

# Attractions to explore in and around Gangtok



Picture courtesy- Unspalsh

Sikkim has been chosen as one of the 30 coolest places to visit in 2024 by the National Geographic magazine. Gangtok is the capital of Sikkim, and the perfect destination to explore the region.

Gangtok is one of the most beautiful Himalayan towns in India. Nestled at an altitude of 1,650 metres above sea level, and perched in the lap of the Himalayas, Gangtok is one of the most sought-after travel destinations in Sikkim. The meaning of Gangtok is 'hilltop' and the city has rich natural and cultural diversity. The snow-capped peaks, rippling waterfalls, ancient monasteries make it an ideal travel destination for avid travelers across the globe who are seeking natural beauty, adventure, and peace.

## Local sightseeing in Gangtok

### MG Marg

MG Marg is the heart of Gangtok. It is the central shopping hub with various shops, restaurants, and hotels lined up along both sides. Walk around the town and collect small souvenirs for your friends and families, from this place.



picture courtesy- Unspalsh

## **Gangtok Ropeway**

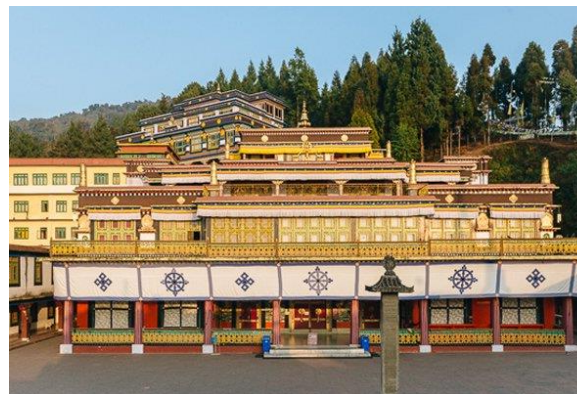
Riding on the Gangtok Ropeway should be on the to-do list of everyone's vacation schedule. It provides a birds' eye view of the city and the magnificent beauty of the surrounding nature, making it a great way to appreciate the panoramic view of Gangtok's beauty. The ride takes approximately 15 minutes and covers a distance of one kilometer, passing over the Deorali Bazaar and landing at Tashiling Secretariat.



picture courtesy- Unspalsh

## **Rumtek Monastery**

Ancient Buddhist artifacts, such as thangkas, statues, and other holy relics embellish the monastery's magnificent interior, creating a visual and spiritual feast. Visitors are welcome to take part in regular prayer ceremonies and rituals at Rumtek Monastery, which is also a center for religious and spiritual activities. A totally unique environment of serenity and meditation is created by the monks' chanting.



picture courtesy- Unspalsh

## **Banjhakri Waterfall**

Seeing this captivating waterfall is one of the most popular tourist activities in Gangtok. It bears the name Banjhakri, after one of the Lepcha communities' shamanic healers. The Banjhakri Waterfall itself is, of course, the park's primary draw. The waterfall, which is around 70 feet high, creates a mesmerizing and attractive scene as it rushes down a rocky slope. It is possible for visitors to approach the waterfall up close and experience its cool mist. Visitors can also enjoy various adventure activities, including ziplining, rock climbing, and rope walking.



picture courtesy- Facebook

## Hanuman Tok

This temple is another well-known sight to see in Gangtok. The temple is devoted to the Hindu deity Lord Hanuman, who is revered for his tenacity, loyalty, and devotion. The setting of Hanuman Tok sets it apart from other Gangtok tourist attractions. Perched at an elevation of 7,200 feet, the temple provides stunning vistas of the neighboring mountain ranges, and the city of Gangtok. It can be difficult for visitors to ascend the steep staircase that leads to the temple, but the breathtaking vistas are well worth the effort.



picture courtesy- Elgin Hotels

## Do Drul Chorten

One of the most important Buddhist sanctuaries in the area is the well-known stupa known as Do Drul Chorten. The stupa's architecture which combines elements of contemporary Buddhist and old Tibetan design is distinctive. The stupa was built in 1945 by the well-known Tibetan teacher Trulshik Rinpoche with the intention of driving out evil spirits and promoting harmony and prosperity in the region. The stupa is a pleasant and interesting destination to visit because of the decorations on it, which include prayer flags and religious symbols.



picture courtesy- Unspalsh



## **Enchey Monastery**

Gangtok's Enchey Monastery is a serene and lovely Buddhist monastery. The monastery's remote setting in the middle of dense forests is reflected in the name Enchey, which translates to "solitary temple" in the local tongue. This 200-year-old monastery, which is home to numerous Buddhist monks, is renowned for its elaborate wood carvings and murals. It is surrounded by breathtaking scenery, with Gangtok's verdant hills and woods, serving as a breathtaking background to the tranquil ambiance of the monastery. It should undoubtedly be included in the Gangtok agenda.



picture courtesy- Wikipedia

## **National Institute of Tibetology**

One of the most significant institutions for studying the Tibetan language and culture is the National Institute of Tibetology, formerly known as the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology. The structure is a beautiful illustration of Tibetan design and architecture. On its grounds, there is a Tibetan library housing an extensive collection of books on Tibet and the Himalayas, as well as a museum. The Institute is situated in a calm area of Deorali. The magnificent statue of Manjushri, a Bodhisattva of knowledge and wisdom is the most amazing sight to behold.



picture courtesy- TourmyIndia

## **Ridge Park, White Hall and Flower Exhibition Centre**

Ridge Park is a stunning park that features the well-known Himalayan orchids and shrubs from Sikkim. Ridge Park is a level road that ascends from Gangtok town to the Palace Gates. Gangtok's M.G. Marg is merely a fifteen-minute walk away. All year long, there are many orchids and other flowers to be found, but April and May are the ideal months to explore the location. This is where Gangtok's yearly International Flower Festival takes place in May.



picture courtesy- Tripuntold

## Ganesh Tok

Ganesh Tok is a temple devoted to Lord Ganesha that is situated near Tashi viewpoint. It is situated on a hill next to the massive TV Tower at a height of 6,500 feet. In addition to praying to Lord Ganesha, visitors flock here to take in the breathtaking views from the circular balcony surrounding it and the observation room. There's a glass-panelled viewing lounge beside the little temple.



picture courtesy- Indiano Travel

## Tashi Viewpoint

Gangtok town is about 8 miles away from Tashi viewpoint. It is the ideal location for seeing Gangtok's surrounding mountains, valleys, and town. It provides a breathtaking picture of the snow-covered peaks glowing in a variety of colours at daybreak. You can see the Phodong and Labrang monasteries on the other side.



picture courtesy- Unspalsh

## Bakthang Waterfalls

Situated around 3 kilometers from Gangtok, this stunning waterfall is found along the North Sikkim Highway that leads to the Tashi View Point. For those who like adventure, there is a rope slide here. Water droplets on you as you go down the rope, makes this little slide exciting. The location provides fantastic views of the mountains and a portion of Gangtok city, and it takes around 20 minutes to get there from Gangtok.



picture courtesy- Temples Vibhaga



## Day Trips from Gangtok

The most famous day trip from Gangtok is the full day trip to Tsomgo Lake, Baba Mandir and Nathula Pass.

- 1. Tsomgo Lake** - Changu Lake, sometimes referred to as Tsomgo Lake, is a glacier lake that rises 12,313 feet above sea level. One of the highest lakes in India, it remains perpetually frozen over the winter. The lake is surrounded by snow-capped mountains, and the sight of its glistening clean water is breathtaking.



Visitors can take a yak ride around the lake, wander along its banks, or just relax and take in the breathtaking scenery. A ropeway ride is now available for the visitors who want to enjoy the panoramic view of Sikkim. They can also go hiking in the neighbouring hills. (Picture courtesy- Unsplash)

- 2. Nathu La and Baba Mandir** - The ancient trade route that connected China and India is included the mountain pass known as Nathu La. At 14,140 feet, Nathula Pass is situated at the Indo-Chinese border. To visit Nathu La, one needs a permit, which is available from the Gangtok DC office. At the summit of the pass lies the Baba Mandir, dedicated to the memory of SENTRY Harbhajan Singh, who lost his life here in 1968. The people in charge of border security here think that he is still alive and is watching over the army authorities stationed here. These places are restricted areas, and you will need permits to visit them. You must carry valid ID proofs and photographs to get the permits.



picture courtesy- Tour my India



picture courtesy- Tripot.com

### Best time to visit

March to June is the best time to visit Gangtok and is also the peak season. The months of October and November are also a good time to visit Gangtok.