

South Col Expeditions

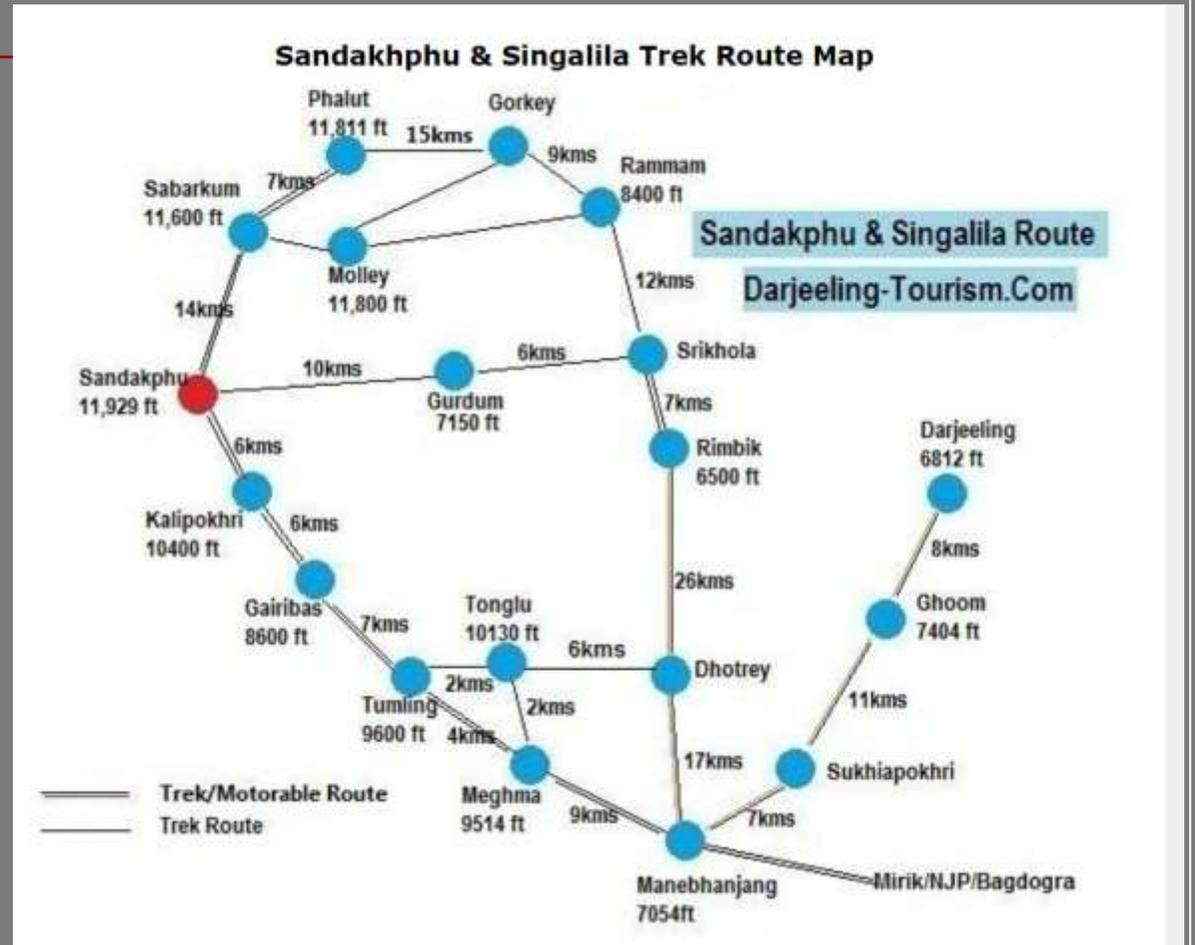


The Kangchenjunga group from Phalut

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The Singalila Ridge Trek (8 days Bagdogra to Bagdogra)

- This is one of the finest ridge walks which covers soaring views of Kangchenjunga along with three other 8000 metre peaks Everest, Lhotse and Makalu.
- This trek is moderate in nature as it does not go more than 3600 metres and the walking is for 6-7 hours a day both uphill and downhill. The trek has been carefully planned by South Col to ensure that the trekker has the minimum discomfort and proper acclimatization which is most important.
- The costs of this trek is Indian Rs 38,500/-Meals not included in the tea houses and in Darjeeling, Exclusions apply. For details please see page 7.



Trip Highlights



- A walk along the high ridge between India on one side and Nepal on the other with the valleys of Sikkim in front
- Views of four 8000 metre peaks from Sandakphu – Everest, Kangchenjunga, Lhotse and Makalu.
- Verdant forests of the Eastern Himalaya rich in bird life.
- The Singalila National Park is also the home of the red panda and many naturalists come here to see and study red pandas.
- A loop trek not crossing 12,000 feet so moderate in nature with tea houses along the way.
- The minus point in this trek is that there is a rough jeepable road from Manebhanjan to Sandakphu and one will encounter a few landrovers on this road on the second and third day of the trek. This has been there from the 1980s.

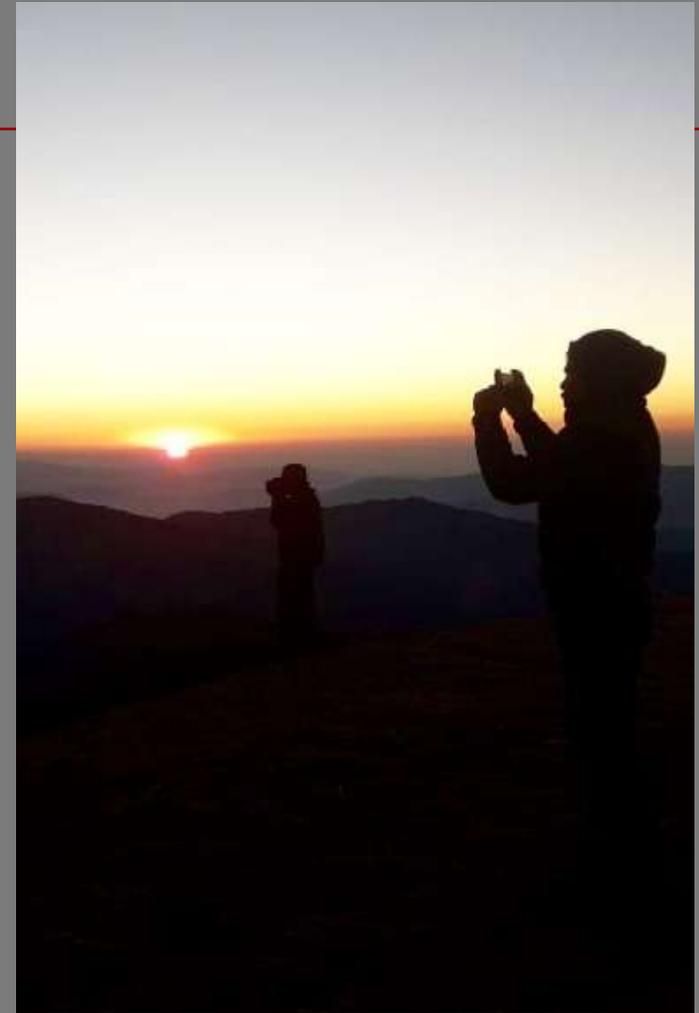
Who should join this trek?



- A good choice for most trekkers moderate level of fitness required.
 - 1) Walking times: average 6-7 hours walking per day some longer days Sandakphu to Phalut 8-9 hours
 - 2) Altitude: up to 3625m
 - 3) Terrain: mostly following well travelled trails and paved paths and steps.
 - 4) Remoteness: the trek is close to Darjeeling and mobile phones will work on a few days on the route like Tumling, Sandakphu, Gorkey etc
- 5) This is a tea house trek with basic rooms in the lodges and food from a menu at each lodge similar to Nepal.

The Singalila Ridge Trek Itinerary - 1

- Day 01 - Bagdogra to Manebhajan by vehicle 3 hours and then 45 minutes by Landrover to Tumling 9600 feet
- We stop for the night at Tumling as there are good lodges to stay and a good view in the morning of the mountains.
- Day 02: Tumling to Kalapokhri 10,400 feet 13 km 5 hours
- The trail leaves the village of Tumling and then enters Nepal for a brief while through the village of Jaubari about 45 minutes away. From Jaubari the trail drop down to Gairibash. We can stop in Gairibash for a cup of tea at the teashop. From Gairibash there is a steady uphill climb of about 2.5 hours to Kalapokhri.
- Day 03: Kalapokhri to Sandakphu 11,929 feet 3 hours
- The next day is a the day for views we now leave the valley and start moving into the higher country. From Kalapokhri goes down and then climbs up to Bikeybhanjan. From Bikheybhanjan through a series of zig zags the trail eventually reaches the Sandakphu lodges on a ridge top. This is a short and strenuous day and we should be in Sandapkhu by early lunchtime.
- Day 04: Sandakphu to Phalut 11,811 feet 21 km 8 hours
- This is the most beautiful walk of the trek and is largely level following the ridge of the Singalila with mountains on either side - the Everest group to the west and the Kangchenjunga group in front. It is a 180 degree spectacular view one of the finest in the Himalayas. After about 5 hours we reach Sabarkum where we stop for lunch. From here the trail begins to climb through a series of zig zags to the Phalut trekkers Hut . Phalut is the tri junction of Bengal Nepal and Sikkim.



The Singalila Ridge Trek Itinerary - 2



Everest, Lhotse, Makalu and Chamlang

- **Day 05 Phalut to Gorkhey 9600 feet 15 km 5-6 hours**
- The trail starts dropping from Phalut through forests of chestnut, pine and fir. The trail loses altitude steadily all the way down. We should reach Gorkhey in the afternoon and have a free evening to enjoy the forests and a good dinner
- **Day 06 Gorkhey to Sirikhola 7500 feet 18 km 8 hours**
- The trail follows the river and comes initially to the village of Ramam in about 3 hours. After a stop for tea at Ramam we continue downhill following the valley and through the verdant forest. By early evening we should reach the lodges of Sirikhola where our trek ends near the river.
- **Day 07 - Sirikhola to Darjeeling night at Darjeeling**
- We drive by jeep to Darjeeling which would take around 4 hours and reach in time for lunch, a hot shower and a good meal.
- **Day 08 Darjeeling to Bagdogra by vehicle and onto home destinations**
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The Singalila Ridge Trek Costs 2020

- **For Indian Nationals Indian Rs 38,500 /- per person meals at tea house and in Darjeeling extra - budget around Rs 1000 per day for meals on the trek.**
- The cost is per person for Bagdogra to Bagdogra(8 days) as per the itinerary given.
- Costs given above are at current rates and may change without notice. Changes if any will be notified 3 months before the trek.

Costs include

- All necessary permits and Kangchendzonga National Park permits as needed.
- **All stay in lodges and one night in Darjeeling on twin sharing basis.**
- All transport in private vehicles and jeeps - Bagdogra to Manebhanjan; Manebhanjan to Tumling; Srikhola to Darjeeling and Darjeeling to Bagdogra.
- Cost of porters/guides/ponies and other support staff on the trek is covered. Please note that porters or pony will carry one duffel bag or backpack not exceeding 12 kgs in weight for each trekker comprising of personal items, clothing, sleeping bag etc.

Costs not included

- Flight Cost/Train costs to reach Bagdogra/New Jalpaiguri
- **Meals on the trek and in Darjeeling not covered.**
- Client travel and medical insurance of any kind. Emergency evacuation costs if needed.
- Personal clothing and equipment; sleeping bag; down/ goretek jacket, medicines for personal use etc.
- Air fare from residence country to India and back
- Cost of covid 19 certificate if needed before the trek.
- Tips to porters and guide at the end of trek - we will give a guideline on this before the trek.

Why trek to Singalila Ridge with South Col?



- South Col is a small, personalized firm specializing in treks in the Himalayan region. **Sujoy is one of the few trekkers to have visited the region way back in 1980! Our trek leaders have a huge experience with this trek.**
- We are keenly aware of the fragility of environment and cultures in which we trek and recognize our responsibility in maintaining them. "Take pictures, leave only foot prints" is our motto.
- Trekkers get personalized attention both in the planning stage as well as during the trek itself and put a lot of emphasis on the safety of our team.
- Support team of guides and porters as needed are personally supervised by the trek leader to ensure that the clients are comfortable and well looked after.

The Singalila Ridge Trek FAQ #1

How fit do I have to be to do a trek? Whilst you do not need to be super-fit, you need to be fit enough to comfortably walk for 5-6 hours per day in the mountains on reasonable trails. You will definitely need to walk for around an hour at least every day to get fit. If you can spend some time in the gym it would help. Walking uphill/stairs etc also helps a great deal.

What is a typical group? Will I fit in? Groups range in size from 6 up to 12, and typically comprise a range of nationalities and experience. So far, all of our groups have got along very well. One of the attractions of such a trip is the chance to meet people with different backgrounds and personalities.

Do I need to buy special equipment? Usually our clients simply bring their existing clothing and equipment. However, if you do not have an item on our equipment list you will have to buy or borrow this. Please check the equipment list which we will send out.

I am a single trekker. How does this work? Normally single trekkers have no problems fitting in with a group. Normally single trekkers share rooms or tents with other trekkers of the same sex, but if we have an odd-number we ensure that a room or tent is organized accordingly.

Will I be able to deal with the high altitude? Our itineraries are designed so that our clients ascend at a sensible and safe rate. The effects of altitude are felt by everyone, even the guides and Sherpas, but most people find that gentle acclimatization allows them to reach their high point without any problems. We will be monitoring this closely on the trek and in the event of any problems we will ensure that there is no compromise on safety. For details on AMS visit

http://www.ismmed.org/np_altitude_tutorial.htm#prevention



The Singalila Ridge Trek FAQ #2

Where do we stay on the trek? We stay in tea houses either rooms or dormitories. Meals are available at the tea houses.

Where do we eat our meals? Meals are available at the tea houses. You are encouraged to bring chocolates, nuts, energy bars etc with you.

Where do we get water during the trip? It is our suggestion that in order to save money, trekkers carry iodine tablets or lugols solution or chlorine with them so that they can purify the water every day.

What type of shoes or boots should I wear? The proper foot wear depends on the trek. The Singalila trek should be done in boots with firm ankle support. Having said that you will find locals and porters trekking in sneakers! Shoes and boots are best purchased before your arrival for the trek with proper break in.

What will the weather be like? October November is the post monsoon season so we expect clear sunny days and cold nights. Temperatures in the day can range between 15 and 20 degrees Celsius while nights would be between 0 and 6 celsius. Higher up the temperatures will be less and being autumn snow is not likely though a freak snow storm cannot be ruled out!

How should I give my gear to the porter? Ideally the gear should be given to the porter /ponyman in a duffle bag locked and this will be returned to the client in the evening. As you may not be able to access the duffle bag during the day please carry the essentials like water, jacket, camera, sweets etc in your daypack.

Terms and Conditions #1

CANCELLATION POLICY

- The cancellation policy and refunds available are given below:
- 0-7 days before the start of the trek =75%
- 8 -15 days before the start of the trek = 50%
- 16-30 days before the start of the trek = 35%
- 31-45 days before the start of the trek = 30%
- 46 days and above = 20%



IN CASE OF LEAVING THE GROUP

- If due to illness or any other reason a client has to leave the group and go down or wait at a lodge for the group to pick him/her up on the way back, all expenses including lodging, fooding and any porter/guide related expenses if any are to be borne by the individual client over and above the trek fees paid for the trek. There are also no refunds for leaving a trek before completion.

HIRING OF PONIES ETC

- In the eventuality of a client needed the services of a pony to come down to lower altitudes, the cost of hiring the pony will be paid by the client.

EVACUATION BY HELICOPTER

- In the eventuality of not being covered by emergency helicopter evacuation insurance and an evacuation is considered necessary, the cost of the evacuation will be paid by the client in advance to the helicopter company/travel agent etc as deemed necessary.

Terms and Conditions #2

CANCELLATION OF LUKLA FLIGHTS (IF YOU ARE GOING TO THE EVEREST REGION)

- In case the Kathmandu to Lukla flight is cancelled, the additional cost for hotel accommodation in Kathmandu is to be paid by the client over and above the contracted days accommodation provided.
- In case the Lukla to Kathmandu flight is cancelled, the client has the following options:
- Continue to remain in Lukla at the client's cost (both fooding and accommodation) and try for a flight the next day or day after.
- Depart from Lukla if possible using the services of a helicopter usually US \$ 500per person. In this case the one way flight cancellation charges will be refunded to the client.

LODGES/CAMPING SITES ON THE TREK

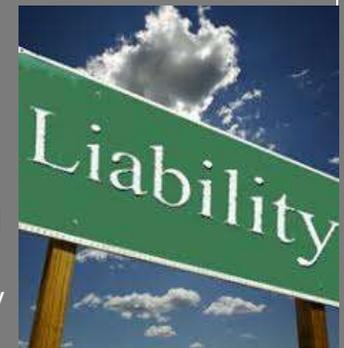
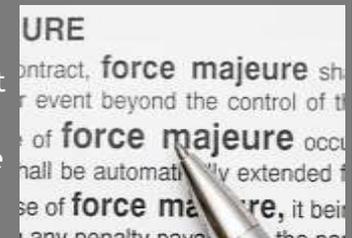
- The choice of lodges/camping sites to be used on the trek will be decided by South Col and clients will have to stay at these designated lodges/camps. Clients are not permitted to choose their own lodges on the route.

TREK ROUTE

- The trek route and day wise schedule will be fixed by South Col and will have to be followed by the client.

RISKS AND LIABILITY

- The trek is in a remote mountain area and has certain additional dangers and risks, some of which include: physical exertion for which the client should be prepared; weather extremes subject to sudden and unexpected changes; remoteness from normal medical services; evacuation difficulties.
- In the event of injury or illness South Col Expeditions (Sujoy Das) or its Staff can, at the clients cost arrange any medical treatment and emergency evacuation service as it or they deem necessary for the health and safety of the client.



South Col Founder Profile

Sujoy Das has been trekking and photographing in the Himalayas for more than thirty five years.

His notable treks include: Winter ascent of Kala Pattar peak (Everest region) Dec 2003; Everest Base Camp 18,500 feet (2001); Thorung-la pass/Annapurna Circuit 17,746 feet (2000); Annapurna Base Camp 14,300 feet (1999); Gokyo Ri peak Everest region 18,275 feet (1998); Rupkund Lake, Garhwal 16,200 feet (1996); Kangchendzonga Base Camp North and Green Lakes 16,875 feet (1987); Dorji La peak North Sikkim 18,644 feet (1986); crossing of Lhonak-la pass North Sikkim (1987).

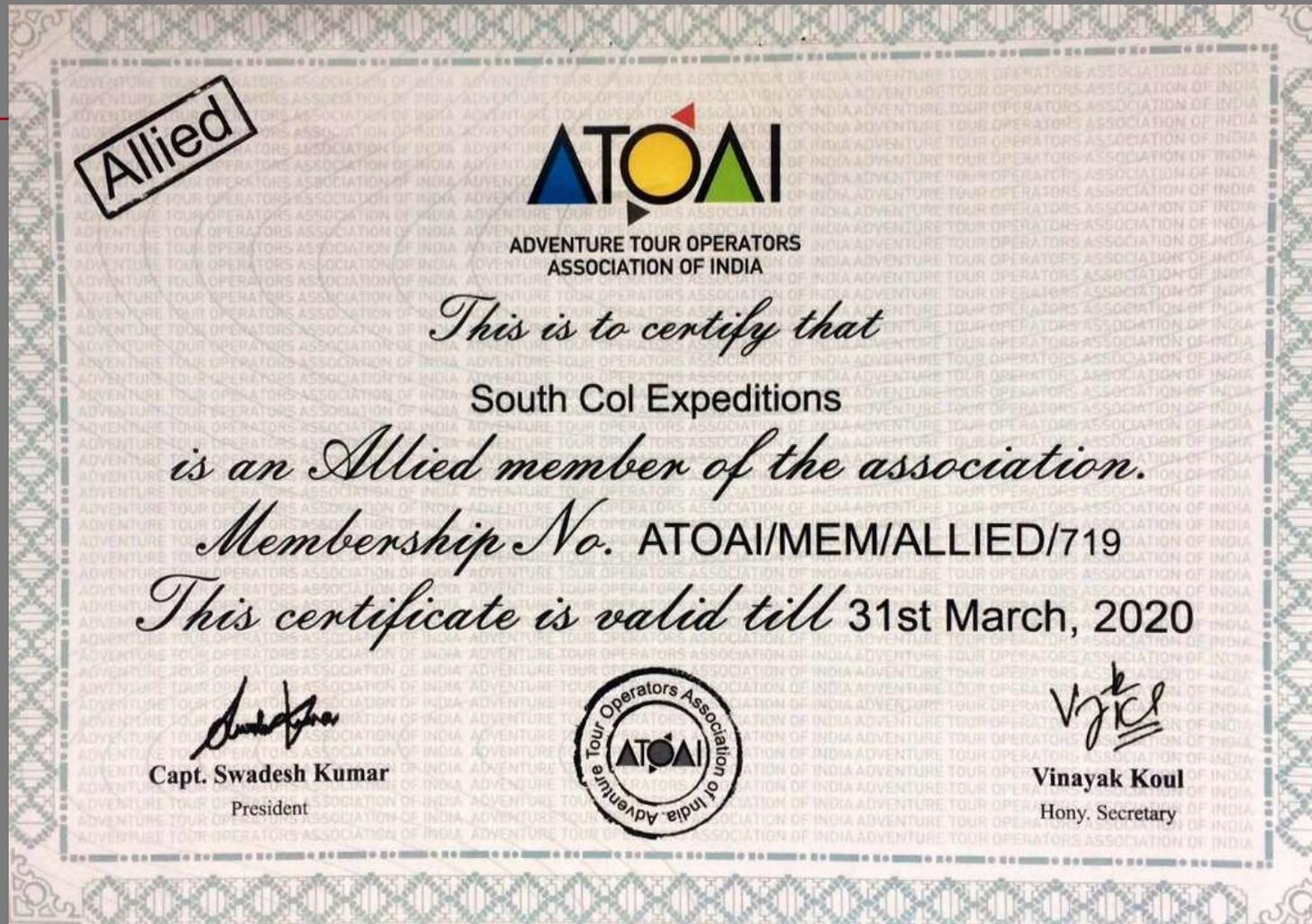
He has visited the Annapurna region a dozen times including three visits to the Base Camp and the entire circuit of Annapurna. He has trekked in the Everest region more than fifteen times including the winter of 2003-04. In the Eastern Himalaya he has trekked the Singalila ridge of Sandakphu and Phalut six times and made four visits to the alp of Dzongri in West Sikkim. In September 2009 he trekked across seven passes in Ladakh from the monastery of Lamayuru to Padum in Zaskar.

He has been an invited speaker at the Mussoorie Mountain Festival 2017 and Mountain Echoes - the Bhutan Literary Festival 2019.

He is the joint author and photographer of a number of books like Sikkim- A Travellers Guide, Nepal Himalaya - A Journey Through Time, Everest Reflections on the Solukhumbu, Lonely Planet - Nepal for the Indian Traveller. His essays and photographs have been published in books and magazines worldwide. To view his photographs of the Himalaya please visit www.sujoydas.com. He can be contacted at sujoyrdas@gmail.com



Membership



Om Mani Padme Hum!

