How cool would it be to travel to a state that shares its borders with three other countries? Super cool, right? If you just got interested, we should tell you that it is possible if you plan to take a trip to Sikkim, which shares its border with Nepal, Bhutan and China (Tibet). Around 40 percent of the entire area is forested which makes it even more cool. Come here to get jaw-droppingly amazed at what nature can do to you.

Sikkim is one of the most visited places in the eastern region of the country. And it has some solid grounds for being that. The natural beauty here is not something which can be fully enjoyed in just one trip. The state is accessible by foreigner tourists only with a Restricted Area Permit which is also known as the Inner Line Permit. The popular Rumtek Monastery is one place which is visited by people all around the world. The monastery is the main seat of the Karma Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism in Sikkim which makes it all the more important. The popular Nathula Pass is another feather in the state's cap along with the beautiful Tsongmo Lake. When it comes to impressing the foodie in you, Sikkim is no underdog in that department too. You cannot miss having some delicious momos when here. Also, worth mentioning is Phagshapa which is actually a strip of pork fat that is stewed with dried chilies and radishes. There is no way of entering the place other than by road from West Bengal as there are no airports or railway stations in the state. Do not miss to explore Gangtok, the state's capital while in Sikkim. Rest assured, the state will amaze you beyond your belief.

Famous For: State / Province

What To SEE

1. **Lachung**

   Lachung is a small village town in Sikkim, where Lachen and Lachung, the tributaries of Teesta river, converge. Literally a "small pass," Lachung was blocked to visitors and has only recently become a tourist destination, owing to the Indian Government's efforts to make it more accessible. This has kept its natural, verdant landscapes intact. Rich in Sikkimese and Tibetan culture, it houses the historic Lachung Gompa (monastery), which has some fascinating ancient inscriptions and murals. For trekkers and mountaineers, it serves as a base camp for the Rhododendron Valley Trek from Yumthang Valley to Lachen. Experience the kaleidoscopic beauty of nature and the tranquility of an ideal retreat destination in the true spirit of Sikkimese hospitality.

2. **Pelling**

   Offering great views of the majestic Himalayan mountains and specifically Kanchenjunga, Pelling is essentially a laid back town of quiet monasteries. To soak in the tranquility of this atmosphere, one should visit the Pemayantsqe Monastery and the Sangachoeling Monastery. Tourists also undertake excursions to the nearby Sangay Waterfall and the Kchehepalri Lake which is hidden in dense forest cover and is sacred to Buddhists. The Rabdantsey Ruins are those of an erstwhile kingdom and worth checking out. Pelling also serves as a base camp to mountain climbers and trekkers who undertake the arduous journey into the Himalayan ranges. The town has been undergoing the process of
development lately, providing good roads and better hotels to travellers.

3 Yuksom

Apart from being the first capital of Sikkim, Yuksom also holds the position of being a sacred site, symbolically representing the “third eye”. This biodiversity hotspot offers you the chance to get close and personal with Mother Nature. Head for the trekking trails to Mt. Kangchendzongha, or visit the wildlife sanctuary or simply relax with a glass of bamboo drink and take in the beautiful landscape. Also, do not forget to take back home some of the local handicrafts to show them off to your friends.

4 Lachen

Lachen has only recently been made available by the Sikkim government to tourists, and thus retains most of its unexploited, serene and pristine landscapes. This little hamlet will mesmerise you with its green and verdant surroundings, white snowy peaks and lofty, black cliffs. Must visit Lachen for the breathtaking Chopta Valley which is a photographer’s delight, the Gurudongmar Lake which is open only to Hindus and Buddhists and the exhilarating annual yak race, “Thangu”. Close to the Indo-China border, this town offers great opportunities for mountain treks and quiet nature trails.

5 Shingba Rhododendron Sanctuary

Shingba Rhododendron Sanctuary can be reached easily from Mangan in the northern part of Sikkim. Ranging between the elevations of 3048 to 4575 meters, Singba Rhododendron Sanctuary is a striking place to view flora and fauna in their full glory.

The spring season is regarded as the best time to visit, when rhododendrons blossom to their apex in the sanctuary. Shingba Sanctuary is enclosed by Chomzomei Tso broadening up to Lava pass in the west. To its south, Shingba Sanctuary is delimited by the angelic Yumthang Valley that is renowned for its alpine meadow and sublime beauty; whereas in the east, it is bordered by Chuba - Sagochen mountain ranges.

The Sanctuary also embraces the Yumthang River that flows through its periphery. On the banks of river, one can trace long queues of Rhododendron trees and shrubs. Apart from Rhododendrons, the sanctuary also boasts of primulas, potentillas, gentians, saxifrages, poppies, aconites larch, juniper, maple along with rambling lichens. You can also see silver fir and well-groomed thick mat of moss shielding the soil.

Talking about the fauna, the sanctuary has a small populace of wildlife like Tigers, Civets and Blood Pheasants. Lachung is the last village that is to be found prior to Shingba Sanctuary. This is the only place, where you can accommodate yourself, in the vicinity of the Sanctuary. By and large, it can be said that Singba Rhododendron Sanctuary is a nice place to explore the vegetation and fauna in their natural habitat.

Where To Eat

1 Cafe Live & Loud

As the name suggests, Cafe Live and Loud is a happening night club that promises an awesome, fun night. It is the place to savour sparkling
drinks and yummy appetizers. The pulsating atmosphere at this peppy pub cum restaurant is highly infectious and it draws you into a comfortable, laid back mood. The city is known for its thriving nightlife, flashy lounges and live musical performances; this cafe lives up to this reputation. There is an open terrace where you can go when you wish to distance yourself from the music inside.

3 Parivar Restaurant

Parivar Restaurant, which is famous for its authentic South Indian and North Indian cuisines. Order filling Masala Dosas, piping hot Idlis, tasteful Sambhar with North-Indian thalis and rest be assured of a fantastic experience. Even though the restaurant remains crowded during peak hours, you could still give it a try if a craving for north-Indian vegetarian food strikes you. With a cheerful staff and good service, you're sure to be all smiles here!

4 Pub 25

Pub 25 is every party animal's dream come true! The thriving nightlife means that there are a number of pubs, and one such place is Pub 25. Located right in the heart of MG road, this upscale pub offers great drinks, tasty food and an amazing ambience. Food lovers should definitely try the malai tikka and sauteed mushrooms, which are hot favourites among the guests. Even though the price is higher as compared to the other pubs, it's definitely worth a visit. A very classic British ambience, this place offers a variety of cocktails and liquors that is well complimented with an equally impressive food menu. Open till 11 PM, it is best suited for anyone who wants to enjoy a hearty meal and a drink.

5 Snow Lion Restaurant

Snow Lion Restaurant is popular for its indigenous and lip-smacking Tibetan cuisines. The restaurant is spacious and colourful. In terms of ambience, attention has been given to detailing and you can see trademark Tibetan motifs on the pillars and ceiling. The Chinese noodles and Momos will leave you with an everlasting flavour on your palate. And this exactly is the specialty of the restaurant - it offers many genuine local flavours in food, without compromising on their local authenticity.