

OPTIONAL PRE-TOUR TO SHIMLA

06 - 11 November 2010 (6 days)



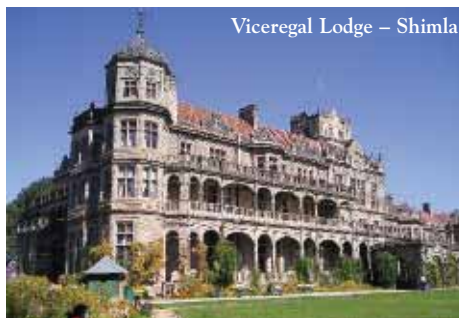
Kalka – Shimla Railway



Shimla

Shimla was declared the summer capital of the British Raj in India in 1864 shortly after the first Anglo-Gurkha war. Often referred to as the 'Queen of Hills' (a term coined by the British) Shimla is located in the foothills of the Himalayas at an altitude of 2,128 metres, and experiences mild summers and cold, snowy winters. The city is renowned for its eclectic architectural styles dating from the colonial era.

Shimla is connected to the city of Kalka by one of the longest narrow gauge railway routes still operating in India. The Kalka-Shimla Railway was constructed by the Delhi-Umbala-Kalka Railway Company between 1898 and 1903. In 2008 the Kalka-Shimla Railway was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List of 'Mountain Railways of India' (along with the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway and the Nilgiri Mountain Railway).



Viceregal Lodge – Shimla

SAT 06 NOV 2010

AUSTRALIA – DELHI

Depart Australia on Thai Airways (via Bangkok) or Singapore Airlines (via Singapore). Late evening arrival in Delhi and transfer to your hotel.

SUN 07 NOV

DELHI

Morning at leisure.

Following a welcome lunch with Scott McGregor and fellow travellers, depart the hotel for a half-day tour of Old Delhi. Evening at leisure. (Meals included – B, L)

MON 08 NOV

DELHI – SHIMLA

Early morning breakfast and departure from the hotel to New Delhi Railway Station. Depart at 07.45 am on a Shatabdi Express train (Executive Class) for Kalka, arriving

at 11.45 am. On arrival at Kalka, transfer to the Kalka – Shimla Railway, departing at 12.10 pm.

On leaving Kalka (656 meters above sea level), the 2 ft 6 in (762 mm) narrow gauge railway enters the foothills and immediately commences its climb to Shimla. An engineering marvel, the railway has a ruling gradient of 1 in 33 or 3%. Throughout its length of 96 km, the line runs in a continuous succession of 919 curves, the sharpest being 48 degrees. There are 864 bridges, all but one of which are viaducts with multi-arched galleries similar to ancient Roman aqueducts. The line has about 107 tunnels, 27 cutovers and 20 intermediate stations.

At 1.30 pm, after a journey of 20 km, disembark at Dharampur (1494m) for lunch. Continue the spectacular journey by road, arriving in the late afternoon at Shimla (2,076m).

Your accommodation for the next three nights will be at the Wildflower Hall, a luxury resort set in 22 acres of virgin woods of pine and cedar. The former residence of Lord Kitchener, rebuilt to a new magnificence, Wildflower Hall recreates the grand style of the colonial era. (B,L,D)



Christ Church



Chandratana Lake



Bhimakali Temple



Shimla Ridge

TUE 09 NOV

SHIMLA

Enjoy a morning tour of Shimla. Begin at the Mall Road, the busy commercial and shopping heart of the city. Continue to the Ridge, the hub of many cultural activities in Shimla. Visit Christ Church, the second-oldest church in northern India (1857) and the magnificent Viceregal Lodge (1888) now transformed into the famous Institute of Advanced Studies.

Shimla is surrounded by seven hills and thickly wooded forests. Amongst the

various picnic areas and viewing places within a few kilometres of the city are Annandale, Glenn, Prospect Hill and Summer Hill.

Return to the hotel for lunch. Afternoon at leisure to enjoy the many sporting and relaxation activities available at the hotel. (B,L,D)

WED 10 NOV

SHIMLA

A further day to relax and enjoy the unique atmosphere of this former hill station. Enjoy

gentle 'heritage trails' around the city or more strenuous walks in the nearby forests. You may also like to visit the Shimla State Museum and Library, famous for its collection of ancient sculptures, paintings, coins and photographs. (B,D)

THU 11 NOV

SHIMLA – DELHI

Morning transfer from the hotel to Shimla Airport for a midday flight (1 hr 20 min) to Delhi where you are met and transferred to your hotel. Evening at leisure. (B)



Wildflower Hotel – Shimla



YOUR HOTELS***:**

Delhi – Taj Palace
Shimla – Shangri-La

TOUR CODE: RLWY101106

DEPOSIT: \$250 per person

FINAL PAYMENT: Friday 03 September 2010

TOUR PRICES:

Per person, twin-share \$2,750
Single supplement* \$950

* Single travellers may request to share. Please advise at time of booking.

TOUR PRICES INCLUDE:

- Accommodation in 5-star hotels with daily breakfast (B)
- Meals as per itinerary (L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- Transfers in Delhi (if arriving on group flights)
- Shatabdi Express Executive class seat Delhi - Kalka
- Comprehensive sightseeing including entrance fees as per itinerary
- Economy class flight Shimla - Delhi (20KG luggage allowance)
- Gratuities for local guides and drivers
- Hotel portorage (1 piece per person)

DO NOT INCLUDE:

- Drinks with meals
- Items of a personal nature, including telephone, laundry, mini-bar etc.
- Airport portorage
- Travel insurance