

Are you living on the edge yet . . .  
or are you still taking up too much room ?



*Ferris  
Wheels*

*Classic Motorcycle Safaris*

Shining Shangri-La Safari 2011-12



## Shining Shangri-La Motorcycle Safari



### Overnight Destinations / Places of Interest

#### (India)

1. New Delhi
2. Naini Tal
3. Bardia N Park
4. Lumbini

#### (Nepal)

5. Pokhara
6. Kathmandu
7. Everest flight
8. Hetauda

#### (Bhutan)

9. Biratnagar
10. Siliguri
11. Darjeeling
12. Phuentsholing
13. Paro
14. Thimpu
15. Punakha
16. Jakar
17. Mongar
18. Trashigang
19. S Jongkhar
20. Guwahati



# *Shining Shangri-La Motorcycle Safari*

## Itinerary for Dec 2011 / Jan 2012

Day	Date	Details	Distance
1 S	Dec 18 '11	Arrange your flights to arrive in the Indian capital of New Delhi tonight	
2 M	19 *	½ day sightseeing in Delhi, and familiarization of motorcycles	
3 T	20	Early start (6:00am!) to exit Delhi before traffic; ride to Naini Tal in the hills	300k
4 W	21	Cross the border into Nepal; proceed to Bardia National Park	290k
5 T	22	Dawn elephant safari in the Park, then a long ½ day ride to Lumbini	280k
6 F	23	Relatively short ride from the lowlands of the Terai to the mountains of Pokhara	130k
7 S	24 *	Rest day lakeside in Pokhara; optional climb to Sarangkot, paragliding	
8 S	25	Ride to Kathmandu on Christmas Day !	200k
9 M	26 *	Boxing Day rest day in Thamel district of Kathmandu; scenic Everest flight	
10 T	27	Short day to Hetauda on the eastern Terai	120k
11 W	28	Long but straightforward ride to Biratnagar in the east of the country	320k
12 T	29	Cross the border back into India, proceed to Siliguri	150k
13 F	30	Leisurely ride through Darjeeling teagardens, following the tracks of the Toy Train	90k
14 S	31 *	Rest day in Darjeeling; visit the Zoo, New Year's Eve party at the hotel	
15 S	Jan 01 '12	Darjeeling to Teesta Bazaar via backroads, then into Bhutan on New Year's Day	190k
16 M	02	A steady climb all day into the Himalayan foothills at Paro	170k
17 T	03 *	A 'rest day' climbing to Tigers Nest monastery on a cliff high above Paro	
18 W	04	½ day to the capital Thimpu; ½ day exploring	60k
19 T	05	To the sensational Punakha dzong, on the confluence of two rivers	110k
20 F	06	To the provincial capital of Jakar in the Bumthang region	190k
21 S	07	Further, ever further, east to Mongar	190k
22 S	08	½ day ride to Trashigang in time for a look around	90k
23 M	09	To the exit border post of Samdrup Jongkhar; back into India once again	180k
24 T	10	Through the Assam teagardens to the state capital of Guwahati	<u>100k</u>
25 W	11	Domestic flight to New Delhi then international connections home	3160

\* indicates consecutive night in same hotel, allowing for laundry, etc.

### Departure Date

For our tri-nation Shining Shangri-La, your recommended departure date (Australian participants) to New Delhi is **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2011**. Please see further discussion on International Flights herein.

### Tour Operator

This Motorcycle Safari is one of several itineraries offered by **Ferris Wheels**, Australia's only professional tour operator specialising solely in international motorcycle adventures. Mike Ferris pioneered the Himalayan Motorcycle Safari concept in 1994 with his first crossing of the world's greatest mountain range by an Australian group of riders. In 1995, by now a qualified travel agent, he took his first commercial safari to the Khardung La in Ladakh (India), at 5,602 metres the highest road in the world. Mike and Denise Ferris now operate and personally lead annual **Ferris Wheels** motorcycle safaris to diverse destinations such as the Indian Himalaya, Turkey, Morocco, Peru and Bolivia, and the Dalmatian coastline, as well as this one through Nepal and Bhutan, all of approximately three weeks in duration.

**Be aware that this itinerary is a guide only and may need to change due to weather, road conditions or other factors. Please be flexible, but rest assured your Tour Leader will make the final day-to-day decisions only after consultation with our agents in Delhi, Kathmandu and Thimpu, local authorities and of course, group members.**



## Package Price

The Shining Shangri-La tour price, excluding airfares and **joining in New Delhi**, is Aus\$8,500-00. Riders must have an unrestricted rider's licence. Pillions are welcome and we also have a limited number of seats available in our support vehicle, a 15-seater minibus which accompanies the riders for the Safari – price for pillion or passenger is Aus\$8,000-00. Please note that our prices are subject to exchange rates and we reserve the right to alter any pricing, pursuant to Clause 9 of our Terms and Conditions herewith, up to the date of final payment.

## Price includes

- Full motorbike rental for the duration of the Safari (500cc Enfield Bullet)
- Clean, friendly, mid-range accommodation throughout the Safari, nights 1 to 24 inclusive
- Twin-share basis; (single room supplement, additional Aus\$900-00) <sup>1</sup>
- All meals (breakfast, lunch and evening)
- Experienced guide, local agent and Enfield mechanics
- Minibus support vehicle and driver, for luggage transport and assistance
- Spare parts, tools, medicines, first aid equipment
- All fuel costs, maintenance and repairs, third party insurance for the bikes
- Airport transfers if arriving & departing via our recommended flights
- Domestic scenic flight from Kathmandu to Mt. Everest, and flight from Guwahati to Delhi
- Guided elephant safari and jungle trek
- A complimentary *Ferris Wheels* Safari shirt, luggage tags, Nepal and Bhutan maps

<sup>1</sup> Accommodation is provided on a twin-share basis and if you're on your own we'll do our best to bunk you in with an acceptable roommate. But if you're the last person to book, there's obviously a 50-50 chance you'll have to take a room on your own and will therefore be liable for the single room supplement. So the moral of the story is, book early or bring your own roommate with you. Or preferably both!

## Price excludes

- International airfares to/from India (approx. Aus\$2000-00)
- Travel insurance policy covering use of motorbike (approx. Aus\$169-00 for 24 days) <sup>2</sup>
- Tourist visas for India, Nepal, Bhutan (currently Aus\$75-00, US\$30-00 and US\$20-00 respectively)
- Medical examination and vaccinations before departure (recommended)
- Expenses of a personal nature such as postage, laundry, souvenirs and all drinks
- Tips for our support staff at the end of the tour; optional but appreciated; Aus\$100-00 suggested <sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Please note that a motorcycle safari overseas must be considered one of life's more adventurous pursuits and therefore personal travel insurance is mandatory. If you already have existing travel insurance, we will insist on sighting a copy of the policy before you will be permitted to participate in this tour. Or if you prefer, we can arrange comprehensive travel insurance for you (Australian clients only) for approximately Aus\$169-00. **Be aware**, however, that any travel insurance ceases immediately on return to your own country, even if on-going medical treatment or surgery is required. Private health cover or government Medicare automatically resumes at that point.

<sup>3</sup> A note on tips. We recognize tipping is not generally part of the antipodean psyche, but it is pretty much expected in most other parts of the world. Daily hotel porters will expect a small reward for carrying your bags to your room, and our mechanics, drivers and support staff anticipate reasonable tips to supplement their modest wages whilst on tour with us. We suggest something like Aus\$100-00 is affordable for your



three weeks (only about Aus\$5-00 per day), distributed amongst the crew. If you've had a good time, we would encourage you to donate generously! (... if you haven't, please let us know).

### **Our benevolent side**

It is important to us to make a positive contribution to some of the less privileged communities that we visit. Our strongest connection is with India, and in focusing our efforts we have decided certain communities therein are most deserving of our care and support. We provide financial support and facilitate the donation of clothing to the Ganga Brijghat Charitable Trust, a registered help center for poor and underprivileged people at Brijghat, on the shores of the Ganga (the holy river Ganges), about 90 northeast of Delhi.

### **International Flights**

You will have to arrange your own airfares through your preferred travel agent, or Australian clients may wish to take advantage of an arrangement we have with our local agent, Press & James Travel Associates. Phone 02 9979 5235 or email [natasha\\_dann@travel-associates.com.au](mailto:natasha_dann@travel-associates.com.au) and mention you're joining the ***Ferris Wheels 'Shining Shangri-La' Tour***; they have a copy of this itinerary and can arrange your route and flights as well as any stopovers or extensions you desire. We recommend you book at least six months ahead, and full payment will generally be required six weeks before your departure. Singapore Airlines fly into New Delhi every day from Singapore and we have scheduled our program accordingly; SQ408 is our recommended flight, arriving at 21:50pm. If you arrive on this flight we will meet you at the airport for free transfer to your hotel.

### **Food & Health**

Quality of food can obviously be a concern when visiting exotic foreign lands. We take care in selecting clean and reputable establishments for our meals and the local fare is not always as fiery and spicy as some people would have you believe. Our clients are often pleasantly surprised by the delicious meals available. Even so, an occasional upset stomach cannot always be avoided in remote areas, so we advise initial caution and we carry various medicines to ensure as much comfort as possible. Participants in any of our adventure activities are obviously expected to have a reasonably high level of health, fitness and capability, but **in all cases a consultation with your doctor is recommended** in order to identify necessary vaccinations and precautions, particularly if traveling overseas for the first time. Please note that when it comes to malaria medication, it is our experience that the commonly experienced side effects of such medication, outweigh the potential benefit, for what is a very low risk likelihood of contracting this disease.

### **Climate & Clothing**

Our Shining Shangri-La Motorcycle Safari is scheduled for Dec/Jan, possibly the best time for touring in this part of the Himalaya. It is post-monsoon, therefore the skies are clear and bright and brilliant blue. It is also winter so it will be quite cold, and single-digit temperatures but almost zero chance of rain will be the order of the day. At times there will be little shade available, so plenty of sunscreen, sunglasses, hats and long sleeves will also be required. Jeans and our long-sleeved ***Ferris Wheels*** shirts tend to be the norm, with strong boots and riding gloves. Helmets should be brought with you from home, full-face or open-face a matter of personal preference.

Professional quality riding gear such as Rivet's Cordura jackets, overpants and other protective clothing is an excellent investment and will go a long way to ensuring your comfort in what may sometimes be adverse conditions. Rivet's jackets are versatile with a zip-in / zip-out padded liner for extra warmth and protection. But if you're susceptible to the cold, then probably a good set of thermal underwear would also come in handy. A couple of other products we've used for several years and are happy to endorse are the Kevlar-lined jeans and



clothing from Draggin Jeans in Melbourne ([www.dragginjeans.com.au](http://www.dragginjeans.com.au)) and those Velcro alternatives to 'occy' straps from Andy Strapz ([www.andystrapz.com](http://www.andystrapz.com)).

And while we're giving plugs, we'd like to suggest you consider a Rider Improvement course, regardless of your experience or perceived ability on a motorcycle, to brush up on your skills prior to joining an international riding safari. Our personal recommendation here is the Australian Superbike School, which actually concentrates on correct cornering techniques rather than all-out speed, despite the name ([www.superbikeschool.com.au](http://www.superbikeschool.com.au)).

### **Other important information you should note**

The Indian subcontinent is not everyone's 'cup of tea'. It can be an extreme assault on the senses. In order to fully appreciate its true beauty you will need the ability to leave behind western values and to turn a blind eye to some of the harsher aspects of life in third-world, developing nations. If you can do this, you will find it truly a rewarding experience.

The riding conditions are also sometimes arduous and whilst 200k or so would *appear* to be quite an easy day's ride, this is not always so. Some days will require us to be on the road by 6:00am to beat the morning traffic, and the days can be long and tiring. It is obviously expected that you are able to handle a motorbike competently and are fit and strong enough to cope with some demanding conditions. An important part of this is your mental approach and attitude. If you are the type of person who prefers lounging by the poolside with a dry martini, then perhaps this motorcycle safari is not for you. Try Club Med instead !

India and Nepal, and occasionally Bhutan, suffer from regular power shortages, so don't automatically expect a hot shower every single day. Be prepared to rough it a bit, be prepared to accept delays and hastily changed plans, be prepared to be tolerant of some grinding bureaucracy and ineptitude. Be flexible and above all, bring your sense of humour.

But let's not pull any punches here. This is not a trip for the faint-hearted; you'll notice there are only 4 'rest' days out of 22 on the bikes, and some of these rest days consist of strenuous (but optional) activities. And a tour such as this is potentially a dangerous undertaking; it's inherent in the very nature of the trip. You'll be on an unfamiliar bike, on unfamiliar roads in unfamiliar traffic conditions. It is important for you to recognize this and accept ultimate responsibility, firstly for joining and secondly for riding in a circumspect manner for the duration of the tour. Please read and acknowledge Paragraph 15 of our Terms and Conditions! (End of sermon)

### **The Classic 'Royal' Enfield Bullet**

Originally manufactured by The Royal Enfield Motorcycle Co of Redditch, Worcestershire, production ceased in Great Britain due to financial difficulties in the mid-1950s. The Indian subsidiary acquired the production line, transferred operations to Madras and simply continued to build Enfield Bullets without bothering to change any original design specifications. To this day they continue to churn out brand new, 50 year old bikes!

The Enfield is a true classic, with the single cylinder 500cc engine producing a deep, throaty rumble and powerful torque that have prompted some to christen it the two-wheeled tractor. At idle speed you can audibly count the engine revolutions per minute. High speed is not what the Enfield is about (any faster than about 60kph in India is suicidal anyway!), it's about aesthetics, comfort and style. Some unconventional aspects take a little getting used to, such as the gear-change on the right foot and the brake on the left, but riding an Enfield gives a pure, unadulterated pleasure - particularly through the stunning scenery where you're going. It is the perfect bike for touring in this part of the world, taking the rough roads easily in its stride.



## Detailed Daily Itinerary

**Day 1** of your trip involves the logistics of having all of you fly from different starting points at different times and somehow all meet up in Delhi. From your first glance at the sprawling metropolis you will immediately begin to appreciate that India is a land of contrasts, a land of diversity and variation unparalleled anywhere else in the world. At times confusing, at times challenging and at all times chaotic, Delhi is never still, never restful and never boring.

If arriving on our recommended flight you will be met at Delhi airport by our representative for your safe and rapid transfer to the hotel, to minimise what can sometimes be a testing introduction to the country.

**Day 2** We will introduce you to a little bit of the chaos and madness of Delhi, and some of its beauty and charm. Abject, squalid slums sit incongruously alongside amazing modern buildings of stunning beauty, like the lotus shaped Ba'hai temple. Five star hotels are served by 1950's-vintage Morris Oxford taxi cabs with engines the same size as their batteries. Something like 12 million people somehow manage to eke out an existence in this city whose levels of activity continue to escalate at an apparently unsustainable pace. In the afternoon we'll have a familiarisation session with the motorbikes, in preparation for tomorrow's departure.

**Day 3** sees us up at a rude hour, because we simply have to get out of Delhi before the commuter rush begins. If we're on the bikes by 6:00am we should be OK. We head east out of the capital and then north up into the hills, winding through some spectacular forested scenery. Our destination is a lovely little lakeside town called Naini Tal, where famous tiger-hunter turned conservationist Jim Corbett once resided. He established the sailing club here, as well as the Corbett National Park tiger sanctuary nearby.

**Day 4** We head to the border town of Mahendranagar this morning, where bureaucracy and officialdom will 'assist' us to cross into Nepal. Be patient; it often takes us more time to process the paperwork for the motorcycles than for us tourists riding them. But we'll be on our way soon enough and we'll immediately notice the absence of traffic in Nepal, after the chaos of India! We head to Bardia National Park for the night.

**Day 5** and we take an elephant-back dawn safari in the Park, searching for tiger. The chances of spotting one here are far greater than in the more widely-acclaimed and therefore more popular Chitwan, with the inevitable commercialism having less of an impact here in Bardia. The park is an untamed place of wild beauty and as one author for *Lonely Planet* says, "Watching the sun rise or set over the forest from the back of an elephant is like having a box seat at the dawn of time." Then we have a long, straightforward ride through the Terai (Nepal's lowlands) to Lumbini in the afternoon, which is reputedly the birthplace of the Lord Buddha.

**Day 6** We've been skirting the mountains for a few days but now we head directly into them, to the Trekker Mecca destination of Pokhara. The scenery along the route is spectacular, with terraced hills, rushing rivers, steep gorges and green hills back-dropped by the magnificent Himalaya. Be careful not to run into the back of a fellow rider when, in the latter part of the ride, you come around a corner and there in all its glory is Machhapuchare (the Fishtail Mountain), lit to perfection by the slanting rays of the afternoon sunshine.

**Day 7** Many serious Himalayan treks start from Pokhara, including the Annapurna Circuit, Jomson Trail and Dhaulagiri Base Camp treks for the serious walker. We take a half-day ride up a nearby ridge to Sarangkot for a bird's-eye view of Machhapuchare, Annapurna and Pokhara with its picturesque Phewa Tal (lake). For the energetic or adventurous there's the option of trying your hand at paragliding – a more spectacular setting would be difficult to imagine! For the serious shopper, there's some pretty serious souvenir hunting to be done in the markets this afternoon.



**Day 8** For those who don't mind falling out of bed really, really early, it's worth the effort to get down to the lake this morning, hire a boat, paddle out to the middle and loll there while you watch the sun rise over Machhapuchare. Wake us up for breakfast when you get back. We head for the national capital today, Kathmandu, sitting in a bowl-like valley at only 1500m but surrounded by impressive peaks on all sides. The valley is extremely fertile and has been manicured into a state of cultivated perfection. The timing of our visit, in the heart of winter, should ensure that the surrounding hills are covered in fresh snow, adding a picture-postcard touch to this surreal landscape. Oh, and by the way, MERRY CHRISTMAS !

**Day 9** is Boxing Day; how about a scenic joyflight to Mt. Everest and back? The whole majestic panorama of the world's greatest mountain range spreads out before us for an hour, and it is a totally captivating experience. Then when we come back down to earth, we have the rest of the day to explore Kathmandu's bustling bazaars and streets, visit the city's Durbar Square, roam through the surrounding area of Thamel, drop in for a quick drink at the *Rum Doodle Bar* (the traditional watering hole for mountaineering expedition teams) or simply relax in the garden of our hotel.

There are two other large cities in the Kathmandu Valley, but they are so close as to be almost suburbs of Kathmandu itself. Patan is just across the river and Bhaktapur is only 12k away; so we can visit one or both to examine their ancient temples and splendid artisan works, much of which is still being produced in the local streets and bazaars today. Another option is the huge Bodhnath (Boudha) Stupa, the largest in Nepal and one of the largest in the world. It is the main religious centre for Nepal's considerable Tibetan population and while a visit to a stupa would appear to be a short-lived affair, this one is pretty special – the atmosphere alone can keep you entranced for ages. Then there are the shops!! Don't be afraid to bargain *hard*, as the prices are often inflated and very negotiable.

**Day 10** sees us heading out of the Kathmandu Valley to the eastern Terai, as the lowlands of Nepal are known. Although very much the 'poor cousin' of Nepal's main attraction (the Himalaya) and thus to a large extent ignored, the Terai has its own beauty and is a very fertile and prosperous area, home to half the country's population. We pass through mud-walled villages, rice paddies and thatched houses built high above the floodplains of the numerous rivers bursting out of the foothills. The plains are a mere 100m above sea level, but over 1000 km away from the rivers' final destination, the Bay of Bengal. We reach Hetauda for the night, on the main Tribhuvan highway from Kathmandu to India.

**Day 11** Huge tracts of these floodplains were uninhabitable until the early 1950's, when a successful malaria eradication program was introduced. The subsequent land-grab rush from the hill tribes saw much of the wilderness cultivated almost overnight, which in turn had a devastating effect on the habitat of large animals such as the tiger and the Indian one-horned rhino. Virtually the only place these can be found now is in the National Parks and reserves. Our stop for the night is a small town called Dharan which boasts a Country Retreat Golf Club; perhaps 9 holes before dinner, or just straight to the 19<sup>th</sup> ?!

**Day 12** involves another potentially bureaucratic hassle of crossing back into India. Passports and visas will be double-checked, road tax has to be paid, bike ownership and registration papers will be double-checked, our staff will be scrutinised . . .! Always a time consuming exercise, but soon enough we'll be into the next chapter of this tour. We stay in a nondescript little town called Siliguri, but the hotel at least has a pleasant bar.

**Day 13** sees us off to Darjeeling, following the same route as the narrow-gauge 'Toy Train' up into the hills. The only (non-tourist) steam locomotive still in active service in India criss-crosses the road dozens of times and is a very impressive sight and sound accompanying us on our climb. Much favoured by the British in preference to the heat and dust of Calcutta in the height of summer, Darjeeling has been dubbed The Queen of Hill Stations. We'll have time to visit one of the world-famous tea estates and see a production factory, almost unchanged from a couple of hundred years ago.



**Day 14** If you feel like an early start, we can amble along to the nearby lookout to watch the sun rise over the Himalayan massif including Mt. Kangchenjunga, 3<sup>rd</sup> highest peak in the world, or you can book a taxi-jeep to take you to Tiger Hill where at dawn you can sometimes see Mt. Everest. We shall then visit the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, established by Darjeeling's most famous son, Tenzing Norgay following his ascent of Everest with Edmund Hillary in 1953, and the associated Darjeeling Zoo, centre of the world breeding program for the endangered and stunningly beautiful snow leopard.

In the afternoon, probably a leisurely half day is in order strolling through the town square "Chowringhee", discovering some exquisite treasures in the junkshops.

**Day 15** After some small backroads winding from Darjeeling to Teesta Bazaar, we're on Highway 31 most of the way across the northern extremity of the Great Gangetic Plateau, crossing a few rivers as they burst forth from the mountains just above us. These rivers of course, all end up crossing into Bangladesh where they annually wreak havoc in this low-lying, impoverished country. Our destination tonight is the border town of Phuentsholing, where we unofficially cross and spend the night on the Bhutan side of the border without being 'processed', because the hotels are much nicer. Oh and by the way, HAPPY NEW YEAR !

**Day 16** Border formalities are refreshingly straightforward and efficient, so we'll soon be on our way into Bhutan. The first thing we'll notice upon leaving India is, there's virtually no traffic! The few vehicles we do encounter are well-maintained and well-mannered. The roads are great, the scenery is spectacular, the air is clean and fresh. We have a couple of 'foreigner registration' check-posts to pass through today but they don't slow us much as we wind our way along to third-largest town Paro.

**Day 17** we shall spend in and around Paro. As well as boasting the only airport in the country, the National Museum is also located here, housing an impressive collection of artefacts. Just a few km's out of town for the more physically-inclined, is the start of an arduous 4-hour trek up to the spectacular Tiger's Nest *dzong* perched high on a rocky ledge.

**Day 18** sees us heading off to the capital, Thimpu, and it's a short enough ride to give us the afternoon doing some local sightseeing and souvenir shopping, as Thimpu is about the only commercial centre in the country. We'll visit a viewpoint overlooking the town and then the nearby 'zoo' containing maybe half a dozen takin. This strange beast, the national animal of Bhutan, is said to be the result of a god known as The Divine Madman having a huge feast, getting a little intoxicated, and sticking the head of a goat on the body of an ox.

**Day 19** has us lazily rolling out of Thimpu in the direction of Punakha, which has a stupendous *dzong* on the confluence of two rivers. The *dzong* is the administrative head of both state and religion for the district, and this one is nothing short of sensational. We can spend a couple of hours strolling through its courtyards and temples. Then in the afternoon we proceed further, passing through Wangdi Phodrang on the way to our beautiful resort hotel at Chuzomsa, on the very banks of a raging torrent of a young river.

**Day 20** is a rather long day, with nearly 200k in the saddle. Heading east we first come to Trongsa with yet another magnificent *dzong*, perhaps the most spectacular in the country, an imposing fortress of a structure built on several levels up a hillside. We can have a look around if you're not already *dzonged* out by now, then later in the day we arrive at Jakar in the wilderness of the Bumthang valley.

**Day 21** will probably see a cold start to the day (some years we've had ice on the seats of the Enfields....) and we head across a couple of high passes, so have your handwarmers in your pockets. We're getting into more remote areas now and it's another long day but we spend most of it riding through a national park on superb roads with no traffic. Overnight is a spotless little town called Mongar, the capital of the same-named district.



**Day 22** is a more leisurely-paced day. With only 90k to Trashigang, we can cover this before lunch and then have the afternoon to stroll around and enjoy the second-largest town in Bhutan. A good time to catch up with writing those promised postcards back home, or watching the locals practising their archery skills. Our hotel is in the tiny town square, a great place to enjoy an evening drink and watch the locals going about their business.

**Day 23** is, dare we say it, another superlative day in the saddle on the road less travelled. We head directly south for nearly 200k, completing our traverse of Bhutan from one border to the other. Traffic out here is so rare that some of the locals take off their hat at the sight of an approaching car. Our destination is the frontier town of Samdrup Jongkhar which, whilst still actually in Bhutan, has a distinctly Indian feel to it....

**Day 24** has us registering at the Indian side of the border crossing, which for some reason takes about five times as long as on the other side. We have a fairly short ride through more of the ubiquitous tea gardens to Guwahati, the state capital of Assam. It's a fairly typical Indian 'small city' of about 2 million people and we'll need to bunch up and follow our minibus in order to find the hotel. We scrub up for a cleansing ale and a celebratory farewell dinner – we've certainly earned it.

**Day 25** is our "*outa here*" day. Kiss the bikes goodbye as we head for Guwahati airport, and the short hop back to Delhi gives us plenty of time to make our international connections on to Singapore or Bangkok or Timboctou. You're heading for home sweet home – thanks for your company, it's been a lot of fun.

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Further detailed trip notes, including a list of essential clothing and equipment to take, health considerations, visa formalities, etc, will also be sent upon receipt of a completed Booking Form and deposit. Contact our office any time for further information on **(61 2) 9970 6370** or email [safari@ferriswheels.com.au](mailto:safari@ferriswheels.com.au).