

## SIKKIM/DARJEELING

Sikkim, a former Himalayan Kingdom, has been a State of India since its merger in 1975. Located in the Eastern Himalayas, it is wedged between Nepal in the west and Bhutan in the east. With an area of 7,096 sq. kms it has a rectangular shape measuring about 114 kms from north to south and 64 kms from east to west. The elevation varies between 1000 ft to 27900 ft. The greater Himalayas form a natural boundary with Tibet and the Singalila range with Mt.

Khangchendzonga (8545 mtrs), the third highest peak in the world, runs north to south separating Sikkim from Nepal. On the eastern front the Chola range borders with Tibet and the Pangola range further down separate Sikkim from Bhutan. Finally, the vast plains of Bengal open out in the south to form a horseshoe picture of the high ranges bordering Sikkim. The two major rivers, Teesta and Rangit, flow from north to south creating deep gorges which divide Sikkim into three longitudinal strips. The valleys in the north are wider at Yumthang (11800 ft./ 3600 mtrs) and Lachung (8856 ft./ 2700 mtrs) which are easily accessible by road. These Rhododendron areas deep in the northern mountains are inhabited by Lachungpas, who have preserved and maintained their unique culture and a society governed by a traditional village council- "Dzomsa". The Teesta and Rangit rivers also offer the thrill of riding the wild water and angling for some local variety of fish.



### SIKKIM AND DARJEELING( 7DAYS) LAND COST: US\$ 1275.00



Sikkim, a former Himalayan kingdom, now a state in India, is richly endowed with a prominently Buddhist culture dating back to the 7th century AD. Its unique location in the Himalayas and elevation ranging from 1970 ft / 600 mtrs. to over 26250 ft/ 8000 mtrs spread over an area of 7000 sq. km. offers diverse flora and fauna ranging from sub-tropical to the alpine.

Mt Khangchendzonga (8345 mtrs.), the third highest mountain in the world and the guardian deity of Sikkim looms majestically throughout the trip.

Darjeeling- "The Queen of the Himalayas" is a bustling tourist town renowned for its tea gardens, the Himalayan mountaineering Institute, the sunrise over the Himalayas from the Tiger Hill and imprints of the British Raj.

### THE RHODODENDRON TRAIL( 9DAYS) LAND COST: US\$ 1530.00



The Rhododendron Trail is designed to allow you to discover this floral rainbow, traveling in the comfort of a car. Best recommended for the local Spring season (April - June). The tour takes you to the higher reaches of Tsomgo lake & the North Sikkim areas covering Lachung, Yumthang, Lachen & Thangu. These areas vary in altitude from 2500 mtrs to 4250 mtrs and cover rhododendron reserves such as the Kyongnosla Alpine Sanctuary near Gangtok and the Shingba Rhododendron Sanctuary near Lachung, the only area where you find R. niveum the state tree of Sikkim.

The itinerary offers you an introduction to the rhododendrons in Sikkim, however, if you are interested in experience more in detail or other things, it can be customized to suit your requirements.