



Sumatra Jungle Trek and Tiger Conservation Project

4–13 November 2023

EVE_7546

Information Brochure

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Registered Charity No. 203644 (England and Wales) and SC037711 (Scotland)



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Trip Overview

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This four-day trek gives you an insight into Sumatra's natural beauty and biological diversity as well as a great opportunity to push yourself out of your comfort zone.

This trek requires stamina, a good level of fitness, a positive mental attitude and bucketloads of determination as you will be trekking on steep and uneven terrain through hot and humid primary jungle and stay in basic campsites well off the beaten track.

Along the way you'll learn traditional jungle survival skills such as identifying edible fruits and plants as you gain a deeper understanding about the complex ecosystem and how the local communities thrive here.

If you're lucky you may encounter some of the local wildlife such as orangutan, gibbons, hornbills, pig tail macaques, Thomas leaf monkeys and lizards. Although more than 100 tigers live in the area it is extremely unlikely that we will spot any in the wild. You will however attend a talk by a local tiger conservation expert and learn about conservation and anti-poaching efforts in the region. On the final day there will be a chance to visit a local animal rescue centre.

Sumatra

The third largest island of Indonesia, Sumatra is known for its rugged terrain, unique wildlife and volcanoes. It is the sixth largest island in the Indian ocean and can be found west of Java and south of the Malay peninsula, separated by the narrow Strait of Malacca.

Medan is the island's largest city and the gateway into northern Sumatra where we will be trekking. Famous for its wide range of plant and animal species the region has lost almost 50% of its tropical rainforests in the last 35 years and many of its species are now critically endangered, including but not limited to the Sumatran tiger, elephant, rhinoceros, orangutan and ground cuckoo.

Gunung Leuser National Park

Our trek will be based within the Gunung Leuser National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and an area of incredible natural beauty and diversity.

The park covers almost 8,000 km² in the north and straddles the border of North Sumatra provinces. The park is named after Mount Leuser and is nestled by the Barisan mountain range. It is also home to the small village of Bukit Lawang.



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What is the experience like?

How tough is it?

This tour is classified as '*challenging*' for someone already at a good general level of fitness, due to the hot, wet and humid climate, carrying your own backpack each day (your backpack could weigh 6-7kg), the hilly, uneven and rough jungle terrain and basic accommodation and bathroom facilities.

How fit do I need to be?

You must arrive in Sumatra fit and prepared for this challenge. You should start training at least 6 months before departure to ensure the best chance of success and enjoyment on the challenge. Hill walking while carrying a heavy backpack should form a major part of your training as this will most closely replicate the actual trek and is the best way to prepare your body for the numerous ascents and descents involved.

Increasing your cardiovascular endurance, core strength and leg strength will also benefit you greatly so resistance workouts should be added to your training regime in addition to plenty of hill walking. You can download a number of free apps which will help you train and track your progress. E.g. MapMyWalk, couch to 5k, MyFitnessPal etc. If you attempt to complete the challenge without training it will make the trek unnecessarily difficult and may be detrimental to your experience, and the experience of your team mates.

What is the climate like?

The climate in Sumatra is hot, humid and wet all year round. It cannot be stressed enough that the distinction between 'wet' and 'dry' seasons is not marked, and while weather patterns and rainfall is unpredictable it will generally be hot and wet for most of the trip. October is the wettest month, but November historically sees approx. 136.7mm rainfall per day and you are likely to experience short sharp showers throughout the day, often in the middle of the afternoon. Temperatures historically reach up to 30°C during the day and drop to around 23°C at night although it may feel cooler at higher altitudes. The humidity is high, usually at least 83% every day.

Please note: the temperatures and conditions given here are *historically accurate* but climate change can impact the seasons so you may experience uncharacteristic conditions during the trip which are out of our control. Should this happen the guide will assess the situation and make decisions to ensure the best enjoyment and ultimately safety of the group as a whole.

What is the terrain like?

The terrain varies greatly on this trek, from overgrown jungle paths to good open tracks and smaller paths. You can expect uneven and often slippery ground underfoot. There will be a number of steep ascents and long descents so you must arrive in Sumatra fit and prepared. You must be prepared to climb over overgrown vegetation, tree roots and other jungle obstacles. The paths can be muddy and slippery after rain. This trek is not easy.

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Where will we sleep?

During the trek you will spend each night camping in jungle clearings set up as temporary camps. In the jungle camps you will sleep in tents (two sharing a three-man tent). You need to bring a lightweight sleeping bag, sleeping bag liner (cotton or silk) and a mosquito net.

What about bathroom facilities?

There are no showers so you should bring a pack of baby wipes for general hygiene. It may be possible to bathe in some of the streams near camp; if you do this you must use natural, bio-degradable products which will not contaminate the water (products from Lush.co.uk are great for this).

Basic toilets are available at camp, as is cold running water for washing. If you need to use the toilet during the trek day you must inform the guides you are stopping and find a private area off the trail. You must never leave used toilet paper on the ground; this must be packed up into a nappy bag or sanitary disposal bag and carried to camp.

What is the food like?

Sumatran food is traditionally very spicy with lots of chilli, lemon grass, ginger, garlic and coriander. The spiciest food tends to be from Padang in West Sumatra.

Meals are cooked by your trek team and will comprise of various simple local dishes served with rice or noodles. Plates, mugs, cutlery and other equipment are provided for you and dietary requirements can be catered for if we are notified in advance.

Practical information

Who accompanies us?

You will be accompanied by first aid trained English-speaking guides who have an excellent knowledge of hiking, culture and nature in the region. You will also be accompanied by a team of local support staff, a Different Travel Company UK tour manager and Cats Protection representative.

Who can take part?

The trek can be undertaken by anyone with a good level of fitness, who is healthy and determined. Adequate preparation, planning and training is important because the fitter you are the more you will enjoy this experience. An ideal candidate would be a hill walker, an open-minded person with a sense of adventure or someone who would like to take part in a life-changing fundraising experience in the beautiful landscape.

Is there an age limit?

You must be at least 18 years old to participate on this trek unaccompanied. It may be possible for you to participate if you are 16 or 17 years old, but you must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. There is no upper age limit.



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Medical declaration

We require a medical form to be completed by everyone upon registering, and any pre-existing conditions, medications used and other medical issues must be specified. All your medical details are treated in the strictest confidence.

The information will be securely screened by a qualified medical professional, and details provided to your tour manager and local guides so our staff are adequately informed and prepared to support you during the trip. By completing this booking form you are giving consent for us to contact you confidentially with any follow up questions regarding your health.

If you declare any medical conditions you may be asked to provide more information, or we may request to contact your GP.

In the event that your medical issues at the time of booking represent a concern for your safety and wellbeing, or the safety and wellbeing of others in the group, you may be recommended not to take part. If this happens your booking will not be confirmed and the deposit will be refunded.

We must be informed if any conditions or medication change, or if new conditions develop. If necessary confirmation of fitness to travel from your GP or specialist may be required.

Please note that we will never unreasonably deny participation on a trip nor contravene the Equality Act 2010.

Covid-19

Your health and safety is our top priority so rest assured that we are taking steps to ensure you not only have a memorable experience, but a safe one too.

We constantly monitor and follow the advice of the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) who provide recommendations and advice to British travellers about travel to a certain destination.

Health and safety is our top priority so we will **NEVER** operate a trip in an area where there is clear and present risk to our team members, whether that is due to a health outbreak, political instability, natural disasters or anything else.

We are optimistic that this trip will operate as scheduled, however if travel restrictions either in the UK or Indonesia prevent safe travel we will look to either postpone or cancel your trip at no cost to you.

We will be reviewing each trip eight weeks before departure, and if, at that stage Indonesia is either on the UK Government's 'red' list or the country is not allowing UK citizens to enter without quarantine, then we will look to either postpone or cancel the trip.

Please note that at the time of travel there may be enhanced safety and security measures in airports, bag drop may take longer, and you may need to provide a certificate of health or proof of vaccination.

We are closely monitoring the situation and will inform you about any information pertinent to your travel arrangements.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us on info@different-travel.com.



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What does it cost?

To sign up you will pay a non-refundable, non-transferrable registration fee of **£330**. This may be paid in up to three instalments.

Once your place is confirmed you can start your fundraising which is a minimum target of **£3,500** for Cats Protection. A flexi pay and self-funded option is also available upon request.

The £330 registration fee is totally separate from, and in addition to, fundraising targets or self-funded balance payments.

A total of £2,800 (80%) must be raised by Friday, 11 August 2023. The remaining £700 can be raised up to three months after you return from the trip.

The Events team at Cats Protection will help you every step of the way to reach, and most likely exceed, this target.

What is included?

- ✓ Return flights from London
- ✓ Transfers and transport in Indonesia
- ✓ Accommodation in hotels in Medan (2 nights), campsites during the trek (3 nights) and basic guesthouse in Bukit Lawang (2 nights)
- ✓ All meals as specified
- ✓ Local English-speaking guides, porters and support crew
- ✓ Trek permits
- ✓ Talk by local conservation expert
- ✓ Different Travel UK tour manager.

What is excluded?

- ✗ Airport taxes and fuel surcharges (currently approx. £325)
- ✗ Visas (if required)
- ✗ Transport to/from UK airport
- ✗ Travel insurance
- ✗ Tips (£40-45pp)
- ✗ Personal expenses (eg drinks, souvenirs etc.)
- ✗ Vaccinations
- ✗ Personal trekking kit



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Itinerary

Day 1 (Saturday 4 November 2023): London - Medan

Fly to Medan on indirect overnight flights, arriving the next day.

Day 2 (Sunday 5 November 2023): Medan

Upon arriving in Medan you will transfer to the hotel and, depending on flight times, you will have the rest of the day to explore at your leisure. We will gather for a welcome dinner and briefing about the days ahead.

Overnight: Hotel



Day 3 (Monday 6 November 2023): Medan – Bukit Lawang – Gunung Leuser National Park

After an early breakfast we take the scenic drive to Bukit Lawang (approx. 4 hours) where we will stop for lunch. This afternoon we cross the river and start our trek up into the hills of the Gunung Leuser National Park. We will set up camp close to the river.

Trekking: Approx. 4 - 5 hours

Overnight: Camping



Day 4 (Tuesday 7 November 2023): Gunung Leuser National Park

Over the next few days we will trek into the dense jungles of the national park, a UNESCO world heritage site, and experience the unique sights and sounds of the rainforest. It is hoped that you will encounter a wide range of wildlife over the next few days including orangutan, gibbons, hornbills, pig tail macaques, Thomas leaf monkeys and lizards. More than 100 tigers live in the area, but it is extremely unlikely that we will spot any. Though our expert guides will be keeping an eye out for pug marks and other evidence that they are living in the area.

Trekking: Approx. 5 – 6 hours

Overnight: Camping



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Day 5 (Wednesday 8 November 2023): Gunung Leuser National Park

Today we leave the area frequented by the day trekkers and make our way deeper into the jungle. You will get a greater understanding of the ecosystem of this unique island as our guides share their survival skills. They will point out the native plants and explain how they are used in traditional food and medicine and demonstrate how there are used for making tools and building materials.

Trekking: Approx. 5 – 6 hours

Overnight: Camping



Day 6 (Thursday 9 November 2023) Gunung Leuser National Park – Bukit Lawang

It's the last day of trekking today as we make our way through the jungle in the morning. After lunch we make our way back to Bukit Lawang - by river tubing down the Bohorok River. This is an exhilarating and amazing experience but there is an option to walk if you prefer.

Trekking: Approx. 4 – 5 hours

Overnight: Guesthouse



Day 7 (Friday 10 November 2023): Bukit Lawang

Today is a free day to relax and enjoy the peaceful riverside surroundings of Bukit Lawang. You can take part in a range of optional excursions – including another chance to see orangutans. This afternoon a local tiger conservation expert will talk to you about the history of the Sumatran tiger and the efforts being made to ensure its future on the island.

Overnight: Guesthouse

Day 8 (Saturday 11 November 2023): Bukit Lawang – Medan

We head back to Medan today and will spend some time visiting a local animal rescue centre before a celebratory farewell dinner.

Overnight: Hotel

Day 9 (Sunday 12 November 2023): Medan - UK

We will transfer to the airport for our return over-night flight back to the UK. We will arrive back on Monday 13 November 2023.

N.B. This itinerary may change due to unusual weather, the ability of the group, wildlife movements and so on. We will do our best to keep to the itinerary but we cannot be held responsible for changes that occur outside of our control. In all circumstances your guide and tour leader will have the final say in the interest of the group's health and safety.

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Kit List

Essentials

E-tickets ☐
 Passport + 2 copies ☐
 ATM card + credit card(s) ☐
 Cash (£ Sterling) ☐
 Travel insurance information ☐
 Pen ☐
 Sunglasses (100% UV polarized) ☐
 LED head torch + spare batteries ☐
 Camera + spare batteries ☐
 Hiking pole(s) ☐

Clothing and Footwear

Hiking boots* ☐
 Footwear for camp ☐
 Non-cotton trek trousers ☐
 Non-cotton t-shirt ☐
 Non-cotton long sleeve top/shirt ☐
 Non-cotton socks ☐
 Underwear ☐
 Leech socks ☐
 Sun hat with wide brim ☐
 Neck cooling 'Cobber' ☐
 Buff (www.buffwear.co.uk) ☐
 Poncho ☐
 Swimwear ☐
 Casual wear for travel days ☐
 Pyjamas ☐

Hygiene*

Shampoo* + conditioner ☐
 Toothbrush + toothpaste ☐
 Antiperspirant deodorant ☐
 Shower gel* ☐
 Non-cotton travel/trek towel ☐
 Wet wipes ☐
 Hand sanitizer ☐
 1-2 toilet rolls (in Ziploc bags) ☐
 Nappy bags (for used loo paper) ☐
 Waterproof sun block (high SPF) ☐
 Feminine hygiene products ☐

First Aid Kit

Prescription medicine ☐
 Insect repellent (50% DEET) ☐
 Ibuprofen + Paracetamol ☐
 Plasters ☐
 Blister plasters (e.g. Compeed) ☐
 Imodium (Loperamide) ☐
 Rehydration salts (e.g. Dioralyte) ☐
 Antihistamine cream/tablets ☐
 Lip balm with SPF protection ☐
 Indigestion remedy (Gaviscon) ☐
 Nail scissors/ tweezers ☐
 Muscle rub (e.g. Deep Heat) ☐
 Zinc oxide tape ☐
 Spare glasses/contact lenses ☐

Optional

☐ Video camera + charger ☐
☐ Mobile phone + charger ☐
☐ MP3 player/iPod ☐
☐ Sewing kit ☐
☐ Waterproof pouch for phone ☐
☐ Portable battery pack ☐

Sleeping

☐ Lightweight sleeping bag ☐
☐ Sleeping bag liner ☐
☐ Ear plugs ☐
☐ Mosquito net ☐
☐ Para cord + gaffer tape ☐

Luggage

☐ Suitcase for main luggage ☐
☐ Daypack (max. 25 - 30 litres) ☐
☐ Kit Bag ☐
☐ Combination padlocks ☐
☐ Dry bag / rucksack liner ☐

Eating and Drinking

☐ Energy snacks ☐
☐ 2-litre bottle (e.g. CamelBak) ☐
☐ 1-litre backup bottle ☐
☐ Electrolyte tablets ☐
☐ Water purification (e.g. Biox Aqua) ☐

PLEASE NOTE: This list is just a guideline and is not exhaustive. The items on this list do not take into account your personal preferences based on your previous trekking experience, or individual requirements. For information about items on this list please refer to the trip dossier or contact The Different Travel Company on info@different-travel.com

*Please ensure you pack your hiking boots into your hand baggage in the unlikely event your checked luggage goes missing or is delayed.

*Please consider eco-friendly or biodegradable options. Consider shopping at Little Footprint Gifts (<https://littlefootprintgifts.weebly.com/eco-traveller.html>).