Spiti Valley Snow Leopard Expedition | Chandigarh

Chandigarh - Narkanda - Kalpa - Tabo - Chicham/Kaza - Sangla - Shimla - Chandigarh

Tour PackagesCustomised

Tour Basics •

Duration: 11 Days 10 Nights	**Route:** Chandigarh - Narkanda - Kalpa - Tabo - Chicham/Kaza - Sangla - Shimla - Chandigarh

Chandigarh — 10D 9N

About This Trip •

As winter blankets the high-altitude landscapes of Spiti Valley in snow, it opens a rare window into the world of one of nature’s most mysterious and majestic creatures, the Snow Leopard Expedition.

Known for their elusive nature and stunning beauty, snow leopards descend from higher elevations during the winter months (December to March) in search of prey. This seasonal movement offers a unique opportunity to track them in the wild. Although difficult to spot due to their natural camouflage and solitary behaviour, the chance to catch even a glimpse is truly unforgettable.

This carefully crafted expedition begins from Chandigarh and takes you on a gradual ascent through Rampur, the Kinnaur region, and the scenic Hangrang Valley before reaching the heart of Spiti. Our base for this adventure is the remote village of Chicham, situated at an elevation of over 14,000 feet, just beyond the well-known Kibber village.

During your stay, you'll be hosted in local homestays, experiencing the warmth of Spitian hospitality amidst an otherwise harsh winter environment. Days are spent tracking wildlife, often hiking through snow-covered trails to set up viewing spots at a distance, all under the guidance of local wildlife trackers who have grown up in these mountains and understand the delicate balance of nature.

Beyond the Snow Leopard Expedition, Spiti is home to other rare Himalayan wildlife, including Blue Sheep, Red Foxes, Tibetan Wolves, Golden Eagles, and Siberian Ibex, offering an enriching wildlife experience.

This expedition is less about physical trekking and more about patience, observation, and respect for the natural world. A moderate level of fitness and mental readiness is advised to withstand Spiti's brutal but beautiful winter climate.

At its core, this journey is about responsible wildlife tourism, where sightings are never guaranteed, but the experience of being immersed in Spiti's raw, winter wilderness is deeply rewarding in itself.

Join us in this once-in-a-lifetime expedition and uncover the secrets of Spiti's snowy heights, where silence, snow, and shadows might just reveal the Ghost of the Himalayas, the Snow Leopard.

Best Time for Snow Leopard Expedition in Spiti Valley

The best time to do a Snow Leopard Expedition in Spiti Valley is from January to March. This is the harsh winter season when snow leopards descend to lower altitudes in search of prey, such as blue sheep and ibex. The snow-covered landscape makes spotting easier with the help of expert trackers.

? January – February: Peak chances of spotting snow leopards, extreme winter conditions, fewer tourists.
? March: Slightly milder weather, good balance of snow leopard sightings and accessibility.

Why Do a Snow Leopard Expedition in Spiti?

1. Rare Wildlife Encounter – Snow leopards are among the most elusive big cats in the world. Spotting one is a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

2. Pristine Winter Landscapes – Experience Spiti in its most magical form with snow-clad mountains and frozen rivers.

3. Adventure of a Lifetime – Staying in remote villages, trekking through snow, and following pugmarks make this a true adventure.

4. Cultural Immersion – Stay with local families in homestays, experience Spitian hospitality, and learn about their survival in extreme winters.

5. Photography Heaven – Wildlife photography, snow landscapes, and traditional Spiti villages create postcard-perfect frames.

Things to Remember During Snow Leopard Expedition

- Extreme Cold: Temperatures can drop to -20°C to -30°C ，so proper layering and winter gear are essential.
- Physical Fitness: Moderate fitness required for trekking in snow and high altitudes (3,500m – 4,500m).
- Slow Travel: Days can be long, and sightings require patience, carry binoculars and scopes, and keep expectations realistic.
- Local Guides: Always go with experienced trackers and naturalists for the best chance of spotting snow leopards.
- Limited Connectivity: Internet and phone networks are very weak; prepare for a digital detox.
- Responsible Tourism: Respect wildlife, avoid noise, and do not litter in pristine habitats.

Other Important Aspects

Accommodation

- Mostly village homestays in Kibber, Chicham, and Demul.
- Basic rooms with heating (Bukhari), traditional Spitian meals, and shared facilities.

Food

- Simple but hearty meals: Thukpa, Momos, local bread, butter tea, and lentils.
- Non-vegetarian options are available at some homestays.

Accessibility

- In winter, road connectivity is limited. Most expeditions start from Kaza, which is accessible via road from the Shimla side (the Manali route is usually closed due to snow).
- Journeys can be long and require 4x4 vehicles with snow chains.

Duration

- Most Snow Leopard Expeditions last 7–10 days, allowing enough time for acclimatisation and multiple sightings.

Other Wildlife You May Spot

- Blue Sheep (Bharal)
- Himalayan Ibex
- Red Fox
- Tibetan Wolf

Stay Categories & Options •

Basic	Persons: 1	INR 185,000.00	~~INR 195,000.00~~	Save INR 10,000.00
Basic	Persons: 2	INR 95,999.00	~~INR 105,999.00~~	Save INR 10,000.00
Basic	Persons: 4	INR 75,999.00	~~INR 85,999.00~~	Save INR 10,000.00

Itinerary •

Day 1: Pick up at Chandigarh | Dist: 135 km | 04-06 hours

- Meet our representative at the designated pickup point in Chandigarh.
- Begin your journey by cab from Chandigarh.
- Travel to Narkanda, depending on the day's itinerary.

Meals: Dinner

Night: Stay at the hotel in Narkanda

Day 2: Narkanda to Kalpa | Dist: 241 km | Time: 07 to 08 hrs

- After breakfast, begin your drive from Shimla/Narkanda towards the picturesque village of Kalpa.
- Kalpa is famous for its vibrant apple orchards and stunning views of the Kinner Kailash mountain range.
- Foreign nationals will need to obtain an Inner Line Permit upon arriving in Kalpa.

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Night: Stay at the Hotel in Kalpa

Day 3: Kalpa to Tabo | Dist: 148 km | Time: 06 to 07 hrs

- After breakfast, begin your drive towards the historic village of Tabo.
- En route, stop at Khab, the confluence point of the Sutlej and Spiti rivers.
- Visit the serene Nako Lake, beautifully bordered by willow and poplar trees.
- Explore the Gue Monastery, which houses a well-preserved 600-year-old mummy.

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Night: Stay at Homestay in Tabo

Day 9: Kaza to Sangla | Dist: 235 Kms | Time: 07 to 08 hrs

- After having breakfast, begin your drive to Sangla, passing through Chango, Nako, Khab, Pooh, and Spillow along the way.
- Enjoy the changing landscapes and breathtaking scenery throughout your journey.

- On reaching Sangla, check into your hotel or homestay and settle in.
- In the evening, take a stroll through the town and explore the local markets at your leisure.

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Night: Stay at Hotel/Homestay in Sangla

Day 10: Sangla to Shimla | Dist: 226 km | Time: 7 to 8 hrs

- Wake up to stunning views of Kinnaur Valley, beautifully set along the banks of the Sutlej River.
- After enjoying your breakfast, begin your return journey towards Shimla.
- Drive through scenic towns and landscapes, passing Karcham, Rampur, Narkanda, and Theog along the route.

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Night: Stay at the hotel in Shimla

Day 11: Depart to Chandigarh | Dist: 109 km | Time: 02 to 04 hrs

- After breakfast, complete the check-out formalities at your hotel.
- As the expedition concludes, begin your journey back with a drive towards Chandigarh, enjoying the scenic views along the way.
- Enjoy the scenic views along the way as you conclude your mountain adventure.

Meals: Breakfast

Night: NA

Inclusions •

Stay will be provided on a twin or triple-sharing basis, as per the hotel or homestay arrangements mentioned in the itinerary.

All three meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinner) will be included during the Snow Leopard tracking days.

Meals as per the itinerary.

Transportation throughout the trip will be by a non-air-conditioned vehicle.

A skilled and experienced wildlife guide will accompany you for tracking and spotting snow leopards.

All necessary permits required for travel in the region are included.

Entry fees for monasteries during the Spiti leg of the journey are covered.

Services of a scanner and porter for the snow leopard scanning expedition are included.

Exclusions •

Charges for photography at specific locations or monuments.

GST 5%.

Entry fees to monasteries and heritage sites.

Personal expenses incurred in case of trip cancellation after commencement.

Additional costs may be incurred due to unforeseen events, such as landslides, road closures, or weather disturbances.

Any services or items not mentioned under the "Cost Inclusions" section.

Extra charges for room heaters, if required.

Travel insurance coverage is not included.

Fees for optional adventure activities are not included in the package.

FAQs •

Q: Can snow leopards be found in Spiti Valley?

A: Yes, Spiti Valley is one of the few regions in India where snow leopards are spotted in the Kibber Wildlife Sanctuary, especially during winter.

Q: What are the best spots in Spiti to see a snow leopard?

A: Villages like Kibber, Chicham, and Langza are among the top locations for snow leopard sightings in Spiti.

Q: Which is the top destination to spot snow leopards in India?

A: Spiti Valley in the Kibber Wildlife Sanctuary, Himachal Pradesh, and Hemis National Park in Ladakh are among the most reliable places to spot snow leopards in India.

Q: How much does a snow leopard expedition in Spiti cost?

A: Prices typically range from ?65,000 to ?79,000 per person for Indians, depending on the itinerary, duration, and inclusions.

Q: What’s the best way to spot a snow leopard in Spiti?

A: Join a guided winter expedition between December to March, led by local trackers who specialise in spotting snow leopards in their natural habitat.

Q: How many snow leopards live in Spiti Valley?

A: Spiti Valley is home to an estimated 30–40 snow leopards, though they are extremely elusive and well-camouflaged in the wild.

Q: Which Indian state has the highest number of snow leopards?

A: Jammu & Kashmir, particularly the Spiti Valley & Ladakh region, is believed to have the largest snow leopard population in India.

Q: What types of wildlife are found in Spiti?

A: Spiti hosts a diverse range of Himalayan wildlife, including Snow Leopards, Blue Sheep, Tibetan Wolves, Red Foxes, golden eagles, and Siberian Ibex.

Q: What if the snow leopard is spotted on the first day?

A: If spotted early, the remaining days can be used to explore the local culture, wildlife, and landscapes around Kaza, rather than continuing the tracking.

Q: Is the expedition physically demanding?

A: The trek involves minimal hiking, but you should be in good physical condition and mentally ready to face challenges: extreme winter conditions and high altitudes.

Q: Are cameras and photography gear available in Kaza?

A: No. There are no shops in Kaza to buy or rent cameras, tripods, or lenses. Photographers must bring their gear.

Q: Are there refunds if the snow leopard is not spotted?

A: No. Since snow leopards are wild and rare animals, sightings are not guaranteed, and no refunds will be issued for unsuccessful attempts to spot them.

Get in Touch •

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