

# Best of India – Epic Indian Travel Snow Leopard Expedition – Leh & Ladakh

The Trans-Himalayas of Ladakh are among the most dramatic and remote landscapes on earth – a cold desert of soaring peaks, frozen rivers and ancient monasteries where the elusive snow leopard reigns as the mountain ghost. This expedition begins with two nights in Delhi before flying to Leh for acclimatisation and cultural immersion, then venturing deep into the high-altitude valleys of Ulley – one of the finest snow leopard habitats in the world. Alongside the snow leopard, search for Tibetan Wolf, Red Fox, Himalayan Ibex, Ladakh Urial and Tibetan Argali, while over 300 bird species – including Golden Eagle, Lammergeier and Himalayan Snowcock – reward the patient observer. Expert trackers, intimate lodge accommodation and the raw beauty of the Himalayas make this an expedition of a lifetime.

## Delhi – Gateway & Acclimatisation [2 Nights]

India's vibrant capital serves as the perfect gateway – two nights to acclimatise, explore Delhi's iconic monuments and receive a full expedition briefing before flying north to Leh and the high Himalayas

## Leh – Culture, Acclimatisation & Birdwatching [2 Nights]

Arriving at 3,500m, two full days in Leh are essential for acclimatisation – visiting Thiksey Monastery, birding the Indus River and preparing for the high-altitude wildlife tracking ahead

## Ulley – Snow Leopard Tracking in the Trans-Himalayas [6 Nights]

The heart of the expedition – six nights at the intimate Ulley lodge, tracking snow leopard with expert spotters across the dramatic cliffs and valleys of one of Ladakh's finest wildlife areas

## Leh – Farewell & Fly Delhi / Home [1 Night]

A final night in Leh before the morning flight back to Delhi and onward connections home – time to browse the market and reflect on an extraordinary Himalayan adventure

**Tour Route: 13 Nights / 14 Days · Delhi [2N] – Fly Leh – Leh [2N] – Ulley [6N] – Leh [1N] – Fly Delhi / Home**

*Best season: January to March – the peak snow leopard tracking season when prey species concentrate in the valleys and snow leopard sightings are at their highest. Expert trackers and spotting scopes provided throughout.*



# Tour Highlights



## Royal Bengal Tiger—India's Apex Predator

Four parks, maximum tiger sighting opportunities— Bandhavgarh holds the world's highest tiger density, while Tadoba's habituated tigers offer some of India's most dramatic close encounters



## Big Five of Central India

Tiger, Leopard, Sloth Bear, Wild Dog (Dhole) and Gaur — all four parks together offer exceptional chances of encountering every member of Central India's iconic wildlife quintet



## Diverse Ecosystems

Sal and bamboo forests of Bandhavgarh, Kanha's rolling meadows and grasslands, Pench's teak and mahua woodland, and Tadoba's lake-studded Chimur Hills — four completely different habitats in one journey



## World-Class Wildlife Photography

Expert naturalist-guided jeep safaris at golden hour, dedicated photography zones, and the chance to photograph tigers, leopards and rare Hardground Barasingha in stunning natural light



## Exceptional Birdlife

Over 250 bird species across the four parks — including Malabar Pied Hornbill, Crested Serpent Eagle, Indian Pitta, Painted Stork and the rare Jerdon's Nightjar

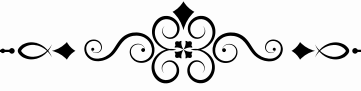


## The Jungle Book Legacy

Walk in the footsteps of Rudyard Kipling — Pench and Kanha are the landscapes that inspired Mowgli, Baloo and Shere Khan, and the forests feel as wild and timeless today as they did in 1894

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# Expedition Tour Highlights



## Snow Leopard – The Mountain Ghost

Ulley is one of Ladakh's finest snow leopard habitats—expert trackers go out daily to locate this elusive big cat across the dramatic Trans-Himalayan cliffs and valleys



## Trans-Himalayan Wilderness

Explore a breathtaking cold desert landscape of soaring peaks, frozen rivers and ancient monasteries at altitudes above 3,500m – one of the world's most spectacular wildlife environments



## Rich Wildlife Beyond the Snow Leopard

Alongside snow leopard, search for Tibetan Wolf, Red Fox, Himalayan Ibex, Ladakh Urial and Tibetan Argali – a remarkable suite of high-altitude mammals



## Outstanding High-Altitude Birding

Over 300 bird species documented in Ladakh – including Golden Eagle, Lammergeier, Himalayan Snowcock, Chukar Pheasant and the rare Ibisbill along the Indus River



## Culture & Monastery Visits

Thiksey Monastery, Ladakh village life, traditional cuisine and local artisan crafts – the expedition weaves cultural immersion throughout the wildlife experience



## Expert Trackers & Spotting Scopes

Dedicated trackers go out every morning to locate snow leopard activity – spotting scopes and mobile holders provided for exceptional photography opportunities

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DAY 01

## Arrive Delhi — Gateway to the Himalayas

*Delhi — India's ancient and modern capital—is the starting point for your Snow Leopard Expedition. Your Epic Indian Travel representative meets you on arrival at Indira Gandhi International Airport and transfers you to your hotel in the heart of the city. The evening is yours to rest, recover from your journey and begin absorbing the extraordinary energy of one of the world's great capitals.*

### Welcome Briefing

- Your naturalist guide joins you for a welcome dinner and a detailed briefing on the expedition ahead — covering the landscapes of Ladakh, the snow leopard and its habitat, acclimatisation advice and what to expect at each destination
- Equipment check and any last-minute preparations. Your guide is available to answer all questions about the itinerary, the high-altitude environment and the wildlife you are likely to encounter

### Delhi — First Impressions

- Even on arrival day, Delhi makes an impression — the scale, the colour, the noise and the history of this 3,000-year-old city are immediately apparent. If time and energy permit, an evening walk in one of Delhi's historic neighbourhoods offers a vivid introduction to India
- Tomorrow brings a full day to explore Delhi's extraordinary monuments and markets before the flight north to Leh and the high Himalayas

### Overnight

- Delhi

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DAY 02

# Delhi – Monuments, Markets & Expedition Briefing

*A full day in Delhi – part sight seeing, part preparation. Delhi's UNESCO World Heritage monuments offer extraordinary subjects for the curious traveller: the geometric perfection of Humayun's Tomb, the soaring minarets of the Qutb Minar and the living history of Old Delhi's Chandni Chowk bazaar. This is also the day to finalise all expedition preparations before tomorrow's flight to Leh.*

## Delhi Sightseeing

- Morning visit to Humayun's Tomb – a masterpiece of Mughal architecture and a UNESCO World Heritage Site that served as the inspiration for the Taj Mahal. The gardens and symmetrical design offer superb photography in the early light
- Afternoon at the Qutb Minar complex – Delhi's oldest surviving monument and another UNESCO World Heritage Site, with the 73-metre minaret dominating the skyline of South Delhi

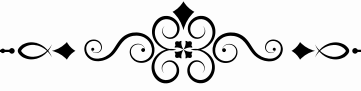
## Old Delhi & Final Preparations

- An evening rickshaw ride through the lanes of Old Delhi – Chandni Chowk, the spice market of Khari Baoli and the Jama Masjid – offers an unforgettable sensory introduction to India at its most vivid
- Final expedition briefing with your naturalist guide: acclimatisation protocols for Leh, packing advice for the cold desert climate and a detailed overview of snow leopard tracking techniques

## Overnight

- Delhi

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DAY 03

## Fly Delhi to Leh – Acclimatisation Day

*A nearly morning flight from Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport to Leh – the capital of Ladakh and one of the highest-altitude cities in the world at 3,500 metres. The flight itself is spectacular, crossing the Himalayas with views of snow-capped peaks stretching to the horizon. On arrival, acclimatisation is the priority – the jump of more than 3,000 metres in altitude demands a careful and restful first day.*

### Arrival & Acclimatisation

- Your Epic Indian Travel representative meets you at Leh airport (photography is not permitted as it is a military airport) and transfers you to your lodge – approximately 30 minutes from the airport
- The first afternoon is spent resting and acclimatising. Avoid strenuous activity, drink plenty of hot water, and allow your body to adjust to the reduced oxygen levels at altitude

### Acclimatisation Tips

- Do not climb stairs or exert yourself on the first day – rest is essential for a safe and enjoyable expedition
- Stay well hydrated with hot water or herbal tea; avoid alcohol on the first day
- Do not shower on the first day; avoid daytime napping to ensure good sleep at night
- If you experience headaches, nausea or unusual symptoms, inform the lodge staff immediately

### Overnight

- Leh

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DAY 04

## Leh — Thiksey Monastery, Indus River & Birdwatching

*A full day in Leh—cultural exploration and gentle outdoor activity to continue acclimatization before the move to Ulley. Leh's extraordinary setting—ringed by snow-capped peaks and steeped in Tibetan Buddhist culture—makes this a deeply rewarding day. The Indus River, flowing through the valley below, is a birdwatcher's paradise and offers the first taste of Ladakh's remarkable avian life.*

### Thiksey Monastery

- Morning visit to Thiksey Monastery — the largest monastery in Leh and one of the most impressive in all of Ladakh. Resembling the Potala Palace in Lhasa, Tibet, its whitewashed buildings rise dramatically up the hillside above the Indus Valley
- Explore the monastery's halls, prayer rooms and courtyards, home to remarkable Tibetan Buddhist art, thangka paintings and a 15-metre Maitreya Buddha statue. The views across the valley from the monastery roof are extraordinary

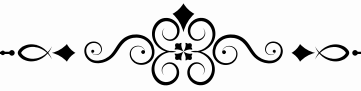
### Indus River Birding

- Afternoon birding along the banks of the Indus River — a peaceful and productive session for Ladakh's specialist bird species. The Ibisbill — one of the most sought-after birds in the region — is regularly seen along the river's stony banks
- Other species to look for include Ruddy Shelduck, Brahminy Duck, Common Merganser, White-capped Redstart and various waders. The river setting, with the Himalayas reflected in the water, offers outstanding photography

### Overnight

- Leh

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DAY 05

## Leh to Ulley – Drive into Snow Leopard Country

*After a leisurely breakfast, the expedition moves into its most thrilling phase—the drive from Leh to Ulley, a remote village of just six households that is one of the finest snow leopard habitats in all of Ladakh. The two-and-a-half-hour drive through the Trans-Himalayan landscape is spectacular, passing the confluence of the Indus and Zaskar rivers at Sangam before climbing into the high valleys where the mountain host roams.*

### The Drive to Ulley

- Departing Leh after breakfast, the route follows National Highway 1 before turning into the high valleys. The first highlight is Sangam — the dramatic confluence of the Indus and Zaskar rivers, where the turquoise Zaskar meets the grey-green Indus in a spectacular meeting of waters
- The road winds through Ladakhi villages and past military installations before climbing to the Ulley valley. If the tracker team reports a snow leopard sighting en route, the vehicle will divert immediately to the location

### Arrival at Ulley & First Tracking Session

- Arrival at the intimate Ulley lodge — greeted with tea, coffee and a warm welcome. The lodge sits in the heart of prime snow leopard habitat, with the dramatic cliffs and rocky slopes where leopards are regularly seen visible from the dining room windows
- After settling in and lunch, the afternoon brings the first snow leopard tracking session — joining the expert trackers as they scan the surrounding cliffs and valleys with spotting scopes for any sign of the mountain ghost

### Overnight

- Ulley Lodge

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DAY 06

## Ulley — First Full Day Snow Leopard Tracking

*The first full day of snow leopard tracking begins before dawn. Rise early, dress in warm layers and step outside to join the lodge's dedicated trackers as they scan the mountain side in the first light of day. The cliffs and rocky slopes surrounding Ulley are prime snow leopard habitat — and some guests have spotted leopards from the lodge itself. Today is the beginning of the most extraordinary wildlife experience the Himalayas can offer.*

### Dawn Tracking Session

- Join the trackers at first light as they systematically scan the surrounding cliffs and valleys with high-powered spotting scopes. Snow leopards are most active in the early morning, often moving between hunting grounds as the light improves
- The trackers communicate with a network of spotters across the valley — any sighting, however distant, triggers an immediate response. Be prepared to walk or hike to reach the best viewing position

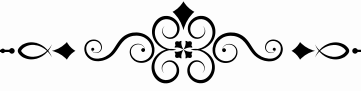
### Wildlife of the Trans-Himalayas

- While searching for snow leopard, the surrounding landscape offers remarkable wildlife encounters. Himalayan Ibex — the snow leopard's primary prey — are frequently seen on the cliffs in large herds, their curved horns silhouetted against the sky
- Red Fox, Tibetan Wolf and Ladakh Urial are all regularly encountered in the Ulley valley. The skies above are patrolled by Golden Eagle and Lammergeier — the bearded vulture with its extraordinary 2.8-metre wingspan

### Overnight

- Ulley Lodge

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DAY 07 / 08

# Ulley – Continued Snow Leopard Tracking & High-Altitude Birding

*Two more full days in the Ulley valley – the rhythm of the expedition settles into a deeply satisfying pattern of early morning tracking sessions, shared sightings and long hours scanning the dramatic Trans-Himalayan landscape. Nothing is fixed in advance on this expedition – everything responds to what the snow leopard does. The trackers are out before dawn every day, and the team moves immediately to any confirmed sighting.*

## Snow Leopard Tracking

- The trackers cover the full extent of the Ulley valley and the surrounding ridgelines, scanning systematically for the snow leopard's distinctive spotted coat against the grey rock. Their knowledge of individual leopard territories and movement patterns is extraordinary
- Spotting scopes are set up at the best vantage points – when a leopard is located, guests can observe through the scope or, if close enough, with binoculars. A mobile phone holder for the spotting scope allows excellent photography even at long range

## High-Altitude Birds & Other Wildlife

- The Trans-Himalayan skies offers some of the most spectacular birding in Asia. Golden Eagle, Lammergeier, Himalayan Griffon and Steppe Eagle are all regularly seen soaring above the valley
- Other notable species include Himalayan Snowcock, Chukar Pheasant, Red-billed Chough, Robin Accentor, Brown Accentor and Eurasian Magpie. The evenings at the lodge – sharing the day's sightings over dinner – are a highlight of the expedition

## Overnight

- Ulley Lodge

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# Ulley – Saspoche & Hemis Shukpachen – Wolf & Snow Leopard Territory

*The expedition extends its search radius to the neighbouring villages of Saspoche and Hemis Shukpachen—two of the finest locations in the entire Ulley area for both snow leopard and Tibetan Wolf. A small pack of five to eight wolves is resident between the set wo communities, and the combination of wolf and snow leopard in the same landscape makes these days among the most exciting of the entire expedition.*

## Saspoche & Hemis Shukpachen

- The drive to Saspoche and Hemis Shukpachen passes through dramatic Trans-Himalayan scenery – narrow valleys, frozen streams and the extraordinary silence of the high-altitude cold desert. Both villages are traditional Ladakhi communities where the local people live alongside the wildlife
- The resident wolf pack is one of the most reliably encountered in Ladakh – the trackers know the pack's territory well and can often predict where they will be found. Watching wolves hunt in this landscape is an unforgettable experience

## Ladakh Urial & Asiatic Ibex

- While trekking in search of snow leopard and wolf, the rocky cliffs and slopes are home to large herds of Ladakh Urial and Asiatic Ibex – two of the snow leopard's primary prey species. Watching these agile animals navigate near-vertical terrain is remarkable
- The combination of predator and prey in this landscape – snow leopard, wolf, ibex and urial – offers a rare and complete picture of a functioning high-altitude ecosystem, largely unchanged for thousands of years

## Overnight

- Ulley Lodge

DAY 11

## Ulley — Final Tracking Day & Return to Leh

*The final morning in Ulley — one last dawn tracking session in the valley before checking out and beginning the drive back to Leh. This is the last opportunity to encounter the snow leopard in the wild, and the trackers will be out at first light as always. Departures from the lodge must be before dark, but the morning is fully dedicated to the search.*

### Final Dawn Tracking Session

- Rise before dawn for one last scan of the surrounding cliffs and valleys. The trackers will have been monitoring the area since first light — any overnight activity or fresh tracks will be followed up immediately
- Even on the final morning, new sightings are possible — the snow leopard's movements are unpredictable, and some of the expedition's most memorable encounters have come on the last day. Stay alert and patient to the very end

### Drive Back to Leh

- The drive back to Leh follows the same spectacular route through the Trans-Himalayan landscape — with fresh eyes after six nights in the valley, the scenery feels even more extraordinary on the return journey
- Arrival in Leh in the late afternoon — time to browse the market for souvenirs, Ladakhi handicrafts and local produce before a final dinner in the city. The Leh market is one of the most atmospheric in the Himalayas

### Overnight

- Leh

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DAY 12 / 13

## Leh to Delhi – Fly Home

*The final morning of the expedition. After a leisurely breakfast in Leh, transfer to the airport for the flight back to Delhi. Your Epic Indian Travel representative meets you on arrival in Delhi and transfers you to your hotel for a final overnight stay – or onward to the international terminal for your flight home, depending on your schedule.*

### Fly Leh to Delhi

- The morning flight from Leh to Delhi retraces the spectacular Himalayan crossing in reverse – a final opportunity to absorb the extraordinary scale of the mountains from above before returning to the plains
- On arrival in Delhi, your representative meets you at the airport and assists with onward arrangements. For guests with an overnight stay in Delhi, the evening is free to explore, dine or simply rest after an extraordinary expedition

### Farewell Delhi & Fly Home

- Day 13 brings the final departure – after breakfast, transfer to Indira Gandhi International Airport for your international flight home
- The memories of Ladakh – the silence of the high valleys, the drama of the Himalayan landscape and, above all, the extraordinary privilege of watching a snow leopard in the wild – will stay with you for a lifetime

### Overnight

- Delhi (Day 12)

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TRAVEL



# Why Choose Epic Indian Travel for Your Snow Leopard Expedition?

Epic Indian Travel is India's premier specialist wild life expedition operator specialising in high-altitude Himalayan expeditions like this Snow Leopard journey to Ladakh, and trusted for the quality of our expert trackers, intimate small-group expeditions, carefully selected lodge accommodation and deep commitment to responsible mountain tourism. Our Snow Leopard Expedition is designed from the ground up to deliver an immersive, safe and unforgettable encounter with the world's most elusive big cat.



## Snow Leopard Specialist Focus

We specialise in high-altitude wildlife expeditions where the experience is intimate, expert-led and deeply rewarding with dedicated trackers, spotting scopes and a network of local spotters maximising every chance of a sighting



## Expert Trackers & Naturalist Guides

Our trackers bring extraordinary knowledge of snow leopard behaviour, territory and movement helping you read the landscape, understand the signs and get the most from every tracking session



## Small Group Expeditions

We keep our expeditions intimate and unhurried, ensuring more personal attention, better viewing positions and a calmer, more respectful presence in the field



## Responsible Himalayan Tourism

We work closely with local Ladakhi communities and conservation partners to support responsible travel and the long-term protection of snow leopard habitat and prey species

## Book Your Snow Leopard Expedition

Getting started is simple just follow these steps and we'll handle everything else.

01

### Send Us an Email

Write to [epicindiantravel@gmail.com](mailto:epicindiantravel@gmail.com) with your details: number of participants and preferred travel dates in January-March.

02

### Receive Your Itinerary

We'll put together a personalised expedition itinerary tailored to your interests, fitness level and preferred lodge options

03

### Customise to Your Needs

Review and let us know any changes we'll refine the routing, lodge selection and activity mix until it fits your plans perfectly

04

### We Share the Costs

Once finalised, we'll send you a detailed cost breakdown including wildlife entry fees, lodge stays, transfers and specialist tracking services

05

### Confirm and We Book

On your approval, we secure all permits, lodge bookings and ground arrangements - including the best available tracker teams for your dates

06

### Combine Other Destinations

Your expedition can be extended to include Spiti Valley, Hemis National Park or a Golden Triangle cultural tour, creating a wider Himalayan journey.

07

### Conservation Partnerships

We work closely with conservation-focused partners and local communities to support responsible travel and long-term protection of the Trans-Himalayan ecosystem

