Person on twin/double sharing basis.

Fully inclusive price from London:	£ 5,220
Ground only price (international flights excluded)	£ 4,420
Single supplement:	£ 1,225