

## My trip to Kolkata, Darjeeling and Sikkim.

My family, I and my grandmother had gone to Kolkata on 6<sup>th</sup> May from Chennai. We went by air in Indigo airlines which left at 7:00 P.M and arrived at 9:00 P.M.



We had a pleasant drive to our hotel “Komala Vilas.” We had our dinner in hotel banana leaf and wound up for the next day.

The next day we got up by 8:00A.M had breakfast and went to see the children’s museum. They had various kinds of dolls and statues from over 157 countries and also the Ramayana and Mahabharata in clay models. This was very interesting.



Then we took a metro from Ravindra Sadan station to Esplanade which was very fast and exciting.



From Esplanade, we drove down to the Hooghly River and had a boat ride from one side of the bank to the other and back. We also saw the New and Old Bridge while boating. While driving we also saw Eden Gardens, the Mecca of cricket.



← Eden Gardens



← Old Bridge



← New Bridge

After the boat ride, we took a taxi back to esplanade. We hopped on to a tram not knowing where it would take us. We got down after two stops.



From that place we went back to our hotel and had lunch. After lunch we relaxed in our room till evening. It rained heavily that evening. We went walking down the street seeing the shops. We also had the famous Kheerkadam, Mishti Dahi and Shingada of Kolkata. We also saw my great grandfather's (those who know him: Bada Thatha) house. We went back to the hotel, had dinner and went to sleep.

The next day we got up by 7:15 a.m and went to the airport as we were going to Bagdogra. At the airport we had early Brunch. We went by Jet Airways at 11:45a.m and reached at 12:45a.m. We then had a three hour drive to Darjeeling. Slowly as we ascended above the mountain, the weather became cooler. By now it was 5:00 p.m. It was a very tiring drive so we relaxed in the evening at Fortune hotel. Later we had a delicious dinner and wound up for the next "Tour-Day".

The next day my parents (My twin brothers and grandmother stayed at the hotel) and I went to tiger hill (the highest point at Darjeeling) to see the first rays of the sun fall on Kanchenjunga Peak at 5:00a.m. It was very misty so we could not see it properly. On the way back to the hotel we saw Ghoom monastery and bought some caps and ear muffs there. We also saw the Batasia Loop (a garden). It is called that because the Darjeeling train makes a loop around the garden. After going back, we had breakfast (the whole family) and had to go sightseeing again. We saw the Himalayan mountaineering institute where there was a small museum of Mt. Everest. Just beside this, the Darjeeling zoo was located which had mostly Himalayan animals and animals that could bear extreme cold like snow leopard. We stopped for a lunch break. We then visited Tenzing rock (named after Tenzing Norgay who was the first man to climb Mt.Everest and came from Darjeeling). After this we went to the Darjeeling tea garden where they make the world famous Darjeeling tea. We also tasted the tea and Momos/Dimsums which were equally good. It was evening by now and we were back at the Hotel. We had a scrumptious dinner and wound up for the next day.

Today was my birthday!!! We had our breakfast at the hotel by 7:30a.m and had a long 4 hour drive to Gangtok. Just beside the road flowed the Teesta rive for 30-40 kilometers where people were rafting. We reached the hotel (Suhim Portico) by 12:30 and had a good lunch. We checked out the hotel the whole afternoon and in the evening my mother, grandmother and I went to M.G Marg (a market) where I got my new shades as a birthday gift from my grandmother. After going back to the hotel I had a surprise Birthday party!!! I got a free cake from the hotel staff and they also gave me a scarf like thing as a birthday gift!!! This scarf or stole is a mark of respect or honour. We had dinner and got ready for the next big day.

We got up by 8:00 a.m and had breakfast. Then we started our sightseeing trip. We first visited the Rumtek Monastery which was a really huge monastery.

The unique thing about it is that it has painting of Lord Ganesha. That is because the builder of this monastery believed that Lord Ganesha helped him to build it.



Then we went to the Nehru botanical garden where there were many types of different plants. After this we went to the Shanti view point where we got a beautiful view of Gangtok. Next we went to the Baljhanki falls where we waded into the water. There was also an energy park where anything you play creates energy. For example Merry-Go-Round is attached to a Dynamo which produces a light at the Merry-Go-Round at night.

We then went to the spectacular Gangtok Ropeway which ran above the middle of the city. This was a good experience.



Then we went back to the hotel and met my mom's brother-in-law, Sailesh who took us out for a delicious dinner. Then, he showed us Sikkim's CASINO! We played with the kids' machine for a while!!! Though we met him just that evening, we had a great time with him and felt close to him.



We then went back to the hotel and went to sleep..

We had to leave from Gangtok today. We got up by 8:00a.m. We had our breakfast and then started our long drive back to Bagdogra airport. We flew back to Kolkata and spent another day there. We went shopping and had misti dahi and keerkadam. We also visited the famous Kalighat Temple and in the evening flew back to Hyderabad. Home Sweet Home.



My brothers and I in the local costume of Darjeeling.



My brothers and I in the local costume of Gangtok.



Outside the Japanese monastery.