

# HOLIDAY

*Talk*

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# A Weekend Destination

## Dooars in West Bengal

Away from the smoke, pollution and din of city life, the Sinclairs Retreat Dooars, Chalsa, West Bengal, provides the perfect getaway for those seeking a far from the madding crowd experience. As the locals at Chalsa have so far resisted any attempt to commercialise this unique place, HolidayTalk explores this perfect haven for nature lovers.

**Peden-Doma Bhutia**







Spread over 20 acres of greenery, Sinclairs Retreat Dooars offers 66 well-appointed cottage style air-conditioned rooms and three thematic luxury suites with private gardens, equipped with all modern conveniences and amenities.



Bask in the early morning sun by the swimming pool, or take a walk across the sprawling property. The resort grows its own organic medicinal shrubs, flavouring herbs, uncommon vegetables and aromatic plants.

**T**he ride to Chalsa, my chauffeur informed me as I boarded the car from Siliguri, would take a maximum of an hour and a half, but it took nearly three-quarters of an hour. No, the roads weren't bumpy; nor was the driver wary of the accelerator. With the Himalayas on one side, the emerald green plains of the Dooars on the other, and a sparkling October sky arching over both, I didn't have the heart to simply drive by. Every scenic point became a photo stop. And of those, there were many. After a prelude so picturesque, the destination did not disappoint.

## Must See

### Samsing

Samsing, a 30-minute drive from the resort, provides an unspoilt canvas of mountain peaks and fragrant orange plantations -- the perfect way to recharge your city-battered batteries. Trekking up to Suntalaekhola ('suntala' in Nepali means orange, and 'khola' stream) offers an invigorating 15-minute exercise. One can easily catch the gush of a mountain stream and the calls of elusive birds, an experience that transfers you to another world.

## Facts

- 60 km from Bagdogra Airport
- Dooars is 632 km north of Kolkata
- This small town was known as Queen of Duars in British India

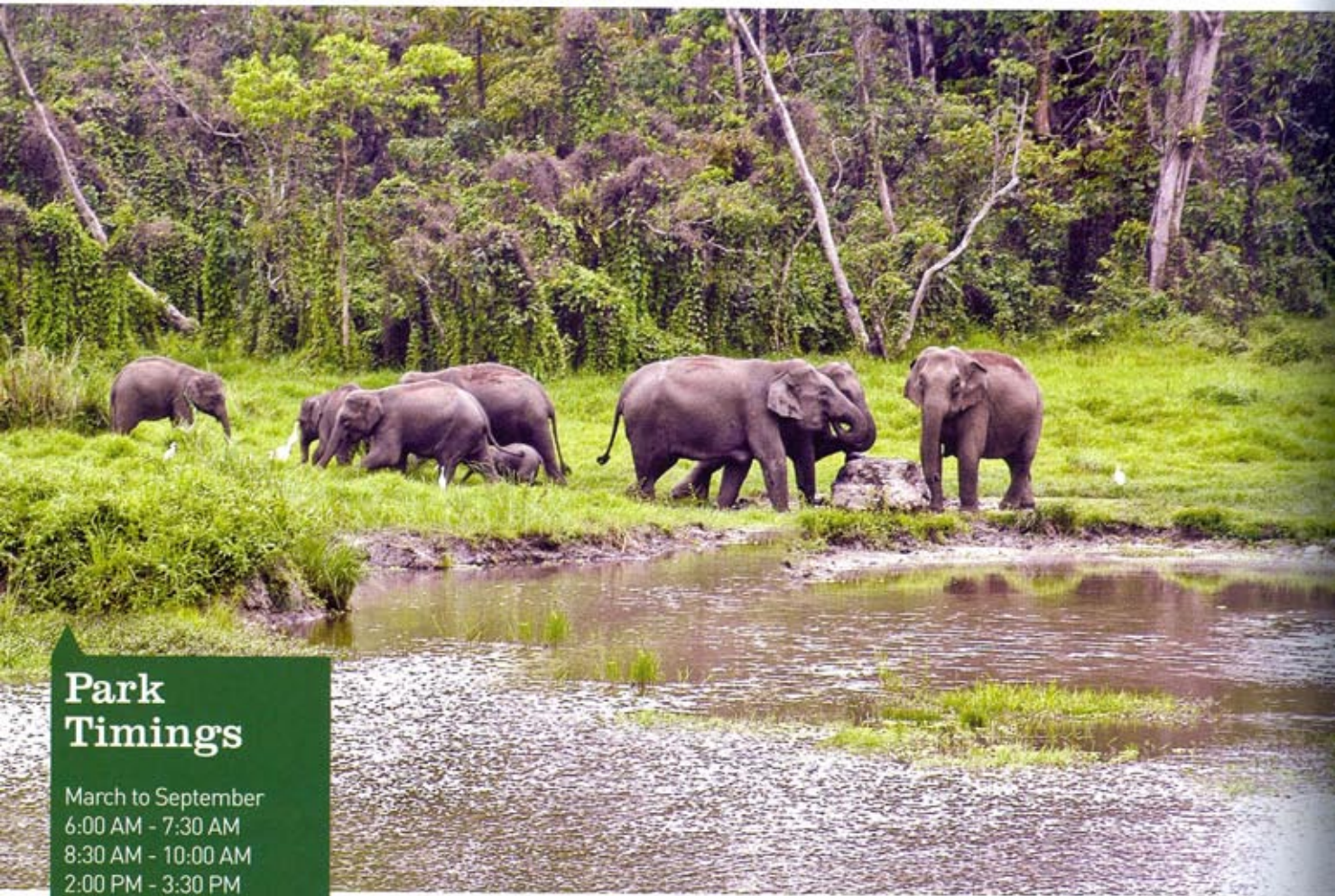




On the way to Samsing, you will find Murti river flowing quietly below with the hills of Bhutan and the Jelepla Pass as its backdrop, makes for a sweeping panorama — like a film playing on a 70-mm screen.

### Bicycle rides

In harmony with the celebration of nature, the hotel does its bit in spreading a little eco-friendliness. It offers bicycles for hire to guests so they can ride off and soak in the spirit of the surroundings. You could also pedal down to the nearby tea garden. It is the next best thing to exploring on foot. For many, it is also the best way to burn some holiday calories --- exercise at its greenest!



### Park Timings

March to September  
6:00 AM - 7:30 AM  
8:30 AM - 10:00 AM  
2:00 PM - 3:30 PM  
4:30 PM - 6:00 PM

October to February  
6:30 AM - 8:00 AM  
9:00 AM - 10:30 AM  
1:00 PM - 2:30 PM  
3:30 PM - 5:00 PM

### Gorumara National Park

- A Safari jeep trip from the resort to Gorumara National Park costs Rs 2,500 + taxes. An extra Rs 100 is for the guide.
- Camera is allowed inside Gorumara National Park, but there are extra charges for handycams.
- Gorumara National Park remains closed between June 15 and September 15.