

Conquer the Indian Himalayas for St Michael's Hospice

9 - 18 October 2027



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Trip overview

Trek Overview

Take on this five-day trek through the Indian Himalayas and home of the Dalai Lama – Dharamshala.

You will fly into Delhi before we board the overnight train to Pathankot. After a night on the train, you transfer to the stunning hill station of Dharamshala, home to the Tibetan Government in exile and the Dalai Lama and surrounded by dense forest and in the shadow of the Dhauladhar mountain range.

From here you will commence your journey into the Lesser Himalayan range of Northern India where, during five days of trekking, you will be awed by lush green forests, views of snow-capped peaks, deep valleys, gushing rivers and small villages with friendly and welcoming local people. You will reach a maximum altitude of 2875m (at Triund) and will walk around 6-8 hours a day.

About India

India conjures images of lush green tea plantations, brightly coloured saris, jasmine-scented incense, ancient palaces and adorned maharajahs. India is the 7th largest country by landmass on earth and borders Pakistan, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Myanmar. There are many highlights in this vast country including the stunning backwaters of Kerala, the mighty Himalayas, the inhospitable deserts, the bustling cities, the magnificent coastline and of course the delicious cuisine.

Delhi

Delhi is the capital city of India and a buzz of sights, sounds and smells. From busy highways where sacred cows cross the street to peaceful temples and lush gardens, Delhi is a contrast like no other. Spicy aromas and the sizzle of street food tantalise your senses and the beautiful ancient monuments will leave you breathless. Take a visit to the imposing India Gate or the Qutub Minar – the tallest stone tower in India at 72.5m high or just get lost in one of the bustling marketplaces where you can haggle for silks, spices, carvings and other gifts.



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What is the experience like?

How tough is it?

The trek is graded *moderate to challenging*. You will trek over varying terrain for up to 8 hours a day, carrying a small daypack which may weigh up to 6kg, and camping in basic campsites along the way. You will also be exposed to altitudes up to a maximum of 2875m (9429ft). Whilst it is difficult to specifically prepare for trekking at higher altitudes, it helps to be physically prepared for the exertions of the trekking day by training in advance. It is advised that you arrive for the trek feeling comfortable trekking for periods of up to 7 or 8 hours for at least two days consecutively. Having a positive and determined attitude is also a key element to your success on the trek.

What is the terrain like?

The terrain will vary throughout the trek but in general, will be undulating (uphill and downhill). There are very few flat sections so you should ensure your training includes plenty of hills. Underfoot there will be stony pathways, grass, rocks and perhaps a few small streams to cross too. Each day you will cover approximately 12-15km (7-9 miles) which, because of the variable terrain, can take up to 8 hours to cover.

Where will we sleep?

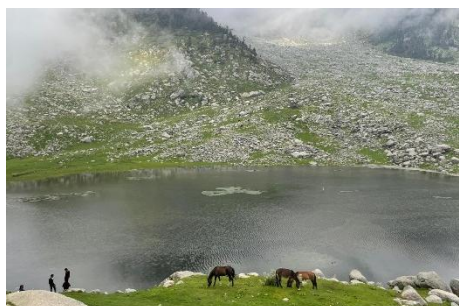
At camp, you will stay in 3-man tents (two people to a tent). You will be provided with sleeping mats, but you are welcome to bring your own if you prefer. While in Delhi and Dharamshala you will stay in hotels on a twin or triple-share basis. We will also travel to and from Pathankot on a sleeper train where you have your own privately screened bed, in a compartment containing up to 5 other beds.

What is the climate like?

In Delhi, temperatures can reach 34°C during the day, dropping to 20°C at night. The temperature in Dharamshala and during the trek is cooler with temperatures of approx. 23-26°C during the day, dropping down to approx. 10-15°C at night. Temperatures will depend on the weather which varies and can be bright and sunny, rainy, cloudy or humid. Please note that conditions in mountainous regions are unpredictable so you should be prepared for all climatic eventualities. Although the conditions mentioned are historically accurate, climate change can impact the seasons so you may experience uncharacteristic weather during the trip which is out of our control. The guides will assess the situation and make decisions to ensure the best enjoyment and ultimately the safety of the group.

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What about bathroom and toilet facilities?

During the trek, bathing facilities will be limited, although you may be able to freshen up at rivers or streams along the way. You are recommended to bring eco-friendly toiletries. Each morning you will be provided with a bowl of hot water to freshen up, but baby wipes are strongly recommended for maintaining general personal hygiene. Toilet facilities at camp will be a hole dug into the ground with a small privacy tent surrounding it. Toilet paper is not provided so you will need to bring your own; consider biodegradable toilet paper. To use the toilet during the trek day you will find a private area off the main trail; any toilet paper you use along the trail must be placed into a nappy sack and disposed of properly at camp. You should NEVER leave toilet paper or other litter (including fruit peel, seeds, food wrappers etc.) on the trail. At the hotels, there will be flushing Western sit-down toilets.

What is the food like?

Meals during the trek are cooked by your trek chef and will be eaten in a mess tent where a table, chairs, plates, mugs and cutlery are provided. Meals are delicious and plentiful and mainly Indian style (although there may be some Western-style meals). Meals in Delhi and Dharamshala will be at your accommodation and local restaurants. Special dietary requirements can be accommodated if we are advised in advance but please note that we cannot guarantee that food preparation will take place in a contamination-free environment.

Practical information

Who accompanies us?

The trek is accompanied by English-speaking local guides who have an excellent knowledge of the local culture and hiking in the region. You will also be supported by a team of cooks and porters and a UK Different Travel Company tour manager.

Who can take part?

The trek can be undertaken by anyone with a good level of fitness, who is healthy and determined. Adequate preparation, planning and training is important because the fitter you are the more you will enjoy this experience. An ideal candidate would be a hillwalker, an open-minded person with a sense of adventure or someone who would like to take part in a life-changing fundraising experience in the beautiful landscape.

Is there an age limit?

You must be at least 18 years old to participate in this trek unaccompanied. It may be possible for you to participate if you are 16 or 17 years old, but you must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. There is no upper age limit.

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Altitude

The altitude you experience on this trek is up to 2875m which is slightly under the threshold that is considered high altitude (3000m). However, there is a possibility that some people may notice altitude-related symptoms. The local guides are very experienced in spotting signs of altitude sickness but it is important that you also research the effects so you can be aware of how your body is adjusting. A great source of information can be found at

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Altitude-sickness/Pages/Introduction.aspx> or <http://www.traveldoctor.co.uk/altitude.htm>.

Common mild symptoms of altitude sickness include headache, nausea, loss of appetite, disturbed sleep and fatigue. You must make your guides and tour manager aware of any symptoms immediately so you can be monitored.

Important information about altitude:

- If you begin to show symptoms of moderate altitude sickness, don't go higher.
- If symptoms increase, descend immediately. Your tour guide and tour manager's decision for you to descend must be respected.
- People acclimatise at different rates. Keep aware of your symptoms.
- Stay hydrated. Drink lots of fluids to remain properly hydrated (water, soup, tea, juices etc.). Urine output should be copious and clear to pale yellow.
- Take it easy and don't overexert yourself. Acclimatisation is inhibited by overexertion, dehydration, and alcohol.
- Avoid tobacco, alcohol and other depressant drugs including, barbiturates, tranquillisers, sleeping pills and opiates such as codeine. These decrease the respiratory drive during sleep resulting in a worsening of symptoms.

Medical Declaration

We require a medical form to be completed by everyone upon registering, and any pre-existing conditions, medications used and other medical issues must be specified.

All your data, including medical details, is treated in the strictest confidence. The information will be securely screened by a qualified medical professional, and details provided to your tour manager and local guides so our staff are adequately informed and prepared to support you during the trip. It is a condition of your registration that you give full and accurate details. If any details change, you must update us. By completing the booking form, you are giving consent for us to contact you confidentially with any follow-up questions regarding your health.

If your medical issues at the time of booking represent a concern for your safety and wellbeing, or the safety and wellbeing of others in the group, it may be recommended that you do not take part. If this happens, your deposit will be refunded. If you develop a new medical condition after making a booking and this results in your withdrawal from the Event, this will be treated as a cancellation by you. Please refer to the terms and conditions at the time of booking.

Please note that we will never unreasonably deny participation on a trip nor contravene the Equality Act 2010.



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Health and safety assurance

Your health and safety are our highest priorities, and we are committed to ensuring your trip is not only memorable but also safe.

We closely monitor guidance from the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), which provides up-to-date travel advice and recommendations. All adventure travel involves an element of risk. We will **never operate a trip in an area against the advice of the FCDO**, whether due to health concerns, political instability, natural disasters, or any other safety threat. If travel restrictions in the destination country prevent the trip from going ahead safely, we will offer the option to postpone or cancel your booking **at no cost to you**.

We will keep you fully informed of any updates relevant to your travel arrangements.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to reach out to us at info@different-travel.com.

ATOL

This trip is operated by The Different Travel Company (ATOL 6706) for St Michael's Hospice Hereford (Registered Charity No. 511179).

All the international flights in this brochure are financially protected by the ATOL scheme. When you pay you will be supplied with an ATOL Certificate. Please ask for it and check to ensure that everything you booked (flights, hotels and other services) is listed on it.

Please see our booking conditions for further information about financial protection and the ATOL Certificate go to www.caa.co.uk.

Trip cost

A £375 non-refundable, non-transferable registration fee is payable at the time of booking. You then have two options:

1. **Sponsorship:** You must fundraise a minimum of £3,500 for St Michael's Hospice by 16 July 2027.
2. **Flexi:** You pay trip costs* of £2,075 to Different Travel by 30 July 2027 and also fundraise a minimum of £1,425 for St Michael's Hospice by 16 July 2027.

*NB. Trip costs are based on overall group size and are subject to change. This is the most you would have to pay.

Trip Includes:

- ✓ Return flights from London (inc. airport taxes)
- ✓ All transport in India
- ✓ All accommodation (hotels and camping)
- ✓ Meals
- ✓ Drinking water
- ✓ English-speaking guides and support crew
- ✓ Entrance fees, conservation fees and trek permits
- ✓ UK Different Travel tour manager.

Trip Does Not Include:

- ✗ Transport to UK airport
- ✗ Indian visa (current cost US\$25 + transaction fee)
- ✗ Personal expenses (e.g. drinks, souvenirs, etc.)
- ✗ Vaccinations
- ✗ Travel insurance
- ✗ Tips (approx. £45-50 per trekker)
- ✗ Trek kit and equipment

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Itinerary

Days 1-2 (Saturday 9 – Sunday 10 October 2027): UK – Delhi

Depart UK for Delhi on an overnight flight. Upon arrival the next day, transfer to a central hotel to freshen up and depending on arrival times we may have a sightseeing tour of Delhi before transferring to the railway station to take the overnight sleeper train to Pathankot (2nd class air-conditioned).

Overnight: Sleeper train

Meals: Dinner



Day 3 (Monday 11 October 2027): Pathankot – Dharamshala/McLeodganj

The train arrives in Pathankot in the morning and from the station, you will transfer by road to Dharamshala (approximately 3 hours), where you will check in at the hotel and enjoy the rest of the day at leisure; and perhaps visit the Dalai Lama Palace and the Tibetan government-in-exile buildings, or simply enjoy the atmosphere and browse for souvenirs in the handicraft stalls before enjoying a Tibetan dinner this evening.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Overnight: Hotel



Day 4 (Tuesday 12 October 2027): Dharamshala – Nowli - Kareri Lake

After breakfast, we drive for approximately 2 hours to our starting point of our trek, Nowli village. To begin with the trail is fairly flat as it passes through mixed oak, rhododendron and pine

forest before a steep ascent following the path of the Kareri Nullah Stream. Our campsite

tonight is in a beautiful location close to the Kareri Lake at 2,945m.

Approx. 10km trekking / 6-7 hours.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Overnight: Camping

Day 5 (Wednesday 13 October 2027): Kareri Lake – Kareri Village

Leaving the lake behind we head downhill through mixed forest to arrive at Kareri Village (1,799m), where we camp close to the river for the night.

Approx. 10km trekking / 5-6 hours.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Overnight: Camping

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Day 6 (Thursday 14 October 2027): Kareri Village – Bahl

After breakfast, we start today's walk with a relatively steep ascent through several small villages, enjoying fine views of beautiful meadows and dense pine forests along the way. We descend to a mountain stream to stop for lunch before continuing with a sharp ascent to our next camp in Bahl (2,130m).

Approx. 8km trekking / 6-7 hours.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Overnight: Camping

Day 7 (Friday 15 October 2027): Bahl – Triund

Today is our toughest day of trekking to Triund, the highest point on the trek at 2843m. The day starts with a steep ascent through a mixed forest of oak, rhododendron and cedar trees, stopping at a local chai shop along the way. After lunch, our ascent continues along a winding path until we finally reach Triund, an alpine meadow situated on top of a ridge from where we have amazing views of the peaks of Dhauladhar on one side and the Kangra valley on the other. This is the perfect spot to enjoy the sunset and our final night in the mountains.

Approx. 8km trekking / 7-8 hrs.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Overnight: Camping

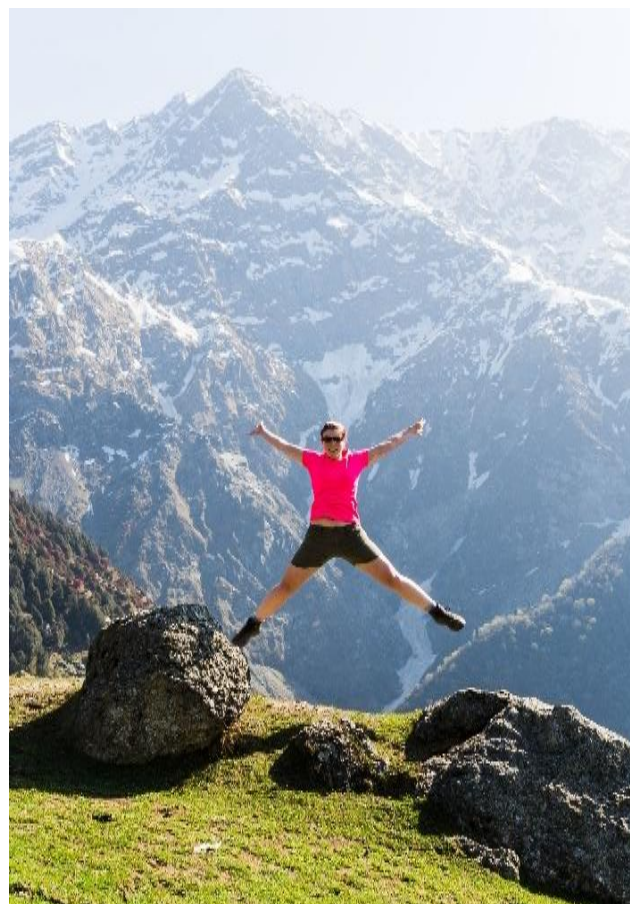
Day 8 (Saturday 17 October 2027) Triund – McLeodganj – Pathankot - Delhi

After rising early to witness the sun rising over the mighty Dhauladhar mountain range we set off for our final day of trekking. Initially, we have a gradual descent over a grassy ridge for a few kilometres, then a steep descent takes us down to Bhagsu waterfall where we stop to enjoy lunch. A further short walk brings us to Bhagsu village where we end our trek and return to Pathankot to take the overnight train back to Delhi.

Approx. 6km trekking / 4 hours.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Overnight: Sleeper train



Day 9 (Sunday 18 October 2027): Delhi

Today we will have some time to explore Old Delhi before our farewell dinner. Depending on the times of your return flight, you may transfer to the airport in the early hours, or alternatively you'll stay at a hotel in Delhi and transfer to the airport on Monday morning.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Overnight: Hotel

Day 10 (Monday 19 October 2027): Delhi - UK

Return flight to the UK.

Meals: Breakfast

N.B. This itinerary may change due to unusual weather, the ability of the group and so on. We will do our best to keep to the itinerary, but we cannot be held responsible for changes that occur outside of our control. In all circumstances, your guide and tour leader will have the final say in the interest of the group's health and safety.