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by sita

Redefining The Wildlife Experiences

Red Panda Expedition

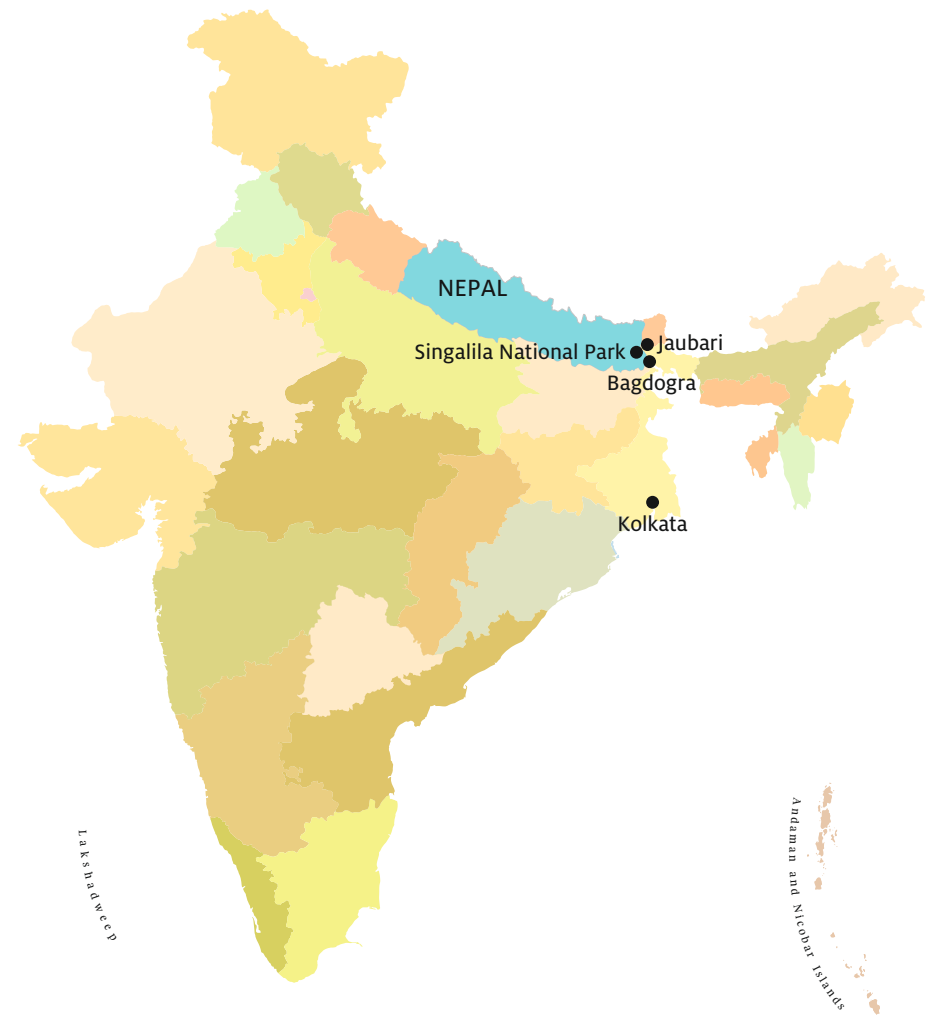
with Shivang Mehta | 04th - 12th December, 2026



Shivang Mehta

Internationally acclaimed photographer and a fellow of International League of Conservation Photographers (iLCP), Shivang Mehta has worn many hats in his 2 decades of journey as a wildlife professional. From being a wildlife guide in Corbett National Park to starting India's pioneering venture in wildlife photo tourism to an accomplished author of award-winning books which went on to become best-sellers to wildlife storytelling through the medium of his photo stories and films. Shivang is also the recipient of the ToFT Tigers award for his contribution in developing alternative wildlife tourism models by working with prominent wildlife lodges of India in locations outside the protected areas through the medium of DSLR camera trapping technology. Shivang and his team now work with the Government of India for documenting Project Cheetah - the world's largest intercontinental translocation of a large carnivore.

Map



Trip Highlight

- Immerse yourself in a 5-night adventure blending wildlife tracking, cultural encounters, scenic walks and expert photography guidance.
- Track the elusive red panda in Singalila National Park, guided by expert trackers through rhododendron and bamboo forests.
- The park's bird reserve boasts over 300 species featuring prized sightings like the Satyr Tragopan, Black-throated Parrotbills, Golden-breasted Fulvetta, Fire-tailed Myzornis, the Black-faced Laughing Thrush, leopard cat and barking deer.
- Enjoy short treks along mountain ridges with breathtaking views of the Himalayan peaks.
- Visit remote villages, meet local families and experience the traditions of mountain communities.
- Learn photography tips and techniques from a celebrity mentor accompanying you throughout the journey.
- Sharpen your photography skills in a pre-departure session with the mentor with optional gear rentals available.

Park Highlights

Singalila National Park

- Located in the eastern Himalaya, the park spans the Singalila Ridge at altitudes of 2,000–3,600 m.
- Dense forests of bamboo, rhododendron, oak, and magnolia create a rich and diverse landscape.
- Ideal habitat for the elusive Red Panda, alongside mammals like the Yellow-throated Marten and Barking Deer.
- Over 300 bird species thrive here, including Kalij Pheasants, Parrotbills, Rufous-vented Tit, Fire-tailed Myzornis, and Golden-breasted Fulvetta.

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Kolkata

Today, our representative will meet you upon arrival at the Kolkata airport. You will then be transferred to your hotel.

Kolkata: A city that thrives on tea and conversation, Kolkata is a place that takes you in from the moment you arrive. A city of many firsts and founded on the model of London, she is both stuck in time and advancing with rapid development. Here heated debates break out over fish, film stars, and football with rivalries to match the Capulets and Montagues. Colonial era buildings in the north and centre, art deco creations in the south, and the steel and glass skyscrapers of today represent the very essence of multiculturalism of the City of Joy.

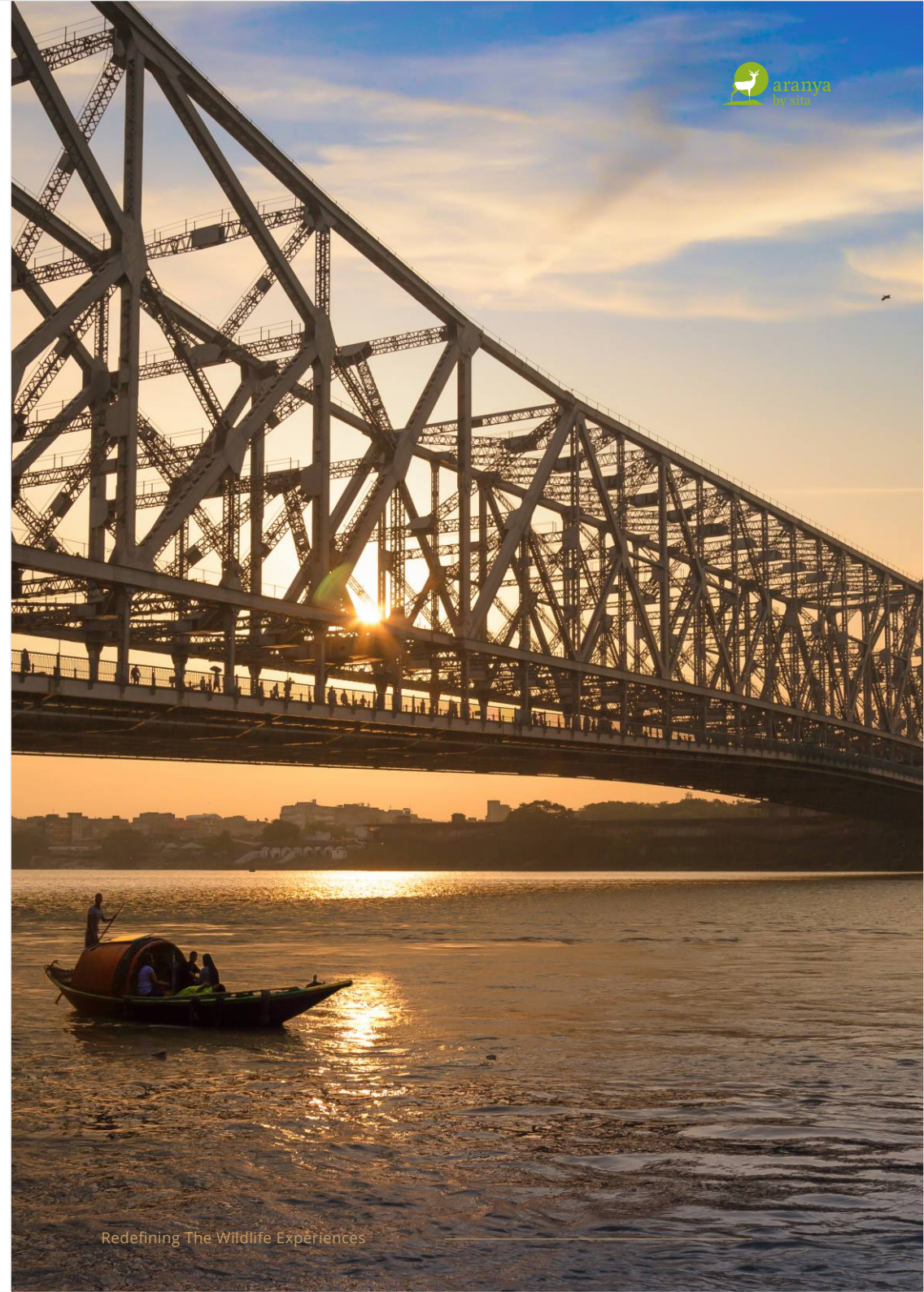
Overnight: Taj Bengal (Luxury Room/Breakfast)

Day 2: A Day in Kolkata

Today will proceed for an orientation tour of Kolkata with English Speaking guide that includes a drive past the iconic Howrah Bridge, Victoria Memorial, Raj Bhawan, Writers' Building, and other important landmarks. You will also visit the workshops of the idol makers of Kumartuli famous for their larger-than-life and conceptual idols of Goddess Durga and her children for the annual Durga Puja festival.

Meet your accompanying photographer mentor over high tea at the hotel, followed by a quick introduction to the adventure ahead.

Overnight: Taj Bengal (Luxury Room/Breakfast)



Day 03: Kolkata – Bagdogra – Jaubari (Nepal)

Flight from Kolkata to Bagdogra / Indigo 6E-751 [1255/1405 hours nonstop/Economy/Baggage Allowance –20 kgs per person]

Drive to Jaubari, crossing into Nepal. Settle in at The Red Panda Outpost and enjoy optional afternoon birding.

Today's journey takes you to Jaubari - the heart of Red Panda territory and the base camp for your expedition. The total drive time is approximately 6 hours, including border formalities.

Drive Details

- Bagdogra - Panitanki (Indian border): approx. 45 min
- Panitanki - Kakarbitta (Nepal border): approx. 15 min
- Kakarbitta - Jaubari: approx. 4 hrs by Toyota Innova
- Last stretch: Switch to 4x4 for approx. an hour on non-metalled forest roads
- Packed lunch included; no food outlets en route.

Good to Know

- Indian Rupees are accepted for tipping in Nepal. Suggested tip: USD 200 per person for porters, helpers, trackers.
- Carry an international travel adapter; Indian plug converters work in Nepal.
- Visa requirements: Multiple-entry Indian visa (valid for at least 10 days) and a 7–10 day Nepal visa.

About Singalila National Park

Native to the Eastern Himalayas, the Red Panda is a rare, arboreal mammal and a highly sought-after species due to its elusiveness. Singalila National Park is one of the few remaining places on Earth where wild Red Pandas can still be found. Its temperate and subtropical habitat ranges between 7,000 and 12,000 feet (2,130–3,660 m) above sea level, providing an ideal environment for them to thrive. The area is also home to other rare species such as the Pangolin, Clouded Leopard, and Leopard Cat.

Situated within the mighty Himalayan range, Singalila and its surrounding areas are a wonderland for wildlife enthusiasts and trekkers. The terrain is challenging and the weather can be unforgiving, but with our dedicated staff and guides, we ensure you have all the support needed to witness one of the rarest species on the planet.

Overnight: The Red Panda Outpost (Standard Room; Breakfast; Packed Lunch for India–Nepal journey, Dinner)

IMPORTANT: The Red Panda Expedition in Jaubari requires multiple entry Indian Visa/E visa with at least 10 days validity and a 7-10 days Nepal Visa.



Day 04 to Day 7: Jaubari (Nepal)

For the duration of stay, an expert tracking team leaves early each morning to look for signs of the Red Panda in the contiguous forests around Singalila National Park in Nepal and India. Guests have the option to join this morning ritual and assist local trackers on established trails. Although there is some flexibility, the primary goal of this expedition is to spend enough time observing and photographing this elusive species.

After a hearty breakfast, guests can enjoy birdwatching in the area, which is home to over 350 species of birds.

Once the tracking team reports fresh signs or a sighting of the Red Panda, guests move to the location with a naturalist. 4x4 Boleros are used if the sighting is near a motorable road. On certain occasions, or for a more active experience, guests may hike to the site depending on its location. The last leg often involves trekking through dense forests to reach the sighting spot.

Depending on how the day unfolds, guests may enjoy a picnic lunch on-site or return to Red Panda Outpost for lunch.

Late afternoons are usually misty, offering time for reading or more birdwatching around the lodge.

Evenings are spent relaxing by the fire, followed by a shared dinner before retiring to a warm bed.

Overnight: The Red Panda Outpost (Standard Room; Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 08: Jaubari – Bagdogra – Kolkata

After breakfast, check out early and begin your journey to Bagdogra. (Approx. 6 hr)

En route, we will complete border formalities- exiting Nepal via the Kakarvitta land border and re-entering India through the Panitanki land border. Please keep your passports and visa copies ready for inspection. Keep photocopies of your passport/visa, passport size photos and a pen ready to fill forms. Just in case. The accompanying naturalist will provide assistance during the immigration process.

Flight from Bagdogra to Kolkata / Indigo 6E-6135 [1950/2055 hours] nonstop / Economy/Baggage Allowance - 20 kgs per person]

Check in to the Kolkata and say goodbye to your accompanying naturalist.

Overnight: Taj City Centre New Town (Deluxe Room/Breakfast)

Day 09: Departure

In-time, transfer to your flight to fly back home.



Hotels

Taj Bengal Kolkata

Serenity and a quiet air of luxury welcome you to Taj Bengal, Kolkata, a landmark hotel in the Alipore neighbourhood of the city. Within walking distance of prominent landmarks, it is surrounded by lush greenery. Inside, the five-storied marble and stone atrium features dramatic lighting, priceless art and a tapestry of textures and colours that define contemporary elegance.



The Red Panda Outpost Jaubari

The Red Panda Outpost is part of the eco-village of Jaubari, developed on a community tourism model that provides meaningful employment to local residents and encourages them to protect the surrounding environment. It has five thoughtfully designed rooms, each with an attached bathroom, offering an intimate and unpretentious stay. At its center is an old wooden house where guests gather around a bukhari fire in the evenings, enjoying wholesome home-cooked meals and sharing stories over traditional millet liquor, tongba. Comfort is balanced with simplicity—reliable electricity, heating, and hot water ensure a restful stay, while the changing landscapes outside invite quiet reflection. Guests wake to the call of thrushes, explore mist-laden trails, and return to a space that feels like home.



Taj City Centre New Town Kolkata

Amongst the characteristic bustle of Kolkata, lies an oasis of urban hospitality, the Taj City Centre New Town, Kolkata. As a distinguished hotel nearby Kolkata airport, this property offers top-of-the-line amenities, impeccable service, and a calming escape from the chaos of the city. Blending vintage charm with a modern personality, the interiors of the Taj City Centre New Town tell the story of Kolkata with pride.



Travel Information

What to Carry?

Since you will be traveling to a remote location on the India-Nepal border with limited road connectivity and amenities outside our homestay, here's a helpful packing list to refer to before you embark on your Red Panda Expedition.

Essential Gear

- Backpack – Lightweight, waterproof, and comfortable for short treks
- Binoculars
- Camera with Zoom Lens, Extra Batteries and Data Cards
- Flashlight / Headlamp
- Trekking Poles – Helpful for steep and rugged terrain. Please note we can also provide locally made bamboo poles
- The experience will be on foot, so versatile focal lengths such as 100–400mm, 200–600mm, 100–300mm or 180–600mm will be highly effective. If you prefer to bring prime lenses, porters will be available to help carry your equipment.
- Tripods are recommended and wide-angle lenses are ideal for capturing stunning landscape photography.

Clothing & Footwear

- Waterproof & Windproof Jacket – To stay dry and warm in misty forests
- Moisture-Wicking Base Layers – Lightweight for breathability
- Insulated Fleece or Down Jacket – For warmth at higher altitudes
- Hiking Pants – Durable and comfortable for long hikes
- Gloves & Hat / Beanie – For warmth in chilly weather
- Hiking Boots – Sturdy, waterproof, and with a good grip

- Extra Socks – Wool or synthetic socks to keep feet warm and dry

Health & Safety

- Personal Medications - Any prescribed medicines you need and a first aid kit that might include bandaids, altitude sickness medication, pain relievers etc,
- Insect Repellent
- Sunscreen & Lip Balm – For protection from harsh sun at high altitudes
- Rehydration Salts / Electrolytes – To prevent dehydration

Precautions and Points to Keep in Mind

- **Altitude Sickness:** Singalila's altitude ranges from 7,000 to 12,000 feet, while Red Panda Outpost is located at 10,000 feet. Only a small percentage of guests encounter altitude sickness for the initial one or two days, but basic care and precautions can help avoid most issues. Rarely does a serious condition occur. A few of our staff members are trained in basic first aid. In case of a medical emergency, we have a vehicle available 24x7 and a doctor for consultation virtually. In case further medical assistance is required, guests would need to travel up to 2 hours away, and 4 hours to reach a big hospital.
- **Stay Hydrated:** Drink plenty of water to help your body adjust to the altitude and acclimatize. Avoid drinking alcohol during the first two days and consume alcohol and caffeine in moderation for the rest of the trip.
- **Carry Essential Medicines:** Since you will be traveling to a remote mountainous area, remember to carry any essential medication and personal prescriptions.
- **Layered Clothing:** The weather can be unpredictable, with fluctuations in temperatures and strong winds. During winter,

temperatures can reach -5 degrees at night, while days are usually around 4-5 degrees.

- **Limited Connectivity:** Mobile networks are patchy, and basic internet connectivity is available, although there might be breakdowns in the network occasionally which take time to fix. We advise you to activate international roaming for the duration of your trip, and inform your family/friends of your itinerary beforehand.
- **Carry Cash over Cards:** ATMs are available in and around Bagdogra airport and not after that, so carry enough cash for expenses.
- **Sustainable Travel:** Carry refillable insulated water bottles, avoid plastic waste, and respect wildlife guidelines to minimize your impact on the fragile ecosystem.

Note: Observing the Red Panda in the wild is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. We limit our viewing time up to 30 minutes for a specific sighting. Guests can observe these elusive creatures from a safe distance, so as not to stress them

24 Hour Assistance

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