

HIGHLIGHTS

Exploring places off the beaten track, staying in old Forest Rest Houses in the western Himalayas amidst dense forests and age old architecture; great views of snow-capped Himalayan peaks.

BEST TIME

Anytime during the year, except during heavy rain.



CORBETT TIGER RESERVE, INDIA

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OUTLINE ITINERARY

- Day 1 Arrive at Camp by lunch. Hike in the forest around Camp. Night in Camp.
- Day 2 Camp Forktail Creek to Forest Rest House (FRH) near Ranikhet. Night in the FRH.
- Day 3 At the FRH near Ranikhet. Night in the Forest Rest House.
- Day 4 FRH near Ranikhet to FRH near Baijnath. Night in the Forest Rest House.
- Day 5 At FRH near Baijnath. Night in the Forest Rest House.
- Day 6 FRH near Baijnath to FRH near Someshwar. Night in the Forest Rest House.
- Day 7 At FRH near Someshwar. Night in the Forest Rest House.
- Day 8 FRH near Someshwar to Camp Forktail Creek. Night in Camp.
- Day 9 Depart for onward journey

ITINERARY WOULD INCLUDE

- Accommodation at Camp for two nights and assorted FRH's in the hills for 6 nights (accommodation at all 'FRH' -Forest Rest Houses would be subject to availability)
- All meals from lunch on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 9, aerated drinks, mineral or filtered drinking water, tea/ coffee.
- Escorted hikes into the forests around Camp.
- A dedicated 4WD jeep with a driver and a guide from Camp for the entire trip (you are also welcome to do the trip in your own vehicle).
- Accompanying chef and other assistants from Camp for the overnight stays in the Forest Rest Houses.
- A pilot jeep for staff and supplies.

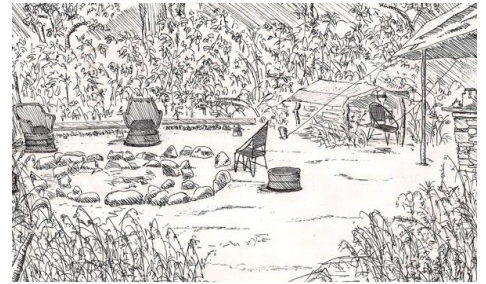
EXTRA EXPENSES

Expenses of personal nature such as beverages (except those mentioned above) laundry, telephone calls, internet, souvenirs and tips.



INFORMATION ON FOOD AND ACCOMMODATION

Camp Forktail Creek is a small jungle camp located on the north-eastern periphery of Corbett Tiger Reserve, India (23 kms from the town of Ramnagar). It is set amidst dense Sal forests and accommodation is in locally handcrafted ensuite mud huts. Elaborate and sumptuous home-cooked meals accompany each trip with enjoyable, courteous and knowledgeable naturalists, who have been in the region most of their lives. Camp is in a village which does not have electricity but ample lighting is provided with solar powered lamps and lanterns and candles.



Accommodation in most Forest Rest Houses would be split between a room within the bungalow and safari tents (if there are more than 4 persons) within the compound. The toilet would be a dry pit with a thunder box on top, enclosed in a large tent with an open or closed roof. The dining and lounge area would be within the bungalow. Meals, hot water for bathing and all other services would be taken care of by our assistants from Camp. Meals would be lavish and a mix of Indian or Continental cuisine. For those who wish to sample local cuisine – this is the best opportunity – our chef would cook up local, seasonal delicacies as we travel along. Throughout the journey, being hilly roads, we stick to a slower speed in our 4WD jeeps- also helps take in each place at leisure.

There are many "pee" breaks and tea breaks and a great many "perfect picture spots".

Our resident naturalists, cooks and camp staff would escort the whole trip and reach each place before us in pilot jeeps with all supplies. They would have each place ready for us by the time we get there.



DETAILED ITINERARY

Day One: Arrive at Camp Forktail Creek

Arrive at Camp Forktail Creek by lunch. After wash and change and a sumptuous lunch, we would take you on an escorted nature and bird walk into the Sal forests surrounding Camp. It is an excellent opportunity to walk in the cool of the forest, to be so close to nature and to appreciate the varied plants, insects, birds, mammals and reptiles that inhabit this part of the country. THE QUIETER YOU ARE, THE MORE YOU WILL SEE.

Back to Camp by sundown for campfire and dinner, which is leisurely and personal. Along with the excellent cuisine, your guide and hosts will amuse and amaze you with their stories of exciting experiences.

Then it is time to relax once again and enjoy carefree chatter by the fireside whilst feasting on the unique sounds and smells that your exclusive location offers, before retiring to bed in a mud hut.



Day Two: Camp Forktail Creek to an FRH near Ranikhet

After a lavish breakfast, pack for the journey ahead and depart for our first FRH. Today our route would take us past Mohan onto the road leading to Ranikhet- as we go higher the Sal forests would give way to tall Pine trees. Packed lunch, specially prepared by our chef, would be served in a pine forest by a stream. Once in Ranikhet, a drive of three hours, we would explore the quiet and charming hill station, offering breathtaking, panoramic views of the snow laden Himalayan peaks.

A visit to the Kumaon Regiment Museum, the tweed factory, the old church and a drive past the old colonial bungalows (most of them restored and in use by the Kumaon regiment and thus in immaculate condition) are a must.



Then, we drive for an hour and a half, past Majkhali (with awe-inspiring and very prominent views of the Trishul & Nanda Devi peaks) to reach the old forest bungalow. The drive to get here is awesome; partly on metalled roads which then gives way to a jeep track past thick rhododendron & oak forests. At the rest house our staff, who would have arrived there earlier in a pilot jeep would have hot 'chai'- tea, ready and waiting for us. After a quick wash and change, admire the stunning sundown and then settle down near the fireplace with your guide and hosts for an easy and relaxed evening over drinks, snacks and dinner. Overnight in the Forest Rest House or in safari tents, in case there are more than 4 persons.

Day Three: At the FRH near Ranikhet

Apart from the great location of the bungalow -overlooking the majestic Himalayan ranges – it is a fine place for walks in the thick oak and rhododendron forest. This can be clubbed with a visit to a famous Ashram nearby. For those interested in bird watching, this is a great opportunity- our naturalist would lead a walk into the forests early in the morning and have you back in time for breakfast. Post that you could explore the bungalow- read its old guest register with entries dating back to 1906, flip through the old, moth-eaten Brit magazines and other publications, admire its old furniture, crockery, cutlery and the great stone architecture.



Post a hot lunch and a short siesta, we explore the environs of the Rest House. After breathtaking views from sunset point (we discovered this vantage point in our last trip!) we head back to the FRH for our last night here. Being on top of a hill with thick forests all around, whistling winds tend to visit each evening, sometimes bringing with them low lying clouds and mists, turning the whole place into an abode of clouds- a heavenly feel!

It is time to relax once again and enjoy carefree banter by the fireplace over drinks and dinner, before retiring to bed.



Day Four: FRH near Ranikhet to FRH near Baijnath

Drive, post an easy breakfast towards the FRH past Baijnath. Today we would drive past Someshwar, Kausani & Baijnath. Stops, to explore each place would be made as and when desired.

Kausani is noted for its close Himalayan views and Baijnath for the famous old temple complex by the Gomti River. The last few kilometers of the drive offer incredibly close views of Trishul & Nanda Devi-some of the highest Himalayan peaks. The drive is on a forest track in a very 'Pine' forest past small Kumaoni hamlets. The FRH is one of the earlier built ones and surprisingly better maintained! Admirable stone architecture with large carved pillars and huge bay windows complete the serene picture. Hot 'chai' and a ready Hest house would be awaiting our arrival. After a wash and change, we can all settle down by the fireplace and discuss the events of the day and the plans for the next day.

Overnight in the Forest Rest House or in safari tents.

Day Five: At the FRH near Baijnath

Day spent in exploring the areas around. This rest house is located in the middle of a dense pine forest. For those who want, we would drive a short distance away for spectacular close views of the colossal Himalayan peaks at sunrise, and then walk back to the Rest House through Pine and Rhododendron forests. Through most of the way, the trail is parallel to the ridge with Himalayan views and can be an exhilarating experience.

The bungalow was built in 1921 and still has remnants of the old grandeur. More than half a day can be spent discovering them. The old outhouse located within the same compound, but at a lower level, is a great area to explore.

Day Six: FRH near Baijanth to FRH near Someshwar

Wake up at leisure and have breakfast laid out in the spacious lawns of the bungalow. After that we pack and leave for our next Rest House, towards Binsar. We don't actually drive all the way to Binsar, but cut off many kilometers ahead for our next stop. The drive today will take us past Bageshwar and then smaller hamlets. The last exciting 15 kms are in a virgin forest of Oak and Rhododendron, which then gives way to Pine as we go deeper and deeper into the forest.



This FRH was also built in 1906 and amazingly has electricity! The bungalow is well maintained and seems like paradise in the

middle of nowhere. Its wild gardens are dotted with patches of lilies, multi-coloured wildflowers and many other seasonal flowers. The staff here proudly tends to a rather large-scale medicinal plant nursery. Just exploring the area within the Rest House compound gives sheer pleasure to those weary city minds!
Overnight in the Forest Rest House or in safari tents.



Day Seven: At the FRH near Someshwar

After a late breakfast and lounging about the FRH, we walk to a nearby temple. There are actually two in the area. The more well-known and famous “Gannath” temple is a mere 15 minutes walk amidst tall pine trees and is intriguing enough, for the not-so-religious-minded too. The second, a one and a half hour uphill hike through dense forests, is also reachable by road, so those who wish to drive and walk back (or vice versa), could also do so. The area also makes for great walks for bird watching and sighting the elusive mountain goat.

Day Eight: FRH near Someshwar to Camp Forktail Creek

Early breakfast, pack and depart for Camp Forktail Creek. Part of the drive today would be similar to our first day of traveling as we hit Ranikhet and then get to Camp. We would have packed lunch on the way and be back in Camp just in time for some evening tea. After the much needed scrub, we gather by the campfire and discuss our trip. This time it would be you telling the stories and adding to our experiences!

After a relaxed round of drinks, barbeque and dinner, retire to the tents for your last night at Camp. If you have more time (say two more days), instead of driving back to Camp we could drive on towards a Rest House near Nainital/ Ramgarh/ Bhowali/ Naukuchital and end your trip there. You could then depart for your onward destination from there itself. It would be the same distance from Delhi as Camp is.



Day Nine: Depart for onward destination

Wake up at leisure. After breakfast bid goodbye to the wildlife team and depart for onward destination.

