

## Places to visit in Darjeeling, West Bengal



Darjeeling is famously known as the 'Queen of Hills'

Darjeeling, widely known as the 'Queen of the Hills', is a town located in West Bengal, India. It is famous for its surreal beauty, tea, and the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway. The popularity of this hill station grew during the colonial days when the British made it their summer capital.

### Attractions

There is no dearth of attractions in Darjeeling. The charm of Darjeeling lies in its natural attractions and the small wonders that people have created to make this destination accessible to one and all.

**Darjeeling Toy Train:** The train is arguably the most popular attraction in Darjeeling. Enjoy the much-coveted ride in one of the heritage trains that had been chugging along the scenic Himalayan route since 1880s. The Darjeeling Toy Train is maintained by the Darjeeling Himalayan Rail and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

**Tiger Hill:** This is the highest point in Darjeeling offering stunning views of Kanchenjunga mountain both at dawn and dusk. On a bright sunny day, you can also spot Mount Everest.

**Darjeeling Ropeway:** Also known as the Rangeet Valley Cable Car, the Darjeeling Ropeway is very popular amongst tourists for the excellent views of the valley it offers.

While the impressive Japanese Peace Pagoda resonates serenity, the Observatory Hill – the oldest site in Darjeeling – is a good vantage point for viewing the Himalayan range.

For those looking to explore Darjeeling to the core, going on a trek is highly recommended.

**Sandakphu & Singalila Trek:** This trek offers stunning views of the surrounding valleys and mountains. The trek isn't too hard and can be done by anyone who is physically fit and used to walking.

**Phalut Trek:** Starting from Sandakphu, the journey takes you all the way to Phalut, which is approximately 21 km away. Both the places are of almost the same height, so the land is fairly level. The path meanders through forests and offers excellent views of several mountains including Mount Everest.

**Village Tour & Trek:** The Village Tour & Trek is also quite popular with tourists as they get to visit many villages in the Kalimpong area. People not only get an insight into local customs, but also enjoy traditional Nepali cuisine.

### Adventure Sports in Darjeeling

**White Water Rafting:** Rafting down the Teesta River is not only an exhilarating experience but it also offers beautiful

views of the forested river banks and the valley itself.

Paragliding: The popularity of paragliding in Darjeeling has been increasing at an exponential rate as more people choose to explore the splendor of Darjeeling from the skies.

Hot Air Balloons: The balloons are perfect for those who wish to view Darjeeling from the sky, but are afraid of paragliding. The hot air balloons are safely moored to the ground and the journey is closely monitored by experienced guides.

## Accommodation

Since Darjeeling is a tourist hotspot, getting an accommodation is never an issue. Budget travelers can choose to stay at the Classic Guest House and the Revolver amongst others. Those looking for a more luxurious stay can choose the Windamere or the Cedar Inn, although there are many more options available. A completely different experience overwhelms you when you choose to stay at a tea estate.

## Places to Eat in Darjeeling

From relishing pancakes, soups, and pasta at Sonam's Kitchen to trying some lip-smacking bakery items at the Glenary's, Darjeeling will leave you gastronomically satisfied. Whether you spend some quite moments sipping the world's finest teas at Nathmull's Tea Room or taste the Nepalese and Tibetan momo, the culinary journey in this hill station is worth remembering.

## Darjeeling Location Map

## Facts about Darjeeling

Darjeeling is also known as the Queen of the Hills.

Darjeeling Tea is considered to be one of the best in the world and is also known as the 'Champagne of teas.'

The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, also known as the Darjeeling Toy Train, was built between 1879 and 1881.

## Where is Darjeeling ?

It is a town in the state of West Bengal located at a distance of around 634 km from Kolkata, 98 km from Gangtok, 504 km from Guwahati, and 596 km from Shillong.

## How to Reach Darjeeling?

**By Air:** The closest airport is Bagdogra Airport, which is about 70 km away. It is connected to all major airports in the country. The drive from the airport to Darjeeling will take about 1 hour and 40 minutes.

**By Rail:** The New Jalpaiguri Station is the nearest railway station and is about 88 km away from Darjeeling. A drive from the station to Darjeeling will take about 1 hour and 40 minutes.

**By Road:** There are a number of buses that ply to and from Darjeeling to the town of Siliguri, which is about 65 km away. Many choose to travel by smaller vehicles by sharing their seat. The drive takes about an hour and a half.

## Best time to visit Darjeeling

Autumn and spring are the best times to visit Darjeeling. Spring in Darjeeling lasts from March to April while autumn continues from September to November. October is the month when the town hosts the 10-day Darjeeling Carnival that organizes poetry-reading sessions, tea-drinking events, music concerts, and food festivals.

### **More about Darjeeling**

The 'Toy Train' is very popular amongst tourists and hence, getting tickets at the last minute is almost impossible. It is advisable to buy tickets well in advance.

The Himalayan Mountaineering Institute in Darjeeling offers a month-long course on mountaineering for those who are interested.

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