

Tea Gardens Ride, India

(3 nights)

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: Riding at Dibrugarh

This morning you might join a tour around a tea estate known for producing high quality CTC teas (CTC is

short for crush/cut, tear, curl which is a method of processing tea).

During your tour you learn all about tea - its origin, how it is grown, about tea tasting and its quality.

Please note: There is no tea plucking between December and mid-March and hence the actual manufacturing process of tea cannot be demonstrated when visiting the factory during this period. The factory is closed on Mondays.

Return to the Chang Bungalow for a light lunch.

Transfer to the airport for your flight (if returning to Delhi this departs at 14:05).

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