

Tea Gardens Ride and Kaziranga, India

(5 nights ride)

Itinerary

Day 1

Fly from Delhi to Dibrugarh. The flight departs Delhi at c 10:00 and arrives Dibrugarh at c. 14.00, normally stopping en route at Guwahati before continuing onto Dibrugarh.

On arrival at Dibrugarh you will be transferred by vehicle (c. 30 minutes' drive) to your accommodation at either Mancotta or Chowkidinghee Heritage Chang Bungalow.

Settle into your room. In the afternoon meet the horses and your guide and have a short introductory ride around the tea estate.

(Riding time c. 1 hour)



Dinner and overnight at your bungalow.

Please note that the following itinerary is a proposed itinerary which is subject to change due to local conditions such as the weather. The order of the rides may change. It may also be possible to amend the itinerary when you are in India and you should discuss this with your hosts and guide.

The itinerary includes about 18 hours riding over 6 days.

DIBRUGARH is the gateway to the “Hidden Land” of Eastern Arunachal Pradesh and Northern Myanmar. The Ahoms from Thailand came through Northern Myanmar to this area in the 13th century to establish their Empire which thrived in the ancient land of Assam. It is the “Camellia” town of Upper Assam, an undisturbed haven, with its rich tea gardens resembling a lush green carpet. Experience and enjoy the richness of these tea gardens while staying at the

Heritage Chang Bungalows. These are constructed on stilts and are situated in a serene atmosphere free from pollution.

*When the British established their tea plantations in the mid-19th century they quickly built comfortable bungalows designed to make life as pleasant as possible in what appeared to them as a hostile and strange land. One of the main features of these buildings has given rise to their name – **CHANG BUNGALOWS**. Chang in the local language means “raised on stilts” and the design served multi purposes- to keep the house cool by allowing a breeze to blow underneath and to keep both water and animals out.*

Day 2: Riding at Dibrugarh on Greenwood Trail

Today's ride takes you into a different tea plantation and on through the countryside and paddy fields. After a picnic lunch in a tree house you continue riding and later return to the Chang bungalow.



For more information contact in the saddle. Tel: 01299 272 997 Fax: 01299 272 935, Email: rides@inthesaddle.com www.inthesaddle.com

The rest of the afternoon is at leisure.

In the evening there is a display of Bihu dance on the lawns of the bungalow.

(Riding time c. 4 hours)

Dinner and overnight at the Chang Bungalow.

BIHU is the most popular folk dance of Assam. The people of Assam are very proud of its unique position among all other such dances of India. Except for Bhangra (the popular folk dance of Punjab), there is no other folk dance in India which can compete with the rhythmic exuberance of the Bihu dance.

Day 3: Riding at Dibrugarh with Rukmini Cruise

The ride today takes you through the tea gardens and along the banks of the Brahmaputra. You finish the ride on the riverfront and then embark on a private boat cruise to an island in the midst of the mighty Brahmaputra.



Have a picnic lunch in this peaceful spot.

You could try kayaking on the river before returning late in the afternoon to the mainland.

On your way back to the bungalow you may visit Mukul Tea Estate where you can see how organic hand rolled green tea is made.

(Riding time c. 3 hours)

Dinner and overnight at the Chang Bungalow.

Mukul Tea Estate is an area of 27 ha and is about 8kms (c. 30 minutes drive) from Mancotta Bungalow. The entire organic garden is set in pristine surroundings. Within its boundary the estate has a tea plantation, a rich bamboo stand and a wet land which attracts numerous bird species. Visitors can enjoy first hand the experience of plucking tea by hand and preparing roasted green tea.

Day 4: Visit Sivasagar and arrive Kaziranga

After breakfast, you set off on the 80kms journey to Kaziranga. After about two hours you arrive at

Sivasagar where you visit the Ahom monuments and temples which encompass the 600 year old history of the Ahom Dynasty.

After lunch at Sivasagar continue driving to Kaziranga National Park (140kms, c. three hours' driving) and check in at your hotel for two nights.

Dinner and overnight at Infinity Resort.

SIVASAGAR was once the capital of the Ahom Kings. The Shans, who came to this area in the early 13th century from Thailand through Northern Myanmar, ruled for 600 years. The Siva Temple in Sivasagar, built by the Ahoms, is believed to be the tallest of all existing Hindu temples. Ruins of the Ahom palaces and monuments dot the landscape around this historical town.

Centuries before the arrival of the British, this part of the world was controlled by a number of tribal chieftains. In the town of Sivasagar, one can still see remaining well preserved relics including the largest and oldest amphitheatre of Asia (Rang Ghar). The Tai-Ahom Museum of Sivasagar contains some of the relics of the Ahom period such as swords, clothes, manuscripts and sundry artifacts

Day 5: At Kaziranga National Park

A full day game safari in the park.

This includes one elephant safari and two jeep safaris.

The elephant safaris are normally at 5:00am and 6:00am and are 45 minutes in duration. Please note that the elephant ride cannot be guaranteed and it is also optional if you would prefer not to do it.

Jeep safaris set out in the morning between 7am and 9.30am and in the afternoon they leave from 1.30pm to 3pm. The jeep safaris last about 1.5 to 2.5 hours depending on local conditions. They take place in four different areas of the National Park.



KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK is a World Heritage Site, where more than 75% of the world's total

population of the great Indian One Horned Rhinoceros can be found. It lies on the southern bank of the Brahmaputra River and is one of the oldest parks of Assam.

Besides rhinos, there are over 1200 Asiatic Water Buffalo, over 1000 elephants and over 80 tigers. Swamp deer, Barking deer and Hog deer can also be seen.

About 400 species of birds are found in Kaziranga National Park including Swamp Francolin, Great Hornbill, Pallas's Fish Eagle, Pied Falconets, Greater Adjutant Stork and Long billed Vulture. Sightings are excellent and always a great experience. The Park is a dazzling mosaic of dense rain-forest, tall elephant grass and swathes of reeds interspersed with vast tracts of marshes and shallow pools that are a favourite haunt of the rhino.

Dinner and overnight at Infinity Resort.

Day 6 Depart

Depart Kaziranga and be transferred to the airport.

The transfer to Dibrugarh is included in the rate (220kms/4.5 hours). It is also possible to be transferred to Jorhat or Guwahati airport (at extra charge).

Accommodation

When the British established their tea plantations in the mid 19th century they quickly built comfortable bungalows designed to make life as pleasant as possible in what was, to them, a hostile and strange land. One of the main features of these buildings has given rise to their name – Chang Bungalows. Chang in the local language means “raised on stilts” and the design served multi-purposes – to keep the house cool by allowing the breeze to blow underneath and to keep both water and animals out.

At Dibrugarh you stay in a restored Chang bungalow, once home to the estate manager. There are two bungalows used for guests – Mancotta and Chowkidinghee. Both are set in beautiful and well kept tea gardens. They are spacious, elegant and comfortable and are staffed by competent and friendly local Indian personnel.



Mancotta bungalow

Mancotta bungalow has six bedrooms, each with en suite shower and loo. There are two spacious rooms on the first floor. Each has a large king sized bed.



Mancotta bedroom

On the ground floor there are two standard rooms each with twin beds.

There are also two single rooms in an annexe. These two rooms do not have air conditioning.

There is a large sitting room with open fire place and large verandas with mosquito protection.

Chowkidingee (formerly known as South Jalanagar) has a total of three bedrooms, each with en suite shower/loo.

There are two spacious rooms on the first floor. One has a double bed and the other twin beds.

On the ground floor there is a standard room with twin beds. This room does not have air conditioning.

Chowkidingee has a comfortable sitting room and a lovely veranda.



Veranda at Chowkidingee

At **Kaziranga** you stay in a comfortable tourist class hotel. We normally use the Infinity Resorts www.infinityresorts.com. The resort is set in the midst of a thick bamboo grove, together with a wide variety of medicinal plants and a plantation of betel nuts and fruit trees. There are 16 spacious guest rooms designed in the style of old Assamese houses set atop bamboo stilts.



Please note that the Infinity Resorts presently does not have any bar facility and does not serve any type of liquor.