



A LADAKH
ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY
RETREAT
with
Pratap J

June 1st to June 8th

at

The Indus River Camp

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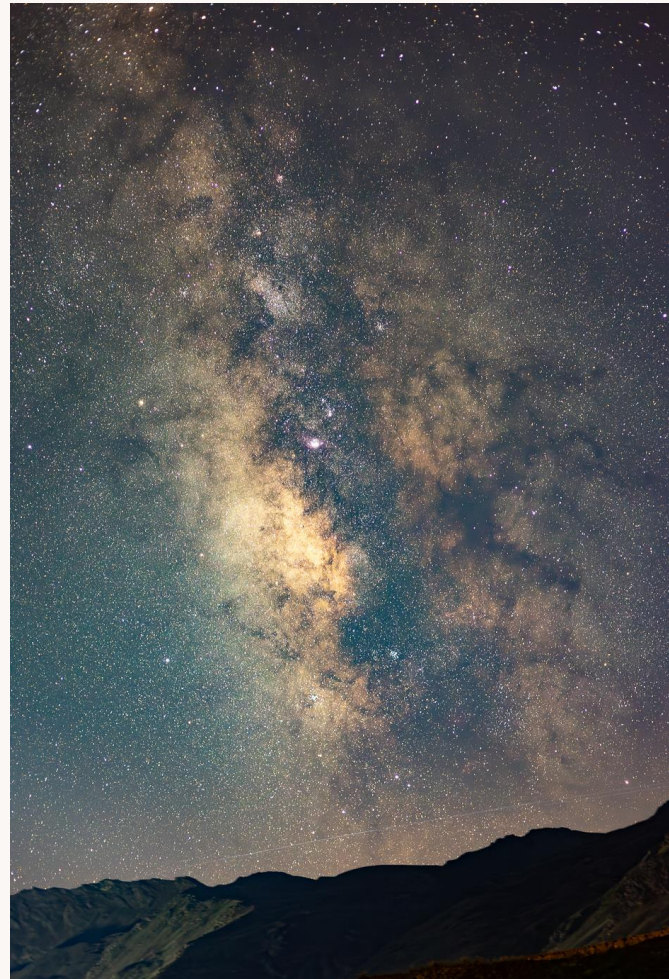
About Pratap



Pratap is a skilled drone pilot, timelapse photographer and mentor. With an acute understanding of the planning, execution, and post-processing of Milky Way photography, he mentors photographers and teaches via his Youtube channel.

You can find him on @pixelshooter on Instagram

Pratap's Photos from Ladakh



Ladakh

Ladakh's altitude creates the ideal conditions for astrophotography - it shelters from the rains, turning Ladakh into a desert with 300+ days of clear skies a year, as well as nighttime clarity from lack of moisture. The sharp contours of the Himalayan terrain make Ladakh the least populated region in India and the lack of light pollution that comes with that. The high altitude also offers greater zenith sky blackness, which provides more contrast and visibility to the stars and planets.

The night gives us the sky, yet the day offers more - rare wildlife, monasteries and Buddhist culture, as well as the unique Ladakhi landscape of desert, snow-capped peaks and vast, high-altitude lakes.



The Indus River Camp

The Indus River Camp is a 40-acre natural property in Ladakh, just outside of Leh. 8 glass-fronted rooms open out to views of the river and mountains. A natural space, lack of light pollution, and comfortable rooms make it the ideal spot to acclimatise to the altitude for Astro tour and to conduct primary lessons, before heading out to Pangong and Hanle.

We make the property our base, with sightseeing and lessons by day, and astrophotography in the evening.

Any trip to Ladakh requires 48 hours acclimatisation to the altitude, close to Leh. Given the extreme altitude of Pangong and Hanle, we spend 3 days at the Indus River Camp.



The Plan

The primary focus is on Astrophotography and capturing the milky way. The three days at the Indus River Camp revolve around this, with night photography, daytime lessons but also local sightseeing to see morning prayers, the confluence of the rivers and local photogenic sights.

3 subsequent nights in Pangong and Hanle offer ample opportunity at the best locations for Astrophotography. A local wildlife guide and photographer comes with us for this journey. The region is home to a wide selection of wildlife, including Pallas Cat – grumpy, sweet and extremely rare, it's a joy to photograph.

All journeys are by Innova Crysta, to ensure that the journey is as comfortable as possible.



DAY 1

Acclimatising by the river

Take the opportunity to acclimatise and relax at our riverside property

Gently explore the 40-acre grounds

Take a walk to watch the sun set over the river

At night, enjoy the warmth of a bonfire under the milky way

View the planets from the property's motorised telescope

Astrophotography lessons



DAY 2

A short, relaxed exploration into the Indus Valley

Local monasteries, a riverside picnic and camels.

An early morning Buddhist prayers experience at Thiksey, a 12-storey monastery perched onto a hill face

Take a guided walk through the local village to sanctuary for double humped Bactrian camels, that plied the Silk Route

Enjoy a picnic lunch by the streams under the Matho monastery

Head back to the Indus River Camp via Stakna, pictured opposite

Astrophotography by evening



DAY 3

The Sham Valley

Lightly explore the Sham Valley

Visit the confluence of the Indus and Zaskar rivers

The less explored Basgo Fort lies en route, the site of an ancient battle between the Mughals and Mongols

Further downstream is the village Alchi, with its 13th century murals and excellent local cuisine

Head back to the Indus River Camp for classes and evening astrophotography



DAY 4

Pangong Lake

Pangong Lake is a photographer's treat, by day and by night

We head off early to reach Pangong Lake. It's a 4-5 hours journey there, over the Chang La pass (5,300 metres above sea level)

The colours of the lake change through the day, offering timelapse opportunities

We stay in one of the better accommodations there, so that it remains comfortable. That said, the conditions are harsh and photographing at night will be chilly

We stay close to the lake, so we use the lake as a foreground for the astro photos



DAY 5 & 6

Hanle

Hanle is India's first dark-sky reserve and home to the Indian Astronomical Society

It's a 5-hour drive through the Tibetan plateau to Hanle. En route, we keep an eye out for wildlife, as well as the Chantangi nomads and their pashmina goats

Hanle's giant telescopes and its wide valley are great foregrounds for astrophotography

It's very remote and the nights will be chilly. Accommodation will be more basic than elsewhere. Wi-fi is unlikely

In the daytime, as well as post-processing and sessions with the mentor, we can seek out wildlife for photography, particularly the Pallas cat



DAY 7

Final Evening at The Indus River Camp

Journey back to The Indus River Camp through the Tibetan Plateau

It's a long journey back to the comfort of the Indus River Camp, but with multiple photograph opportunities - stunning landscapes of the Tibetan plateau en route, wildlife and the nomadic population and the Indus river that tracks from Changtang all the way to The Indus River Camp

Spend a relaxing evening before flying out the following morning



Is This Retreat for You?

If you are curious about photographing the night skies, and have wondered how to capture the Milky Way, then you should participate in this retreat.

Or if you have already been photographing the night sky, and want to enhance your skills, then you will find value in this retreat.

We will use digital cameras (Mirrorless or DSLR) in the field, and then post process the images using Adobe Lightroom on a laptop. **Carrying a digital camera and a laptop is a basic prerequisite.** However, you are welcome to join another photographer as their partner to experience the wonder of Ladakh and can always rent a camera for the tour.



Pricing

Single Room

1,24,000

Couple

1,84,000

(92,000 each)

Another option, depending on availability of other guests, is to share a room at The Indus River Camp with another subscriber, but take a solo room for Pangong and Hanle – This comes to 1 Lac (100,000 INR) per person

Inclusions

Accommodation, Breakfast and Dinner on all dates
Lunch on Day 1, 5 and 6
Teas and Snacks
Astrophotography mentor
All transport via Innova Crystas
Inner Line Permits
Supplementary Oxygen

Photography Assistance and Lessons during the Day
Nighttime astrophotography sessions with Pratap

A wildlife guide and photographer who will assist in seeking wildlife and photographing them during our trip to Pangong and Hanle

In a separate brochure, we have the packing list, as well as the Dos and Don'ts of travelling to Ladakh

Pricing

Deposit Information

An upfront deposit of 35,000 is required per person at the time of confirmation.

2 weeks before arrival, we require the remainder of the balance.

For any cancellation up to 1 month before arrival (the 1st May), refund is 50% of the advance amount

Any cancellation between the 1st May and 16th May 2024, the upfront deposit would be kept.

Anyone not paying the remainder balance by the 16th May will forfeit their deposit. Any cancellation from the 16th May to the 1st of June would mean no refund on the full amount paid.

The tour is designed to work for 3 to 6 people. In the event of 1 or 2 subscribers, we may need to cancel the tour, unless the two people are prepared to pay a higher amount to cover the additional costs. On cancellation, the deposit will be refunded immediately.

Exclusions

Flights to and from Leh
Anything not mentioned in the previous page

Additional costs due to factors outside of our control – this could be bad weather obstructing roads, shutdowns of airports, personal sickness