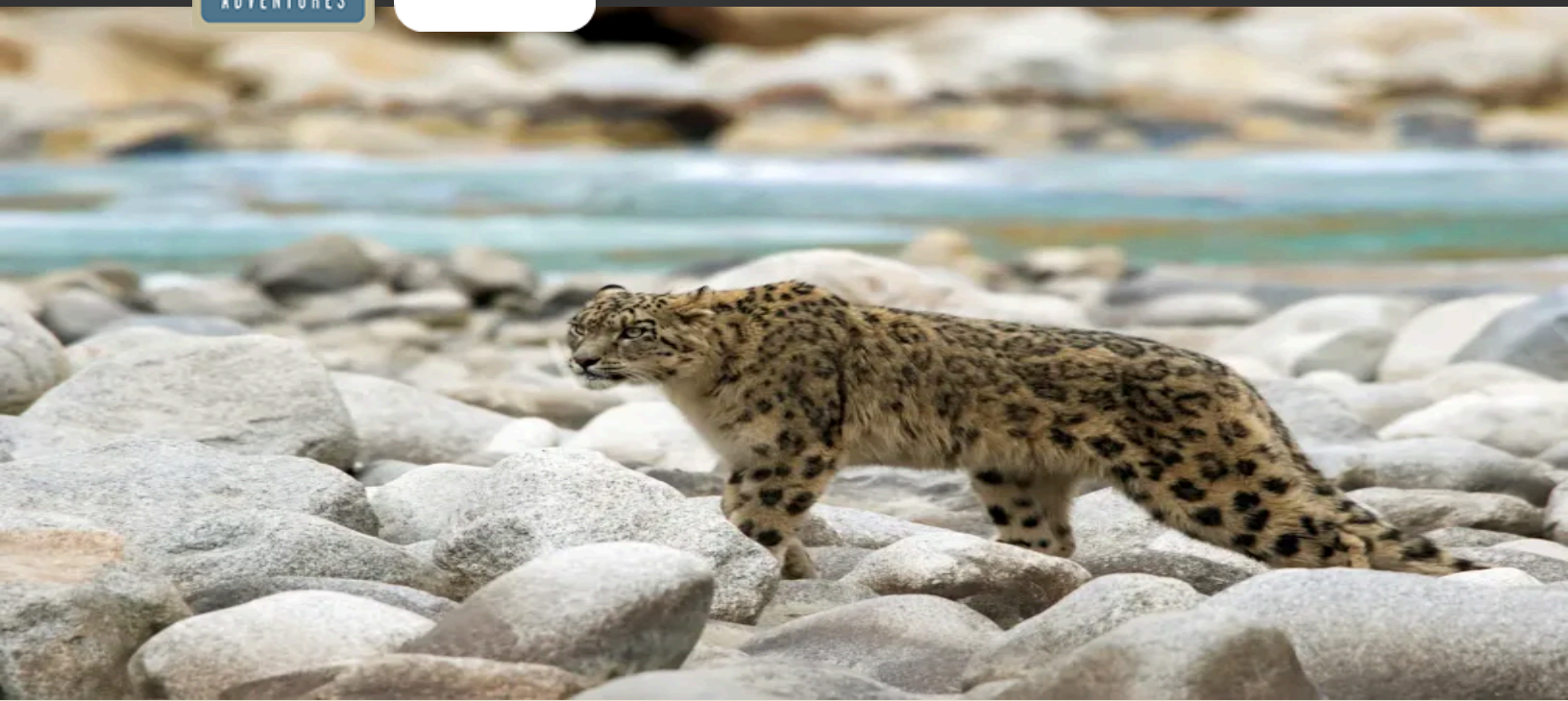




Discovering Our Planet Together



Snow Leopard Quest Photo Expedition

A Himalayan Adventure in Pursuit of One of Earth's Rarest and Most Beautiful Cats



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Trip Details:

Days

11 Days /
Mar & Apr

Price

From
\$12895
(+Air)

Snow Leopard Quest Photo Expedition

A Himalayan Adventure in Pursuit of One of Earth's Rarest and Most Beautiful Cats

The snow leopard is a creature of legend in the alpine heights of the Indian Himalaya. Known locally as the “gray ghost,” they are rarely seen, since they are masters of camouflage and live on steep, rocky slopes. For wildlife photographers, this gorgeous cat is a coveted prize—and we travel with some of the best snow leopard trackers in the world in pursuit of images that few will ever have a chance to attain. Based out of a deluxe, family-owned ecolodge with thick walls, insulated windows, radiant floor heating and abundant hot running water in a remote valley in Ladakh, we spend a full week in the snow leopard’s terrain, heading out each day in search of them. Other wildlife thrives in this austere landscape, too: keep your camera poised for shots of bharal, urial, argali and ibex—the wild mountain sheep and antelope that are the snow leopard’s prey—as well as Himalayan wolf, fox, and raptors soaring overhead, including the Himalayan golden eagle and lammergeyer, with its 10-foot wingspan.

Trip Highlights

With top trackers and guides, pursue photos of snow leopards and other Himalayan wildlife such as bharal, urial, ibex and Himalayan wolves

On this in-depth photography immersion, spend seven nights at a private mountain lodge in snow leopard territory adjacent to Hemis National Park, with the region's most experienced naturalist guides

Our deluxe, newly built mountain lodge features en suite heated showers, radiant floor heating and floor-to-ceiling windows throughout—and it's for our exclusive use



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Itinerary At A Glance

Day 1

Delhi, India / Gurgaon

Day 2

Delhi / Leh, Ladakh

Day 3

Leh—Indian Himalaya
Photography

Days 4 - 9

Snow Leopard Photography from
Rumbak—Private Expedition
Lodge

Day 10

Rumbak / Leh

Day 11

Leh / Delhi / Depart

Snow Leopard Quest Photo Expedition Itinerary

A Himalayan Adventure in Pursuit of One of Earth's Rarest and Most Beautiful Cats

Day 1: Delhi, India / Gurgaon

Arrive at the international airport in India's capital, steeped in centuries of layered history, and transfer to our luxury hotel in the high-tech suburb of Gurgaon outside the city center. This elegant contemporary low-rise hotel is surrounded by seven acres of gardens, courtyards and reflecting pools, lending a resort-like ambience. This evening, join our Expedition Leader for a welcome dinner and preview of our journey into the Indian Himalaya and the realm of *Panthera uncia*, the snow leopard.





Day 2: Delhi / Leh, Ladakh

Early this morning, we fly north to the former Himalayan kingdom of Ladakh. This is one of India's least-populated regions, known for dramatic peaks, monasteries filled with golden Buddhas, and the elusive snow leopards that prowl the snowfields that blanket these dry, rocky mountainsides. Once we touch down at 11,500 feet in the capital city of Leh, our high-altitude acclimatization begins. For centuries, Leh was a crossroads for Indus Valley trade between Tibet, Kashmir, India and China—routes that carried salt, cashmere wool, indigo and silk. The local people are ethnic Tibetans who speak Ladakhi, and Buddhism and Islam have co-existed peacefully here since the 8th century. Our lodging in the heart of this ancient city sits in the shadow of an unoccupied 17th-century palace designed to evoke the Dalai Lama's former residence in Lhasa—the famous Potala Palace. The rest of the day is at leisure as we settle in and adjust to the high elevation.

Day 3: Leh—Indian Himalaya Photography

Today we travel into Leh's rural surroundings, exploring the rugged Indus River Valley. It's easy to see why this enclave at the northern tip of India is often called "Little Tibet," as we cross passes marked with colorful prayer flags beneath soaring Himalayan peaks. As we climb up this crenelated region where the Indian and Asian continents collided, be on the lookout for blue sheep, golden eagles and bearded vultures.

We stop in Gya, one of the oldest villages in Ladakh that is perched on a gorge overlooking the river. A contingent of villagers greets us with a traditional welcome before leading us on a guided tour of their colorful town. We learn about animal husbandry, handicrafts and textiles, along with traditional barley roasting and cooking. Archery is an important element of traditional Ladakh life, and we stop at a range where we have the opportunity to witness archers in their element—and to participate! After a traditional lunch in a local home, we set out on foot with our guide to explore the picturesque landscape. Here we have a high likelihood of seeing more birdlife and blue sheep. We return to Leh by late afternoon.



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Days 4 - 9: Snow Leopard Photography from Rumbak—Private Expedition Lodge

The heart of our adventure begins in the village of Rumbak, where our private expedition lodge is located. From this base, we'll spend six nights tracking and photographing snow leopards. To reach the lodge, we follow the Indus River, stopping to visit the Stakna Buddhist Monastery, built in the 16th century and whose name means "tiger's nose," a reference to the shape of the hill on which it was built. We breakfast with the monks before continuing up the Indus River Valley toward Rumbak and our expedition base. This region is the gateway to a high-altitude realm ruled by the "ghost of the mountains"—a name bequeathed upon the snow leopard for its solitary and elusive nature. As we drive, be on the lookout for ibex, noted for their magnificent horns, standing vigil over rocky outcrops and couloirs.

Recently constructed using traditional Ladakhi techniques and materials, including stone, mud and timber, all chosen for their natural insulating properties, ours is the most luxurious lodge in the region. Blending seamlessly into its surroundings, it features radiant floor heating, abundant running hot water and double-glazed windows for an intimate and warm experience.

Over the next six days, we search the alpine heights for snow leopards in and around Hemis National Park, which holds the highest density of snow leopards in any protected area in the world—about 200. These trans-Himalayan cats have evolved to thrive in some of Earth's harshest alpine terrain, mostly above tree line and up to 18,000 feet in elevation. Our base for exploration is a private ecolodge set on a plateau with unimpeded views of the snowcapped mountains and Rumbak River below. The nearby village of Rumbak, population 250, is a short walk away. The surrounding landscape provides habitat for three large ungulates—ibex, bharal (blue sheep) and urial (mountain sheep)—along with fox, hare, pika and packs of Tibetan wolves.

For our best chance to see snow leopards, we rely on the expertise and keen eyes of a team of local spotters, plus our naturalist Expedition Leader. These seasoned trackers scour the landscape early each morning to help us plan our route for the day and increase our luck of seeing these cats whose camouflage enables them to blend in seamlessly with their habitat. We also retain radio contact with trackers throughout the day, so we know when snow leopards wander into our area. Private vehicles maximize our flexibility to move to where the snow leopards are. Typically, we spot them on high ridges around our lodge or within a short walk from the vehicles, but longer hikes are available for those who desire.

Snow leopards have evolved to thrive in some of Earth's harshest alpine terrain, mostly above tree line and up to 18,000 feet in elevation, across the Himalayas. Typically, we spot them atop a high ridgeline, when a long lens is a necessity. On other occasions, we are graced with closer sightings, sometimes even around the lodge, which offers a cozy respite for warming up with hot chai between photography outings. The surrounding sheer cliffs and broad meadows provide habitat for three large ungulates—bharal, ibex and urial—along with fox, hare, pika and packs of Himalayan wolves. In the valley's narrowest reaches, steep walls and side streams sustain a healthy population of ibex that lures snow leopards, which are capable of killing prey up to three times their own weight.

Our nearest neighbors in Rumbak are warm and welcoming. Nearby are intriguing Ladakhi cultural sites like Buddhist temples and monasteries that we visit if time allows.



At every turn, photo opportunities abound, whether wildlife, landscapes or cultural settings. In the evenings, our Expedition Leader hosts workshops and editing sessions to help you take your photography to the next level.

Day 10: Rumbak / Leh

After breakfast, enjoy a final morning in scenic Rumbak, relishing our last chance to photograph this alpine domain. Later, say farewell to our gracious Ladakhi hosts whose lodge enterprise is enhancing protection for snow leopards through ecotourism. The cats face threats from habitat loss due to climate change, reduced prey, poaching and human conflict, and we leave knowing we have made a difference for their future with our economic contribution and our advocacy. In Leh we attend a private culinary immersion at a local Ladakhi kitchen. Later this evening, we share our reflections over a farewell dinner.

Day 11: Leh / Delhi / Depart

Fly from Leh to Delhi this morning and continue to our hotel where an overnight room is reserved. A lavish lunch awaits at the hotel, followed by time to relax among landscaped gardens and pools. A transfer to the international airport is included to meet departing flights this evening.



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Accommodation Details:

House of Rumbak Wildlife Lodge

The Grand Dragon Ladakh

Roseate House New Delhi

For detailed descriptions, visit nathab.com/asia-adventure-travel/himalayan-snow-leopard-photo-tour/accommodations

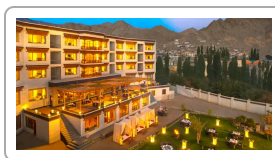
Snow Leopard Quest Photo Expedition Accommodations

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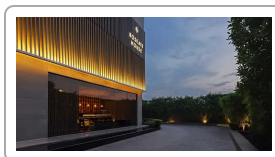
House of Rumbak Wildlife Lodge

Located at 12,800 feet above sea level and offering excellent proximity for snow leopard tracking, this new ecolodge provides a warm and cozy base exclusively for Nat Hab guests.



The Grand Dragon Ladakh

In the heart of ancient Leh, enjoy the luxuries of Ladakh's premier 5-star hotel, combining elements of traditional Ladakhi art and culture with state-of-the-art amenities and expansive views of snowcapped peaks.



Roseate House New Delhi

A modern sanctuary in New Delhi's vibrant Aerocity, Roseate House is a luxurious urban retreat, offering contemporary rooms, world-class dining, and personalized service—all just minutes from the airport and metro station.



The World's Best Opportunity for Snow Leopard Photography

Photographing snow leopards in the wild is one of the most exclusive travel quests on the planet—and no one can help you attain that goal like we can! Visiting high-altitude Ladakh in winter or spring is a daunting prospect on your own—so let us handle all the details. This is the photo expedition of a lifetime you need our expertise for!

1

No Better Place to Seek Snow Leopard Photos

Called the "gray ghost" by locals, a moniker that attests to its elusiveness, the snow leopard is a rare creature that has been virtually "unseeable" to many who go in search of it. But that is changing, as conservation becomes a priority in northern India. As the Snow Leopard Conservancy-India Trust continues to work with local villagers to protect these cats, sightings—and photo opportunities—are up.

2

Top Spotters, Trackers and Guides Enhance Your Odds

If you want the best chances to photograph elusive snow leopards and other Himalayan wildlife, you must have access to a superlative local team. Based at our private lodge in snow leopard territory, we spend seven days with the finest trackers and naturalists, including our professional photographer Expedition Leader who coordinates the entire effort. Adept spotters, who are the region's top local trackers, attempt to locate the cats each morning and stay in constant radio contact regarding their movement. We plan our days with utmost flexibility so we can follow the snow leopards' paths accordingly.

3

Our Private Expedition Lodge is an Optimal Base

Our stunning and environmentally conscious ecolodge—for our exclusive use—provides unparalleled comfort with en suite bathrooms, running hot water, radiant floor heating and gourmet meals. Built in the region's traditional architectural style, the lodge's fine details plus proximity to snow leopards and other Himalayan wildlife are the ultimate in luxury.

4

A Small Group is Essential to Maximize Photography Opportunities

With just eight photographers, our small group has a quiet, non-obtrusive presence, upping our chances of encountering snow leopards and other wildlife.

5

Private Vehicles Ensure Maximum Flexibility

We use private vehicles for maximum flexibility, allowing us to seek out snow leopards and other wildlife such as Tibetan wolves, urial, blue sheep, ibex and lammergeyers, wherever they are found.



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6

Local Porters Help Carry Your Gear

We'll be covering some challenging mountain terrain as we hike in search of snow leopards, and it's easier to walk without being encumbered by heavy, bulky photography equipment. We've hired porters from the community to take the load off, hauling whatever you need them to carry until we are in range for photography.

7

Our Presence Directly Helps to Protect Snow Leopards

Snow leopards are a vulnerable species under threat from habitat loss, climate, retaliatory killings, and poaching. Their range continues to decline from human settlement, while a warming climate could diminish up to 30% of their terrain in the Himalayas. Responsible tourism is part of the solution. As conservation travelers, the investment we make to photograph Ladakh's snow leopards benefits local communities. Our being there creates an incentive to protect wild creatures they share the land with. In addition, we will make a donation to the Snow Leopard Conservancy-India Trust for each photographer on this expedition.

8

Travel with India's Finest Wildlife Photography Guides

Our India naturalist Expedition Leaders average more than 15 years' experience—with top-level training including resources from WWF scientists. And of course, your guide is also an accomplished professional photographer adept in capturing coveted images of snow leopards and other Himalayan wildlife—and by your side to share tips. You won't find more knowledgeable, personable or enthusiastic guides than those who are proud to work for us. Our philosophy is simple: a nature adventure is only as good as the guide who leads it, so we provide the very best! **See Expedition Leader bios** with traveler comments regarding the quality of our leaders.

9

An Immersion in Ladakh's Rich Tibetan Buddhist Culture

While Ladakh is part of India, it stands apart. Ladakh gained status as a separate union territory in 2019, and this Himalayan state is often referred to as "Little Tibet." As ethnic Tibetans whose cultural and spiritual traditions have been left alone to thrive in a remote mountain environment, their long and vibrant Buddhist history continues to influence everything from roadside prayer flag installations to well-maintained ancient monasteries where monks reside and practice. Absorb Ladakh's cultural sites in a quiet, non-touristy way, including our stay among yak-herding locals in the small Himalayan village of Mangyu.

10

Our Quality-Value Guarantee Ensures Your Snow Leopard Photo Expedition

With Natural Habitat Adventures, you receive our exclusive quality value guarantee that promises we will meet the high expectations we set forth in our promotional materials. To our knowledge, this is the most ambitious guarantee made by any adventure travel company.



11

Feel Good About Your Carbon-Neutral Journey

We care deeply about our planet, as we know you do. When you travel with us, the carbon emissions from your trip are 100% offset—including your round-trip flights from home. Natural Habitat Adventures has been the world's first carbon-neutral travel company since 2007.



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Dates & Pricing Summary:

Prices:
From \$12895
(+Air)

Group Size:
Limited to 8
Travelers

Physical Requirements:

Snow Leopard Quest Photo Expedition Dates, Pricing & Info

A Himalayan Adventure in Pursuit of One of Earth's Rarest and Most Beautiful Cats

2026 Departures

Departure	Return	Notes
Mar 15, 2026	Mar 25, 2026	Pair with our India Tiger Photo Expedition, Grand India or Nepal & Bhutan trip*
Mar 22, 2026	Apr 1, 2026	Pair with our India Tiger Photo Expedition, Grand India, Tiger Quest, or Nepal & Bhutan trip*
Mar 29, 2026	Apr 8, 2026	Pair with our India Tiger Photo Expedition, Grand India, Tiger Quest, or Nepal & Bhutan trip*
Apr 4, 2026	Apr 14, 2026	Pair with our India Tiger Photo Expedition, Grand India, Tiger Quest, or Nepal & Bhutan trip*

2027 Departures

Departure	Return	Notes
Mar 16, 2027	Mar 26, 2027	
Mar 23, 2027	Apr 2, 2027	
Mar 30, 2027	Apr 9, 2027	



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Departure	Return	Notes
Apr 5, 2027	Apr 15, 2027	



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Pricing

2026 Prices

Mouse over or tap dates above to view prices for specific departure dates.

➤ Trip Price

\$12895 to \$13195 (+internal air)



Internal Air Cost: \$672 per person (this will be listed separately on our invoicing)

Single Occupancy: For a single room add \$2995. **Click here** to learn how you can avoid the single supplement.

Deposit: \$500 per person (nonrefundable)

Make It Private: **View pricing** to take this trip privately with just you and your select travel companions.

Trip prices are per person based on double occupancy and are given in U.S. dollars.

Please read our Payment & Refund Policy here.

2027 Prices

We're still in the process of confirming 2027 pricing. Please contact an Adventure Specialist for more details: 800-543-8917.

Included

- **Trip price includes:** Accommodations, services of Nat Hab's professional photo Expedition Leader(s), local guides, spotters and lodge staff, local porter to assist with carrying gear, all meals from dinner on Day 1 through lunch on final day, local wine and beer at dinner while at the Snow Leopard Lodge, some gratuities, airport transfers on Day 1 and final day, donation fees to the Snow Leopard Conservancy, all activities and entrance fees, all taxes, permits and service fees.
- **Internal air cost includes:** All flights within the itinerary, additional luggage allowance (this will be listed separately on our invoicing).

Not Included

Travel to and from the start and end point of your trip, alcoholic beverages (other than those listed above), some gratuities, passport and visa fees, optional activities, items of a personal nature (phone calls, laundry and internet, etc.), airline excess baggage fees, required medical evacuation insurance, optional travel protection insurance.



Important Information About This Trip

Our snow leopard photo expedition is a conservation-focused adventure designed to provide accomplished photographers with the best chances to go home with coveted wildlife images. It's meant for intrepid travelers with a desire for deeper discovery, and an awareness that staying in the very heart of wild snow leopard habitat is the ultimate luxury. We spend seven nights in the best area for potential sightings, but there are no guarantees we will see this elusive animal. Many sightings occur in the distance, on mountain ridges and through scopes—but they are thrilling nonetheless! We visit during the Himalayan winter and early spring, and weather and high-altitude conditions are sometime hostile. Essential requirements for travel in Ladakh include flexibility, a sense of humor, a true spirit of adventure, and an openness to the unexpected.

Accommodations

Because of its location and the staff's commitment to our guests, our Private Snow Leopard Lodge offers the most comfortable and authentic way to view snow leopards in the wild. Accommodations there are simple and comfortable, with twin or queen-sized beds and warm bedding, 24-hour electricity, electric and wood-burning stove heat and private en suite Western toilets and sink basins. While there is no running water, hot water is supplied on demand for washing, including bucket-style showers. Because it is a small, Ladakhi-style lodge, you will reside in relatively close quarters with fellow travelers. Thus, a flexible and tolerant attitude toward other participants is paramount for the enjoyment of all. While considered rustic by our usual standards, all in all a stay at the Snow Leopard Lodge is one of the most inspiring and memorable hotel experiences in the world of adventure travel!

Wildlife Viewing in Ladakh

When viewing wildlife in Ladakh, guests will be stationary for long periods of time. After reaching the point of a snow leopard sighting and setting up, we may be seated and simply waiting for any wildlife movement for the majority of the morning or afternoon. Hot refreshments and seating will be provided by our lodge for all outings.

Additionally, the distance from which we typically view wildlife on this trip is extremely far—often miles across a valley on the opposite mountainside or on the top of a mountain ridge line. While it's possible sightings can be closer – and unforgettable when they are – typically, we will be viewing wildlife from far away. This is when proper camera equipment and spotter's scopes will help to bring that wildlife into focus, and we will make use of this equipment for all sightings.

Landscape serving as the backdrop can also present challenges when viewing wildlife in Ladakh. These animals are adapted to this mountainous environment and remarkably can blend into the intricate jagged rocks of a mountainside. While the expert eyes of our spotters are well accustomed to spotting wildlife in this setting, it can take patience to spot creatures against the mountains for most visitors.

Safety & Health

Your safety is of paramount importance to us. Toward that end, we provide highly competent guides and local staff with extensive experience in high-altitude terrain. Our Expedition Leaders are thoroughly trained in emergency wilderness first-aid techniques. Ultimately, our guides and local staff make decisions with everyone's comfort and safety in mind, while trying to maximize the adventure experience for each individual. Listening carefully to your Expedition Leader's instructions and directions is ultimately your responsibility, and your astute attention is always in your best interest and that of the group.

Oxygen is available at all times at our expedition lodge. A military hospital is 1 hour away in Leh. Anyone who experiences acute mountain sickness will immediately be taken down to a lower altitude for treatment at the hospital in Leh.



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Meals

Meals are hearty and delicious, as they are specially planned and prepared for well in advance. Dietary requirements due to serious medical conditions or strict personal restrictions can be met with ample notice, but must be adhered to while on the adventure.

Communication

There is no Wi-Fi or cell reception at our expedition lodge. There are nearby areas where our guides can drive for cell service.

Mandatory Insurance

Since the areas we travel to are remote and wild (that's why we go there!), we require that all guests have, at minimum, medical evacuation insurance for this program. This is for the safety of all guests. We require that your chosen independent insurance plan includes at least \$250,000 in medical evacuation coverage.

To protect your investment and to provide peace of mind while you travel, we also strongly recommend purchasing comprehensive travel insurance. Plans may cover everything from medical treatment to trip cancellations and delays and lost luggage. Please contact our office if you would like more information about the medical evacuation and comprehensive travel insurance policies we offer by calling 800-543-8917.

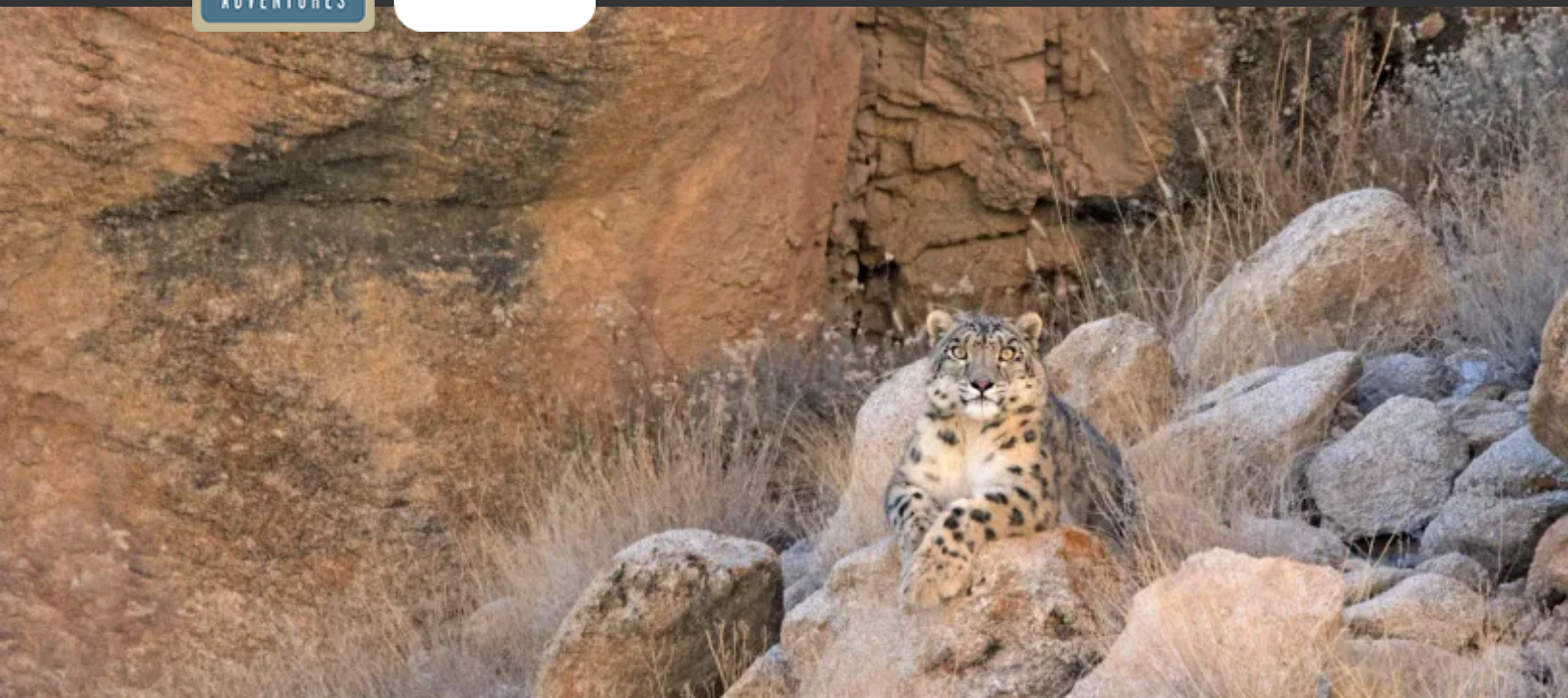
Getting There & Getting Home

You should plan to arrive in Delhi by 2 pm on Day 1 in order to participate in an orientation and group welcome dinner beginning at approximately 5:30 pm. You are free to depart Delhi any time after 8 pm on the final day.

We can best serve you if our Natural Habitat Adventures Travel Desk makes your reservations, as we are intimately familiar with the special requirements of this program and can arrange the most efficient travel. Please call us at 800-543-8917. Note that while we offer you the best possible rates available to us on airfare and additional nights' accommodations, you may find special web rates or better fares online.



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Extension Details:

The Grand India Wildlife Adventure
\$12795

Wild & Ancient Himalaya: Nepal & Bhutan
\$14195

Snow Leopard Quest Photo Expedition Extensions

A Himalayan Adventure in Pursuit of One of Earth's Rarest and Most Beautiful Cats



The Grand India Wildlife Adventure

Look for rare Bengal tigers, one-horned rhinos and other endangered animals as we discover India's wild side on an exploration of three premier national parks. You won't find a richer Indian nature safari!

\$12795 (+air)



Wild & Ancient Himalaya: Nepal & Bhutan

Explore mountain heights and jungle lowlands on this soulful journey through the cultural and wildlife treasures of two neighboring Himalayan nations—including rhino tracking in Chitwan National Park.

\$14195 (+air)



Natural Habitat & WWF: Discovering Our Planet Together

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USA & Canada: 800-543-8917 • International: 303-449-3711

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WWF's membership travel program is operated by Natural Habitat Adventures (Nat Hab). To date, Nat Hab has provided more than \$6 million in support of WWF's mission and will continue to give 1% of gross sales plus \$175,000 annually through 2028. WWF® and ©1986 Panda Symbol are owned by WWF. All rights reserved.