Village India: Slowly Down the Ganges
Uttaranchal, UP & West Bengal

On this trip we focus on the day-to-day beauty of rural India and its people. At Wild Frontiers we believe it is more rewarding to visit the villages of India, experience the pace of life and culture of the locals and witness first-hand the life that the majority of Indians live, away from the regular cities on the tourist trail. On this unique tour in central India you will experience a combination of village life, wonderful mountain scenery, the tranquil world along India’s holy riverbank and the hustle bustle of some of her most vibrant city centres. From Delhi to Kolkata (formerly Calcutta), via the Himalayas and the Ganges, this is a wonderful trip that will stay with you for a very long time.

“We really did go “Slowly down the Ganges”… sailing in small fishing boats was incredibly relaxing and the camping on clean sandbanks was wonderful. I have never seen such bright stars!” Janet Locke

Duration: 16 Days
Average group size: 5 - 12
Start: Sat 18 Mar 17
Finish: Sun 02 Apr 17

Looking for alternative dates? Check the website or give us a call
TOUR DETAILS

TOUR CODE: SDG/A

HIGHLIGHTS

- Walking in the foothills of the Himalayas
- Spotting tigers at Corbett Tiger Reserve
- The historical cities of Lucknow and Allahabad
- Slowly down the river Ganges to Varanasi
- Kolkata, India’s cultural heart

Accommodation: As an overall ethos, wherever possible we aim to use characterful accommodation that enhances the overall travel experience, not just offers a bed for the night. This can obviously vary dramatically from country to country and from trip to trip.

On this trip the accommodation is incredibly varied. You will experience some wonderful and characterful estates to swanky hotels, the ‘experience’ that is the overnight train journey in India as well as two nights wild camping. We believe that you will not be disappointed.

However, this is still India and in certain places facilities are sometimes not quite up to a Western standard and patience is occasionally required.

While camping on the banks of the Ganges we will sleep in sturdy two-person tents. We will provide mattresses and blankets but if you want to be really snug you should bring your own sleeping bag and travel pillow and remember there are no bathroom facilities on the boats.

Please note that the accommodation mentioned in the itinerary is intended as a guide only and is always subject to availability.

Transport: On this tour we will use 2nd Class AC trains, boats, shared safari canter, jeeps and mini-bus coasters.

Climate: Travelling in Uttaranchal at this time of year will be clear and crisp but in Sitla it can get chilly at night up at 2,000m, likewise on the safaris in Corbett National Park some warm clothes will be needed. However once onto the plains and the river it will be beautifully warm and sultry.

Is this trip for me? It may sound obvious but Wild Frontiers tours are not always for everyone and it is important to us that the tour you choose is the most suitable. Please therefore take time to read the dossier carefully. All our tours are graded to give an overall picture of the trip but these are only guidelines and you should check the daily itinerary. Should you have any concerns about your ability to partake in any aspect of the tour then please contact the office.

Adventure Rating ★★★★★☆☆☆☆☆
Comfort Grade ★★★★★☆☆☆☆☆
Fitness Level ★★★★★☆☆☆☆☆
Cultural Interest ★★★★★☆☆☆☆☆

Additional Comments: Please be advised that on this trip vegetarians can be catered for but the selection and variety may be limited.
Day 1: Tour Starts in Delhi: The tour starts early this afternoon in Delhi. After a quick freshen up and meeting at our hotel we’ll head into New Delhi for lunch. From here we’ll visit the splendid UNESCO listed Humayun’s Tomb, stopping at both Rashtrapati Bhavan (the Presidential Palace) and India Gate for a photo stop on the way. We’ll end our tour at the beautiful Lodhi Gardens, a green haven of tranquility in this busy capital city. From here we’ll head back to the hotel to freshen up before dinner at a good local restaurant.

The Claridges Hotel or similar (L,D)

Day 2: Kathgodam - Mukteshwar: We’ll have an early start today as we transfer to Old Delhi station to catch the train to Kathgodam, located where the foothills of the Himalayas rise spectacularly out of the Indian plains. On arrival we’ll drive towards Almora, stopping for tea/coffee en-route before continuing on to Mukteshwar. We will stay at the charming hotel-cum-home that is Sitla Estate. Sitla comprises a cluster of old British cottages, recently converted into a lovely guesthouse, located 2,000m above sea level with breath-taking views of the high Himalayas, including Nanda Devi. Our host here is Vikram Maira - a bon viveur and excellent cook who over the next two days will take us walking into the hills. This will prove a great place to unwind after the long journey.

Sitla Estate or similar (B,L,D)

Day 3: Mukteshwar: Sitla Estate is situated in an old apple estate at the top of the village of Mukteshwar. Here you can drink coffee at dawn watching the sun rise over the spectacular Nanda Devi and the border with Nepal. The Estate has a wonderful warmth and simplicity and the walks into the nearby hills are fabulous. Today we will be able to relax, shrug off our jet-lag and enjoy this charming place, with walks and visits to local communities.

Sitla Estate or similar (B,L,D)

Day 4: Mukteshwar - Corbett Tiger Reserve: After breakfast we drive back down out of the hills towards the famous Corbett Tiger Reserve. We aim to arrive at our accommodation just outside the park in time for lunch. With luck we should be there in time to have a late afternoon jeep safari to spot the famous tiger as well as a number of other rare and elusive animals.

The Riverview Retreat - Corbett Resort or similar (B,L,D)

Day 5: Corbett Tiger Reserve: This morning we will take an early drive into the park in the hope of spotting a tiger. Afterwards we will return to the lodge and hopefully enjoy a nature walk or a visit to the nearby town of Ramnagar.

The Riverview Retreat - Corbett Resort or similar (B,L,D)

Day 6: Corbett Tiger Reserve - Rishikesh: After breakfast we will move on to Rishikesh. Taking lunch en route we will
Day 7: Rishikesh - Lucknow: Today will be very relaxed as we enjoy more wanderings in Rishikesh, exploring the ashrams, temples and the local bazaar. Late afternoon we will transfer to Haridwar and have an early dinner before heading to the train station for the evening departure to Lucknow. **Overnight train (B,L,D)**

Day 8: In Lucknow: Arriving into the fascinating city of Lucknow this morning we will have all day to see where the bloody struggle of 1857 took place, when the Residency was under siege by Indian freedom fighters. Often overlooked on the main tourist trail, Lucknow is well worth a day’s sightseeing and always proves one of the highlights of the trip. **Vivanta by Taj Hotel or similar (B,L,D)**

Day 9: Lucknow - Allahabad: Today we will continue our journey along the Ganges to Allahabad - the holy town at the confluence of the Yamuna and Ganges Rivers. This meeting point of the rivers, the Sangam, is believed to have great soul-cleansing powers and is a major pilgrimage site. It is even more holy as the invisible Saraswati River is believed to join the Ganges and Yamuna Rivers at this point and every 12 years is the scene of the extraordinary Kumbh Mela. We will spend the late afternoon soaking up the atmosphere by the river before dinner. **Hotel Kanha Shyam or similar (B,L,D)**

Days 10/11: Slowly Down the Ganges: Today the adventure really begins as we spend the next three days and two nights drifting slowly down the Ganges. This will be a peaceful and exotic trip as we pass interesting villages, temples and settlements, seeing how life is in this most sacred of rural settings. Each evening we will find a suitable place to camp, usually on a sandbank, and enjoy the serenity of the flowing river. Taking our own cooks the food will be fabulous, vegetarian to respect the spiritual customs of the river, and the camps will be comfortable. **Camping (B,L,D)**

Day 12: In Varanasi: Arriving by boat into Varanasi (formerly known as Benares) in the afternoon will really amaze you...so much better than coming by bus or train. Once here we will check into our hotel, have a wash and change and then take a dusk boat ride along the ghats where we will witness the evening aarti - when the pujas are given and the candles lit and floated on the river, similar to what we saw in Rishikesh - before taking dinner at a local restaurant. **The Radisson or similar (B,L,D)**

Day 13: Varanasi - Kolkata: In the early morning we’ll take a boat ride on the Ganges to see the morning prayers. This is a wonderful time - particularly loved by photographers - as the mellow dawn light washes over the worshipers taking their morning dip. After this we will have free time to enjoy this amazing Indian city before an early dinner and departing to catch our overnight train to Kolkata. **Overnight train (B,L,D)**

Day 14: In Kolkata: Having followed India’s great river, from close to its source almost to its end, we arrive at Kolkata on the banks of the Ganges and transfer to our hotel. With nothing scheduled before lunch we will have time to unwind before exploring this wonderfully manic city. This afternoon we will look to visit a number of sites of interest in the city depending upon the itinerary the Tour Leader has planned for Day 15. In the evening we will have dinner at a local restaurant, an ideal opportunity to sample some of Bengal’s distinctive cuisine. **The Astor Hotel or similar (B,L,D)**

Day 15: In Kolkata: With an optional early start we’ll visit the locals trading at the fish market before having breakfast back at our hotel. From here we will enjoy a guided tour of the city and visit some of the key attractions such as the famous Black Hole of Kolkata, Dalhousie Square (including Raj Bhavan, St. John’s church, the high court, the town hall and the writer’s building), the flower market, Howrah bridge, Mother House, St Paul’s cathedral and the Victoria memorial.

WILD FRONTIERS Adventure Travel Ltd Tel: +44 (0) 20 7736 3968 Fax: +44 (0) 20 8741 3610 Email: info@wildfrontierstravel.com Website: www.wildfrontierstravel.com
before our final dinner in one of the city’s fine restaurants.
The Astor Hotel or similar (B,L,D)

Day 16: Kolkata: The tour finishes with an early morning transfer to Kolkata airport for those booked onto the suggested group flights.

Extensions: If you have more time available, why not arrive early to adjust to a new time zone or just to get a feel for the country before your tour starts? Or alternatively you might choose to allow a few extra days after the tour to relax or to undertake some further exploration. The choice is completely yours and we can usually arrange anything from simply additional accommodation and transfers to full tailor-made itineraries.

Here is just a small sample of what you could do:

• Take an extra day or two in Delhi before the tour, and perhaps visit the Taj Mahal in Agra.
• Extend your stay with a couple of extra nights in Kolkata.
• Visit the nearby centres of Darjeeling, Kalimpong or the Glenburn Tea Estate.
• Finally you could make a short excursion out to the Sundarbans.

Please contact the office for more details and to discuss your individual requirements.

Wild Frontiers tour. If you prefer not to pay a single supplement we’ll pair you with someone else of the same sex for you to share with throughout the trip.

On this trip, if you do opt to pay for a single supplement then please note that it will cover you for all nights of the tour except of course on the overnight trains.

Flights: If you would like us to send you a quote for the suggested tour flight (see GETTING THERE) or on any alternative flight that may suit you better, please let us know although it should be noted that in most cases we are only able to quote on flights originating in the UK.

Please remember that all Wild Frontiers tour prices mean NO hidden extras, NO local payments and NO compulsory single supplements.

WHAT IS INCLUDED?

• Full services of a Wild Frontiers Tour Leader with local guides and drivers
• Meal plan as detailed in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner) with drinking water as required with the majority of meals being taken in local restaurants where viable
• All transport as outlined in the itinerary.
• All accommodation
• All entrance fees, as per itinerary
• A carbon-offsetting contribution to Carbon Clear (if booking international flights through WF office)

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED

• Visas (if applicable)
• Local airport taxes
• Tips (always optional, but some guidance will be given in the pre-departure information pack you’ll receive after booking)
• Beverages other than drinking water & any costs of a personal nature
• International flights to/from the start/finish of the trip
• Airport transfers (unless booking suggested flights through WF office)

Pricing

Tour price: All our tours are priced on a land-only basis, giving you maximum flexibility when deciding how to get to and from your tour. For the latest prices, please refer to our website or contact the office.

Travelling Solo & Single Supplements: As a company approximately 70% of our clients are solo travellers, so it’s very unlikely you’ll be alone!

Our prices are typically based on twin-share accommodation but single supplements are not compulsory for any
GETTING THERE

For this trip our suggested flights from the UK (subject to change) are:

17MAR 9W121 LHR-DEL 20:50/10:50+1
02APR 9W618 CCU-BOM 06:20/08:55
02APR 9W118 BOM-LHR 12:50/17:55

Key:
LHR - London Heathrow
DEL - Delhi
CCU - Kolkata
BOM - Mumbai
9W - Jet Airways

NB If you wish to arrange your own flights you are completely free to do so and in this case we can arrange any transfers or supplementary accommodation that you may require.

Please note that if you are planning on making your own flight arrangements, we recommend that you first check with us to see if the trip is guaranteed. We then suggest that you purchase flights that are flexible and ideally refundable as due to the nature of adventure travel, itineraries and destination accessibility can change at any time. For more information, please refer to our booking conditions.

Insurance: Insurance that provides cover for emergency repatriation in case of a medical emergency is compulsory for all tours. You should be aware that due to some of the geographical areas visited and some of the activities included on certain of our trips some standard insurance policies may not always provide adequate cover. As such we strongly recommend that you purchase a policy that adequately covers your trip.

Travel & General offer a tailor-made policy that provides cover for all Wild Frontiers trips. Under this policy there are two different levels of cover available - Standard and Elite.

Cover explained:

Standard policy: a comprehensive travel insurance policy that provides cover for all Wild Frontiers activities, including trekking up to 6,000m. This policy does not provide cover for travel to areas where the FCO is advising against all or all but essential travel except where it has been previously agreed.

Elite policy: provides the same comprehensive level of cover as the standard policy. In addition the Elite policy also provides cover for travel to areas where the FCO is advising against all or all but essential travel. Except in the case of terrorism, the policy will not provide cover for any claims arising from or relating to the reasons why the FCO is advising against travel.

For this trip the minimum requirement would be the Standard policy.

These policies are only available to those travelling on a Wild Frontiers holiday and can be purchased on a trip-specific basis or annual cover. For more information please refer to the details on our website www.wildfrontierstravel.com/insurance or by calling Travel & General direct on + 44 (0) 20 3794 2954. This insurance is available to EEA residents (i.e. EU countries as well as Iceland, Lichtenstein and Norway) up to the age of 78. It covers horse riding, mountain walking, trekking, white-water rafting and all other activities we offer as part of our tours.

If you are over 78 then you may still be able to get your insurance arranged by Travel & General Insurance Services Limited. Please contact us for assistance with this.

If you do decide to purchase alternative insurance, then you must ensure that it covers you for every aspect of this trip.

Wild Frontiers Limited is an Introducer Appointed Representative of Travel & General Insurance Service Ltd, details of which can be found at the website of the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) www.fca.org.uk

Please note that no insurance policy will cover every eventuality and terms and conditions will apply in the event of any claim.

Visas: Visas are necessary for many of the destinations we travel to and while we aim to provide you with the most up-to-date information, requirements frequently change and as such for the latest advice
we advise that you check with the relevant embassies or contact our recommended visa agency for this trip, details of which are below:

Travcour
Tel: +44 (0) 20 8543 1846
www.travcour.com

Non-UK passport holders or non-UK residents should contact the relevant embassies for individual requirements.

Further details will be sent out to you on booking, however ensuring that correct and valid visas are obtained remains the sole responsibility of the client.

**Responsible Travel:** Responsible travel and sustainable tourism are fundamental ideas that Wild Frontiers has been committed to since our birth. It is our strong belief that these words should not be simply ‘tagged on’ to dossiers and websites but should be at the very core of each trip, and our adventures are therefore designed with the local people, culture and eco-system in mind. We believe that a successful trip not only delivers a unique and unsurpassable journey for our clients, but that it also benefits the peoples whose lands we are privileged to visit.

In 2012 we were delighted to be awarded the Guardian Observer Best Ethical Travel Award.

![Travel Awards 2012 Winner: Best ethical travel award](image)

For more information, please refer to [www.wildfrontierstravel.com/rt](http://www.wildfrontierstravel.com/rt)

The Wild Frontiers Foundation: Supporting communities has always played a huge part of the Wild Frontiers’ ethos and from the outset we have contributed to projects in many of the places we visit. However in 2009 we decided to take things a step further by setting up our own charitable foundation. Through the Wild Frontiers Foundation, we have not only developed our own community projects but also - by working closely with certain carefully selected charity partners - helped fund the invaluable work they do throughout the developing world. With our mandate firmly based on education and sustainability we established our first project in 2010 in the remote Northern Pakistan village of Baleygon, where around 100 children are now being educated in a school built and maintained by the Foundation.

![Baleygon School Project](image)

Working with charity partners we have also established a number of e-learning centres in schools across Ethiopia, sponsored an English class in rural Northern Laos and funded hospitality traineeships for a number of young people from the Kolkata slums in India. Where practicable, Wild Frontiers clients will have the opportunity to visit our projects whilst on tour.

Visit [www.wildfrontiersfoundation.org](http://www.wildfrontiersfoundation.org) to see details of all our projects, along with ways you can get involved by taking on the challenge of a charity trek, attending our fundraising events or simply giving what you can. Other ongoing fundraising schemes include:-

**Go Paperless:** For UK-based clients who are happy for all their final travel documents to be sent by email rather than through the post, Wild Frontiers will donate £5 from each booking to the Foundation.

**Kit Out for Kids:** Nomad Travel Stores generously donates 5% of purchases by Wild Frontiers’ clients to the Foundation. Quote **WF1000** either online or in store when purchasing clothing and kit and Nomad will give you 20% off full priced clothing and kit, plus the charitable donation. Visit [www.nomadtravel.co.uk](http://www.nomadtravel.co.uk)
The Environment: Trying to do our bit for the environment, in 2005 we were among the first UK-based travel companies to automatically offset every client’s international flight (if booked with us) with a payment to Carbon Clear to help promote sustainable energy. To read more about the work of Carbon Clear, please follow this link: www.carbon-clear.com

Non-UK citizens should consult the travel advice of their respective governments.

Wild Frontiers Community

If you’re still not sure if this trip is right or just want to see get some different perspectives, then why not have a look at the wide variety of resources we have on our website?

Clients’ Views: See what other travellers have said about our trips - www.wildfrontierstravel.com/views

Blogs: See what our tour-leaders, staff and clients have posted from the road - www.wildfrontierstravel.com/blog

Videos: They may not find their way on the list for Oscars nominations but we have an extensive (and growing) collection of short videos giving you an insight in many of our destinations - www.wildfrontierstravel.com/video

Photos: Our popular “Photo of the month” competition has added to the vast gallery of photos we already have from around the world. See them here - www.wildfrontierstravel.com/photos

Events: From time to time we hold informal presentations, photo exhibitions and dinner evenings mainly in the London area. To find out more see here - www.wildfrontierstravel.com/events

Wild Miles Club: Everyone that has booked a trip directly with us will become an automatic member of the Wild Miles Club gaining instant access to a range of exclusive discounts from a variety of travel partners from bookshops to outdoor clothing shops. In addition, regular direct bookers will earn “Wild Miles” which can earn you up to 10% in discounts off all tours. For more information visit this page - www.wildfrontierstravel.com/wild-miles

AITO Membership: Wild Frontiers is a member of AITO, the Association of Independent Tour Operators. AITO’s charter states that its exclusive members strive to create overseas holidays with high levels of professionalism and a shared concern for quality and personal service. The Association encourages the highest standards in all aspects of tour operating. AITO sets criteria regarding ownership, finance and quality which must be satisfied before new companies are admitted to membership. All members are required to adhere to a Code of Business Practice which encourages high operational standards and conduct.

British Foreign & Commonwealth Office:
The travel advice of the British Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) highlights potential hazards people might experience when travelling abroad and as an advocate of their “Know Before You Go” campaign we strongly suggest that you refer to it before booking and contact us if you have any queries or concerns. Details can be found on the website below.
INDIA - THE FACTS

Delhi: Capital of modern India, of the British Raj and the Moghul empire, Delhi - the City of Djinns - is a fascinating place to explore, bursting with centuries of colourful history, of old imperial splendour and modern manic mayhem. From the chaotic, narrow alleyways of the old town to the relative tranquillity of the new, at almost every corner there is something - a fort, a mosque, an imperial palace - to excite and amaze the visitor. To wander unhindered down Rajpath - the Kingsway - from India Gate to Rashtrapati Bhavan, stopping for a while in the shade of the sheltering neem trees to feast your eyes on Lutyens’ extraordinary work of architecture will have even the most seasoned traveller gasping in awe. Just as impressive, and arguably a lot more fun, is to take a walk through the old town; down the bustling Chandni Chowk and off into the narrow, sunless alleyways that make up Shahjahanabad.

Here, among the jewellry, fabric and wedding bazaars you will find a world barely changed from that of Moghul times. With plenty more sight-seeing trips available to the Qutab Minar, Lodhi Gardens, the Lotus Temple or the awesome Humayan’s Tomb - inspiration for the Taj Mahal; shopping expeditions on Janpath, Santoshti or Khan Markets; or a quiet cup of tea at the Imperial...Delhi can have you busy for days.

Sitla Estate: Is located in the Kumaon Himalayas in Uttaranchal at a height of 7000 feet, on a 39 acre property. Bordering a huge reserve of jungle it is an excellent holiday location in itself and serves as a very convenient launching pad for the various tours in the region. It also holds one of the most glorious views of the high Himalaya with Nanda Devi and a number of other peaks towering before it. The home itself was built by a British agent in the 1930s and is now owned and run by the charming Vikram Mira.

Corbett Tiger Reserve: The Corbett National Park is a primal jungle as Rudyard Kipling put it. Set up in 1936 as India’s original national park, it was first delimited in consultation with that great hunter and conserver, Jim Corbett. The park spans across some 920.9 square km at an altitude of 600 to 1100 metres above the foothills of the western Himalayas in the districts of Nainital and Pauri Garhwal in the state of Uttaranchal. The main feature of this ridged valley is the...
Ramganga River, running broadly west by south west, the catchment streams of which dissect the land into numerous little ridges and ravines. The topography is therefore very varied - the streams forming islands of 'sheesham' trees, the ridges being thickly foliated with 'sal' trees and the pastures carrying long grasses. In this variety of habitat abounds wildlife of enchanting beauty including 50 mammals, 577 birds and at least 25 reptiles. The river teems with mahseer, gharial, mugger and flocks of cormorants. What is important of course are the tigers - there were 90 in 1984 - and here you have as good a chance of seeing this amazing animal as you do anywhere... though it should be stated this should be seen as the icing on the cake rather than the whole gateau!

**Rishikesh:** Twenty-four kilometres upstream from Haridwar on the banks of the River Ganges is the holy town of Rishikesh. Literally, Rishi's (holy man) locks, this small town is the point where the holy Ganges crashes down in full glory onto huge boulders and creates long stretches of white sandy beaches. The banks are lined with ashrams, where saints and holy men rest before beginning their arduous pilgrimage up into the snow-covered land of the gods. Rishikesh is the lap of Hindu philosophy and learning, with several ashrams devoted to the understanding and propagation of the faith. Signs of religious rituals can be seen all over Rishikesh - in the numerous temples lining the banks of the Ganges, the mythological tales that you hear about various spots and even the shops that sell books and religious objects. Rishikesh first acquired prominence in the west when the Beatles visited to meet Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and begin their quest for spiritual salvation. During their stay they composed many of their best loved songs, including Blackbird, Dear Prudence (about Mia Farrow's sister who was also staying) and Ob-La-Dee, Ob-La Da...Life goes on! The ashram where they stayed however has long since closed down. Still, even today several foreign travellers along with the steady stream of Indian students visit the ashrams to study Hindu philosophy, yoga and Ayurvedic medicine.

**The Ganges:** The Ganges River is the greatest waterway in India and is one of the longest rivers in the world. It begins high in the Himalayas as a pair of head streams in an ice cave in the mountains 10,300 feet above sea level. The river then flows across the northern corner of India until it empties out into the Bay of Bengal. The Ganges River has always been known as a religious icon in the world and represents the focus of the Hindu religion. As such while on the Ganges we must treat it with the spiritual respect it deserves. It will be a journey down the lifeline of the great subcontinent.

**Lucknow:** Lucknow, the capital of Uttar Pradesh, extends along the banks of the River Gomti. The creator of Lucknow as it is today was Nawab Asaf ud Daula, through the city became known as a centre for Urdu poetry and courtly diction during the reign of Wajid Ali Shah who was a connoisseur of music and poetry. It was during his reign that the British appropriated Awadh. Today, the city is dotted with remnants of its rich historic past. Lucknow is also known for its elaborate cuisine and 'Chikankaari' or exquisite shadow-work embroidery on fine muslin cloth and was also an important centre of the British Raj.

**Varanasi:** Once known as Benares, is an incredible city in northern India, sacred to Hindus and overflowing with history and culture...and a few other things besides! One of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, in many ways Varanasi...
epitomizes the very best and most challenging aspects of India, and it can be a little overwhelming. However, the scene of pilgrims doing their devotions in the River Ganges at sunrise set against the backdrop of the centuries old temples is probably one of the most impressive sights in the world. Over 60,000 people come down to the water’s edge every day to take a dip in the sacred waters of the Ganges. Boat rides, especially at sunrise and sunset, are the best way to visit the ghats particularly to see the evening aarti.

**Kolkata:** Though the first time traveller to India might find the chaotic streets and bustling markets of Kolkata somewhat daunting, wander around a while and you will soon realise that this great city's stereotypical image of a decaying, squalor-ridden, mass of humanity is largely undeserved. Kolkata, the City of Joy, is in fact a thriving, colourful and extremely artistic place; described by many as India's cultural heart. Though the city is home to some of the most impressive architecture of the British Raj, it also carries a distinctly Bengali soul. Bengal is home to India’s poets and writers, artists and reformers and it is from here that many of the country's political changes are born. There are also plenty of wonderful places to see and things to do. Soak up the Bengali culture at the various museums, galleries, coffee houses and fine restaurants. Explore the historical collections of the Victoria Memorial, one of India's most telling remnants of the British Raj. Stroll through the Maidan in the late afternoon and watch the heart of the city go about its business.
How to Book:

In order to confirm your booking we need to have a completed signed booking form for each client together with a £400 deposit per person. You can either return your booking form to us by post or by booking online at www.wildfrontierstravel.com

You can contact the office by email to info@wildfrontierstravel.com or we are very happy to take your call on +44 (0) 20 7736 3968.

Protection for you money:

The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT) provides financial protection under the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 for Wild Frontiers, and in the event of their insolvency, protection is provided for the following:

1. Non-flight packages commencing in and returning to the UK;
2. Non-flight packages commencing and returning to a country other than the UK; and
3. Flight inclusive packages that commence outside of the UK, which are sold to customers outside of the UK.

1, 2 and 3 provides for a refund in the event you have not yet travelled. 1 and 3 provides for repatriation. Please note that bookings made outside the UK are only protected by ABTOT when purchased directly with Wild Frontiers.

If you choose to book your international flights with us then you will also be ATOL protected as we hold an Air Travel Organiser’s Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). Our ATOL number is 5975. In the unlikely event of our insolvency, the CAA will arrange to refund any monies to you that you have paid for an advance booking and ensure that you are not stranded abroad. For further information visit www.atol.org.uk

We recommend that you take out adequate travel insurance at the time of booking in the event that you are no longer able to travel as all deposits are non-refundable - full booking conditions can be found on the booking form and online at our website.

As I’m sure you can appreciate, Wild Frontiers trips can be quite complex affairs to arrange and certain elements (such as permits, visa authorisations, trains and flights) may need to be requested several months in advance. As such, wherever possible, we would encourage you to plan ahead and book early to avoid disappointment. Moreover, by booking early you are always guaranteed to get the best price with us as we will automatically offer you a retrospective discount if we happen to reduce the price of the tour later on. For further details, please refer to www.wildfrontierstravel.com/price-guarantee

Further information:
When you make a confirmed booking with Wild Frontiers we will send you a pre-departure information pack giving you details on visas, health and vaccinations, packing lists, suggested reading on the region, photography and other useful tips to make your trip more enjoyable.
Why Wild Frontiers?

Wild Frontiers is proud to have been regularly voted one of the top ten tour operators by readers of Wanderlust Travel Magazine over the last ten years. A number of our innovative itineraries have been included in National Geographic Traveller Magazine’s “Trips of a Lifetime”, and our acclaimed Tour Leaders regularly feature in the Wanderlust World Guide Awards, with Mark Steadman winning gold in 2015. Responsible travel has always been incredibly important to us, so we were delighted to be awarded Best Ethical Tour Operator by The Guardian/Observer in 2012.

We are frequently asked what makes Wild Frontiers different from other tour operators. Below are a few of the factors that we believe set us apart from our competitors and form the reasons as to why our clients travel with us again and again…

**Personal Service & Expertise:** Our London office is manned by experienced expedition leaders and most trips we run stem from our first-hand knowledge - in short, we run the kind of holidays that are passionate travellers, we like to do ourselves. When you ring our office, you can be guaranteed to chat to someone who knows the region and the terrain and is able to offer sound and practical advice.

**Authentic, Cutting-Edge Experiences:** Our unique, original itineraries allow you to take journeys that venture beneath the surface of the region. We rarely run any group tour more than a couple of times a year and they are typically on routes we have discovered for ourselves, meaning we are able to give a truly authentic, off-the-beaten-track experience.

**Be the First:** Our style of travel is all about exploration, and nothing excites us more than opening up new routes to genuine travellers, even if that makes our job harder at times! We keep abreast of new destinations and are often the first to return to places that have vanished from the tourist map. We were the first back into Pakistan after 9/11, the first to return to Kashmir after a decade of tourist isolation, and amongst the first to run a commercial travel trip to Afghanistan for almost 30 years. Since then we have helped bring Colombia, Iran, Georgia and Bangladesh back into the tourist fold, specialising in ground-breaking reconnaissance trips and imaginative expeditions.

**Small Group Size:** On our escorted tours, we believe it is imperative to keep the group sizes small. Most trips are limited to an average maximum of 12 travellers, thus giving you more access to fragile cultures, better opportunities to interact with local people, and the knowledge you are making less of an impact while there. “Having been a bit apprehensive about joining a group as a single traveller, I found myself surrounded by interesting, friendly, helpful people who I hope to catch up with again on future trips.”

Angela Chick, Kashmir Group Tour

**Cost of Group Tours:** We believe in an honest, upfront pricing structure so you know exactly what the tour will cost before you book. On our group tours we avoid local payments, ‘optional extras’ or forcing our clients to go through the annoying procedure of splitting every meal bill. Our tours are provided on a predominantly full board basis, with drinking water, government permits, entrance fees and transport all included.

**Our clients:** Your companions can make or break a trip, and it’s lucky therefore that our clients are often our greatest asset. Travelling to remote regions is not for everyone, and as such we tend to attract open-minded travellers looking for genuine experiences, and a desire to reach those hard to get to places.

**Responsible Travel:** Awarded 5 star status by AITO (Association of Independent Tour operators), responsible tourism (RT) has always been an integral part of our company ethos and our adventures are designed with the local people, culture and eco-system in mind. In 2012 we were awarded the Guardian Observer Best Ethical Travel Award. For further details please refer to the RT section of our website - [www.wildfrontierstravel.com/rt](http://www.wildfrontierstravel.com/rt)