Sikkim
The Magnificent abode of the Gods

Incredible India
Buddhism & Sikkim

As you enter Sikkim you will immediately feel the influence of Buddhism. The fluttering prayer flags, monasteries with golden coloured roofs and maroon robed monks will capture your attention. Guru Padmasambhava, the great Buddhist saint from the north-western part of India, is considered to have introduced Buddhism into Sikkim. There are many caves people still visit which this great master is believed to have used. Guru Rinpoche, as he is usually called, often speaks of Sikkim as a most religiously powerful place. He says, “It is more powerful to meditate in Sikkim for one day than meditating for one year in an ordinary place.” Buddhism was formally established in Sikkim in the 17th century.

The school of Buddhism that is prevalent in Sikkim is usually called the Vajrayana mainly of Nyingma and Kagyu order. Vajrayana accepts and studies all aspects of Buddhism according to the tradition followed in the great Buddhist Universities such as Nalanda and Vikramashila. As well as monasteries, Sikkim also has Drubdoras, often in secluded places, where people go into continuous meditation for 3 years. There are also several Buddhist Academic Institutions where courses are offered on Buddhist philosophy. These are the places where the true living tradition of ancient wisdom is preserved.

* Ringu Tulku

GANGTOK SURROUNDING BUDDHIST CIRCUITS

Enchey Monastery

An important seat of the Nyingmapa order, the Enchey Monastery was built on the site blessed by Lama Drupthop Kempo, a tantric Master known for his power of flying. It is believed that Lama Drupthop Kempo was an Meditation at Molnun Tsechung (Shalay Dhunga) and one day he flew from there and landed at Enchey where he founded the Gumpa in the year 1840. The present Enchey monastery was rebuilt by the 10th Chogyal Sikkong Tulku in the year 1908, duly presenting a unique architecture which is an artistic adaptation of Gyanak Rewo Tse-Nga or sacred mountain of five peaks in China, the spiritual place Jampayang (Saraswati) the God of knowledge as known to the Northern Buddhist. Every year, around December to January on the Eve of the Sikkimese Losang a “Chhoam” or Religious masked dance is performed with great funfare for two days. It is situated close to Sich Visit tourist lodge 3 km. from Gangtok town. It is one of the holiest Monasteries of Sikkim. Devotees and tourist are requested to maintain the Sanctity of the place.

Dud-Dul Chorten (Stupa)

The Dud-Dul Chorten or stupa was built by the Venerable Trulshih Rimpochhe, head of the Nyingmapa order of Tibetan Buddhism in 1945, in order to protect the then Kingdom of Sikkim from invasion by the neighbouring States. Inside the Stupa, there are complete Mandala set of Dorje Phurba (Vajra Kilaya), a set of Kong Gyar relic (Holy Book) complete “Zung” (mantras) and other religious objects. Around the chorten, there are 108 Mani Lhakor (Prayer Wheels). These are turned by devout Buddhist while chanting “Om Mane Padme Hum” (Hail & jewels in the Lotus) to Invoke the bodhisattva. It is surrounded by Chorten Lakhang and Guru Lakhang where there are two huge statues of Guru Padmasambhava. This is the seat of Kyabje Dodrupchen Rimpochhe who is one of the most accomplished Nyingmapa lamas of the world today.
Namgyal Institute Of Tibetology (NIT)
The most prestigious of its kind in India, this Buddhist Institute is a treasure of vast collection of rare Tibetan and Sanskrit manuscripts, statues and rare ‘Thanksas’ (tapestries used in Buddhist liturgy). It has over 200 Buddhist icons and other prized objects of art. Today, it is a renowned world wide centre for study of Buddhist philosophy and religion. The foundation stone of this Institute was laid by His Holiness The Dalai Lama on 19th Feb, 1957 and was inaugurated by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, the then, Prime Minister of India on 1st Oct, 1958.

Rumtek Dharma Chakra Centre
About 45 minutes drive from Gangtok, 25 kms away is the Rumtek Dharma Chakra Centre, the seat of the Kagyu order, one of the four major Tibetan Buddhist sects. The XVth Karmapa Rangjung Rigpe Dorje founded this monastery in 1962. It houses some of the world’s most unique religious scriptures and rare objects. Traditional in design, it is almost a replica of the original Kagyu head quarter in Tibet. It has 300 centres overseas. Lama dances are performed during religious festivals.

Pal Zurmang Kagyu Monastery (Lingdum)
Zurmang Kagyu Monastery, located at Lingdum, East Sikkim is at a distance of about 20kms from Gangtok. The present Gharwang Rimpochhe is the 12th Successive incarnation of the glorious emanation of Zurmang Gharwang. A place worth visiting for its religious and exquisite architecture and serene atmosphere.

Old Rumtek Monastery
Just half a km away from the Dharma Chakra centre is the original Rumtek Monastery, which was founded by the fourth Chogyal Gyumed Namgyal in 1734 A.D. and is regarded as one of the major Kagyupa Monasteries in Sikkim. Lama dances are performed at the Monastery on the 28th and 29th days of the tenth Tibetan month before Losoong, the Sikkimese New Year.
Kabi Lungchok
This historical place is 17 kms from Gangtok in the North Sikkim Highway. This is where the historical Treaty of Blood Brotherhood between the Lepcha Chief Ta-Kong-Tek and the Bhutia Chief Khey-Bum-Sa was signed ritually. The spot where the ceremony took place is marked by a memorial stone pillar amidst the cover of dense forest.

Phodong Monastery
Phodong Monastery is a major Kagyu sect Monastery and the only monastery of its kind in Northern Sikkim. The Monastery was founded by the fourth King Gyanmed Namgyal. However, the Lamas completed the monastery in 1740 AD. In the course of time an earthquake damaged the old structure and the lamas rebuilt it in 1977 with financial assistance from the Government in addition to their own contribution. During the course of reconstruction, the experts of Delhi National Museum Institute extracted the old fresco paintings before dismantling the old structure and it was preserved by the department for restoration in the new building. Since the Phodong monastery is one of the important places of tourist interest in North Sikkim, department of tourism had further taken up the funding of the remaining works of the monastery which included the restoration of fresco paintings. The main festival is the annual masked dance in winter corresponding to the month of December to January.

Phensang Monastery (Sang Chhoding)
The monastery is located in the North Sikkim highways. This is one of the 6th biggest monasteries having the largest number of monks in Sikkim. The third Latsun Jigmé Powo (1682-1735) while traveling to the Northern zone in 1721 AD founded this monastery. Later it was expanded in 1840. However, torrential rains in 1983 badly damaged the structure and repair was not feasible. Therefore, the lamas dismantled the structure completely, started rebuilding in 1983 with government aid and completed it in 1996. The monastery belongs to Nyimaapa Sect and performs all the major ceremonies with annual mask dance.
Tholung Monastery (Rigzine Chhodubling)

This monastery is located in the remote part of upper Dzongu, and is one of the most sacred monasteries in Sikkim. The sacred place of Tholung was unveiled by fourth Lhatso Kunzang Jigmed Gyatso in Iron-Dragon year of 13th Rabjung cycle of Tibetan calendar which corresponds to 1760. The monastery is surrounded by many sacred spots where one can draw holy water and remove ones karmic obscuration. Later the fifth Lhatso Pema Dechen Gyatso built a monastery in 1789 AD to house the spiritual properties of Former Lamas. It is said that Gorkha invasion from Nepal had caused havoc and fear to the Buddhist monk in the west during the reign of Chogyal Tenzing Namgay (1780-1793). Therefore Lama Gyatso transferred all the precious collection, valuable texts and many other belongings of former lamas from Dubdi and Sanga Choeling monasteries in west to the present place of Tholung in 1887-88. Apart from these a Golden Stupa called 'Serdung Choedten' was made duly depositing the relics of 6th Lhatso Lama Kunga Chonyid and is presently seen on the top floor. In the ground floor, one can see another Golden Stupa Known as Mardung Chorten of 7th Chogyal Tsugphud Namgay (1793-1863) and where Lepchas make traditional offering to it in the name of the departed king every year. The religious treasures kept in the monastery are taken for airing once in every three years as Karmi Ceremony under the supervision of the department of Ecclesiastical, Government of Sikkim. The present monastery was reconstructed as the earlier monastery was dilapidated. The route to this monastery diverts from Mangan. It follows the Nyingma sect of Buddhism.

Labrang Monastery

Labrang monastery is located a few kms away from Phodong Gonpo. This is one of the important Monastery of Nyingmapa lineages in North Sikkim. Prince Rigdzin Chhenpo or also known as Kyabgon of Labrang who was said to be the son from the first queen of 7th ruler Tsugphud Namgay (1785-1861) founded it in the fire dog year of XIXth Rabjung cycle which correspond to 1826. Later in 1844, it was developed into its present shape. The record reveals that the prince installed a precious bronze statue of Karma Guru (statue of lord guru in wrathful form) in this monastery which presently exists in the shrine of the top floor. A major renovation was done in 1978 with government aid. Its walls are adorned with life like frescoes of Buddhist legends. Its structures are built up with unique architecture of Rinchen Surgya eight pointed diamond symbolizing the indestructible and is the only monastery of its kind in Sikkim. The Monastery holds annual function of mask dance.
Guru Dongmar Holy Lake

Guru Dongmar Lake is situated in the lap of Mount Khang-Chhen Gyao, and was named as “Guru Dongma” (Guru’s first visiting place in Dejong) after Guru Padma Sambhava’s visit to this place, In 8th Century A.D. Guru Padma Sambhava the founder of Tibetan Buddhism and regarded as “Celebrated Buddhist Saint” of that era. As per religious history, Guru Padma Sambhava paid a visit to this lake before visiting the Hidden Land of Demajong (Sikkim). He recognized this lake as a part of the places of worship of famous Dorje Nyima of Chhoedten Nyima sacred spots. This lake included in the 109 sacred Lakes of Sikkim is a landmark of northern door for entry in to the Hidden Land of Demajong. As per H.E Lachen Rinpoche’s write up, this lake used to be clear like a sky about 40 years back. Some devotees had been fortunate to see their future forecast in the lake. It holds a power to give boon of a son to expecting woman. It is a Buddhist place of worship and protected under the places of worship (Special provision) Act 1991, Government of India.
The Sakyamuni Project
The Sakyamuni project at Rabong, South Sikkim would be a landmark in Sikkim’s unique effort in unifying tourism and religion. Once the project is completed, it will provide an important fillip to nascent Buddhist Circuit in Sikkim especially since the statue of Sakyamuni Buddha will be blessed to hold relics of Lord Buddha that have been most generously donated by several countries.

His Holiness somdetPhraNyanasamvara, the 19th Supreme Patriarch of the Kingdom of Thailand was kind enough to offer the ‘Most Precious Relics’ (Ringsel) of Lord Buddha to Sakyamuni Project, Sikkim.
Sharchhog Beyphug Holy Cave
Demajong is also marked by four Great Holy Caves that is situated in four cardinal directions of the Tashiding Hill, which is regarded a Centre of the Holy land "DEMAJONG" as blessed by Guru Padma Sambhava in 8th Century A.D. 'Sharchhog-Beyphug' is its eastern side holy Cave and lies in Sanga Village in South Sikkim. Literally, it means ‘Hidden Cave of Eastern Direction'. It is a vast cavern reputed to extend by bifurcation to both Mount Tendong and Maitinam. Its height varies from five feet to hundred feet. As described in Dejong Neypik Text, the clues of sacred treasures of this holy land were hidden in this cave. This might be the reason that it is called the cave "Beyphug" or "Hidden Cave". The mystic pattern of the cave walls and roof have religious significances described to various deities and rituals objects. The devotees often commence their pilgrimage from this cave, as this is the entry point for making pilgrimage tour in Boyul Demajong. One can remove one's external defilement by visiting this cave. Here, one can offer prayer for success of one's pilgrimage journey.

Doling Monastery
Doling Monastery is located on a small hillock in the middle of the jungle about 6 Kms southward from Rabang Bazaar. Lama Rinzin Lonyang founded this monastery in earth-dog year of 12th Rabjung cycle year, corresponding to 1718 A.D. The monastery follows the Nyingmapa Sect.
There are many sacred objects of worship in its premises' such as a foot print of Khanchhen Dzonga’s Horse, which was laid on the rock during confrontation with Lama Dorje Lingpa and Deity Khangchhen Dzonga. At the same time, Dorjelingpa also laid his footprint on the rock in counter to Khanchhen Dzonga’s action and these footprints are preserved by the lamas to this day. Today the descendents of the lama still exist and are taking care of this sacred monastery.
Ralang Karma Rabtenling Monastery

Ralang Monastery is the first monastery of Kagyupa lineage built by Sikkim’s fourth Ruler Chogyal Gyurmed Namgyal in Iron dog year of 12th Rabjung cycle year which corresponds to 1730 A.D. The fourth ruler of Sikkim, Chogyal Gyurmed Namgyal (1707-1734), out of distress caused by internal conflict, disguised himself as a religious mendicant and went on a pilgrimage to Tibet. No one in that country suspected his royal origin, until he came before H.H. Changchhurb Dorje, the 12th Karmapa (1703-1732), who recognized and gave him a warm welcome. The king wasindeed surprised and felt uneasy, as he was totally unprepared or had nothing to offer to such a dignified Lama. Therefore, he promised the Karmapa that he would build a monastery of his Sect in Sikkim.

After his return from Tibet, he built a monastery at Ralang in the year 1730 A.D and offered Bhutia and Lepcha villages falling in the regions between river Teesta and Rangit namely Barfung, Lingdam, Burntiak, Temi, Sangmo, Yangang and Lingmoo as devotees for the newly built monastery. On its completion, the Rabney (consecration) ceremony was said to have been performed from Tibet by Karmapa himself. Amazingly, some Robney grains fell on the roof of the monastery at Ralang, which was witnessed by all present there. The devotion and faith had taken root in people’s mind and soon monasteries of this kind spread to other parts of Sikkim.

In the beginning of the 19th century, an incarnation of one Omje Lama of Shamarpa lineage was born in the family of Chhoedten Kallon in the village of Barfung, who was later enthroned as Head Lama of Ralang Gompa by 14th Karmapa Tegchog Dorje. During the tenure of this Lama, the monastery was reconstructed and made bigger. The number of monks increased with the development of the new monastery and once again, Rabney ceremony was performed from Tashiyga, Tibet, but this time by the 14th Karmapa Tegchog Dorje (1798-1863). On this occasion, many auspicious signs were observed, such as appearance of a Vulture that circumambient the monastery three times and thereafter flew north-east towards Malnam hill.

Ralang Palchen Choeling Monastery (New Monastery)

This is another Dharma chakra Centre of Kagyupa lineage after Rumtek, which was established by His Eminent Goser Gyaltsab Rimpache in the year 1995 at Ralang, in south Sikkim. This Centre is located just above the old Ralang Gompa and performs all the major Buddhist ceremonies.
Significance of the Statue
Guru Padmasambhava was the founder of Tibetan Mahayana Buddhism and blessed this Holy Hidden Land in 8th Century A.D. During his travel in Sikkim, he had concealed a great deal of major and minor treasures in its sacred places for the flourishment of dharma and prosperity of this Hidden Land. To repay his gratitude Dr. Pawan Kumar Chamling, the dynamic Chief Minister of Sikkim has built this world’s tallest statue of Guru Padmasambhava at Samdrupstse. His Holiness Dalai Lama on 22nd October, 1997 laid the foundation Stone of this magnificent Statue. The task of constructing this colossal statue of 135 ft. high was commissioned to H.E. Dodrubchen Rinpoche of Deorali Chhoedchen Gampo Trust, Gangtok. The work started in the year 1997 and after nearly three years of hard work put in by more than 1000 labourers and scores of engineers, architects and sculptors, the huge Statue was completed in 2003. Robney Blessing was performed by H.E Dodrubchen Rinpoche during its inaugural ceremony on 28th Nov, 2003 and officially handed over the completed project to the Hon’ble Chief Minister, Dr. Pawan Kumar Chamling.

Samdrupstse literally means “Wish Fulfilling Summit”. It is said that Lama Ngadog Sempo Chhenpo (one of the Three Pioneer Lamas) while opening the southern door of this Hidden Land in 17th Century, entered via Darjeeling and Namtsa. During his short stay at Namtsa, he climbed Samdrupstse Hill where he made wishes to flourish dharma in this Hidden Land. Later, his wishes were indeed fulfilled and thus named the hill as “SAMDRUP-TSE, The Wish fulfilling Summit”. The other two Hills that Lama Ngadog named are Tendong Lhatse and Namgye Lhatse. The latter is presently known as Namtsa, which seemed to be an abbreviation of ‘Namgye Lhatse”, “the Summit of Victorious God”.

Located on a majestic hilltop, this wonderful statue can be seen from far off places like Kalimpong, Darjeeling and Gyalshing. The fund for the construction of this statue was provided by the Department of Tourism, Government of Sikkim and presently the statue complex is under the management of Ecclesiastical Affairs Department, Government of Sikkim.
Dubdi Circuit
At a distance of about 3 Kms to the northeast of Yoksam valley is situated the Dubdi (the Hermit's cell) Monastery. The first ruler Chogyal Phunthog Namgyal (1604-1670) founded this monastery in 1647 A.D in veneration to the Patron Saint Gyalwa Lhatson Chhenpo (1595-1652). Later, it was fully reconstructed by third Lhatson Jigme Pawo in the water-rabbit year (1723 A.D) during the reign of Chogyal Gyurmed Namgyal (1707-1733). The precious Debris paintings of Maha Shidhas of Sikkim, the lineages of High Lamas, Guru Tshog-Shing and various Protecting Deities, which are embellished on the inner walls were painted by Sikkim’s famous Painter Lhamo Rinzin or Tem Lhamo in 1945. The monastery belongs to the Nyimgama Sect of Tibetan Buddhism. However Dubdi Monastery stands today in its repute of being the first Monastery of Sikkim and famed for its old mural paintings. Today the Monastery is protected under Archeological Survey of India as a Cultural heritage of Sikkim. The A.S.I has carried out re-roofing in 1984 in order to safeguard the structure from rain leakages.

Melli Atsing Monastery
Melli monastery is a Lepcha Buddhist Monastery, which was said to have built by Lama Duvaljam Yeshey Nyingpo in 1740 A.D. It lies between Pelling and Khecheopalri Lake. It also follows the Nyimgama Sect and performs all ceremonies throughout the year.
Sang-ngag Cholong Monastery

Sang-ngag Choling Monastery is claimed to have been founded by Lama Lhatson Chhenpo during the reign of first King Phuntsog Namgyal (1604-1670) but date and the year of the construction is not specifically mentioned. However, as per record found in the Gazetteers of Sikkim, it was commenced under the direction of Lha-tsun chhenpo during the reign of the First King and completed, at the time of second King Tensing Namgyal, by Lama Kunzang Jigme or Milkyoed Dorje who came from Tibet and is said to have succeeded Lha-tsun Chhenpo as his incarnation.

As per the record in “the Gazetteer of Sikkim”, Lama Lhatson Chhenpo went back to Tibet probably in 1648 A.D. During this visit, Lama Lhatson offered the Rigdzin Sogdrub Initiation to Fifth Dalai Lama and conferred on him the title of Chhodag or Care Taker of Dharma. After they returned from Tibet, Lama Lhatson and Chhoogyal Phuntsog, demarcated a site in Rabdentse for building a Palace and also built many objects of worship such as the golden Stupa, Bodhi Stupa. Lama Lhatson founded a small shrine called “Tsamikhang” in the west side of present Pemayanta Monastery. At the same time, Lama Lhatson consecrated many sites in surrounding areas and thereafter he returned to Tibet.

Khechoepalri Holy Lake

Khechoepalri Holy Lake lies in the lap of a beautiful hill above Rimbi river in the west of Pelling Bazaar. Khechoepalri means —"Mountain of blissful heaven". According to legends this place was once a grazing ground abounding with stinging nettle. Native Lepchas used the bark of the nettle for various requirements. One day a Lepcha couple while collecting nettles saw a pair of conch-shell coming from the air and entering into the ground. After that the ground underneath shook violently and an immense spring of water engulfed the entire ground which turned into a huge Lake. As per Nesal Text, this Lake was recognized as the abode of Tsuomen Gyalmo, or chief protective Nymph of the Dharma as blessed by goddess Tara. Native Buddhists believe that the shape of the lake is a footprint of Goddess Tara. Khechoepalri has become an important pilgrim destination as well as a tourist destination.
**Pemayangtse Monastery**

It was originally a small Shrine called 'Trongkhong' built by Lhatun Chempo on the spot west of the present Monastery in the year 1650-51. Later, Chogyal Choegyur Namgyal and Lama Khanchhen Rapal Dorje (First Head Lama of Pemayangtse Monastery) shifted this Uba khang to its present site and re-established it in 1705 A.D. They established the new Monastery with enrolment of 108 monks from the family of pure descent after having enrolled the king himself as the first monk. The Pemayangtse was specially built for the pure celibate monk called 'Dra-tsang' and to its Lama was reserved the honour of anointing and crowning the Chogyals. The monastery was further renovated from the upper portion of the structure by the Government in 1959 and completed in 1965. The old structure of Sangdoppalri in the first floor of the monastery was dismantled during the renovation. The re-building and restoration of this masterpiece was entrusted to late Serdup Dungzin Rinpoche Jigme Wangchuk, who started the work on 23rd November 1967 and completed in the year 1972.

Its main festival is Guru Drakmar Chham in winter corresponding to the month of February-March. It has more than 100 monks today.

**Yuksam Norbugang Coronation Throne**

As per prophecy in the religious text, three Great Lamas of Tibet entered into the Hidden Land of Bayul Demajang through three different directions of North, South and West. The three Lamas met at this auspicious site called ‘Norbugang’ and subsequently consecrated Chogyal Phuntsog Namgyal as the first enthroned ruler of Sikkim in 1642 A.D, after inviting him from present Gangtok.

Thereafter, by collecting soil and stones from different places of Sikkim they constructed the sacred Stupa of Yuksam ‘Tashi Woobbar Chhoedten’. As a proof of this historic event, one can still see the seats of the four spiritual brothers known as “Trulpe Naljor Chedshi Zhugtri”. The three Great lamas who came to Yuksam were Lhatun Namkha Jigme or Gyalvas Lhatun Chhenpo, Ngadog Sempa chhenpo and Kathog Kuntu Zangpo. Yuksam, in Lepcha language, means “three lamas”. Yuksam Norbugang is also blessed with a footprint of Lhatun Chhenpo on the small rock nearby Chhoedten. Chogyal Phuntsog Namgyal built his Palace at Tashi Tenka hillock and thereafter set up a new system of ruling over the people of Sikkim.
Tashiding Monastery

Tashiding hill, as per Sikkimese Buddhism is the naval point of all the holy places in Sikkim. The Saint Padmasambhava made his miraculous visit to this hill in 8th Century A.D along with his retinue of followers and recognized it to be the heart of the holy places of Sikkim.

Later, in 17th Century, Three Great Lamas came from Tibet, met at Yuksam, and thereafter visited Tashiding hill in order to unveil this most sacred place. During that occasion, a brilliant light radiated from Mount Khang-Chchen-Dzo-naga and hit upon Tashiding hill with a melody of divine music, which was a miraculous phenomena witnessed by all. Later, the second Lama called Ngagdak Sempa Chhenpo moved his seat from Yuksam to present Tashiding and built a small Lharkhang on this hill known as “Jhampa Lharkhang” (Shrine of Maitriya Buddha) in 1651 A.D. Later, the monastery was reconstructed by Panding Ongmu, the steplister of Chegyal Chagdor Namgyal, under the spiritual guidance of Lama Ngagdak Rinchen Gon, in 1716 A.D. who renamed it “Chegyal Lharkhang” (Shrine of Dharmara).

Due to earthquake in later centuries, the Lamas rebuilt it in 1995 with Government aid. Presently, the monastery has 60-70 monks. The monastery follows the ‘Jhang-Ter’ lineage of Nyingmapa Sect.

The most important festival of this Gompa is “Bhumchhu”, a sacred holy water ceremony, which is held annually and attracts huge numbers of pilgrims and devotees from Bhutan and other adjoining areas.

Lama Ngagdak introduced Bhumchu ceremony in the 17th century with a gift of a precious vase which was brought from Tibet. It is believed to be so sacred that the mere act of beholding it would cleanse all sins.

The lamas with the donation from pilgrims have built Mendangs (horizontal walls bearing rows of thin carved stones of mystic charms and protective deities of Buddhism) and Chchodents which encircle the monastery.
Dechhen Phug Holy Cave
Dechhen Phug is the western side cave of the Four Great Sacred Caves of Sikkim. It literally means “Cave of Great Happiness”. It is situated on the rap of the western mountain range to the west of Pemayangtse. It is approachable from Darap and Nambu Villages and is a half day’s journey from these places. This cave resembles the southern side cave called “Khaido Sangsho” and its inner space has a length of five to six yard. As per Dejong Neyig, it is said thus: “CHHEME TSHEGAR DRUPPA NUP DECHHEN PHUG” meaning western cave of great happiness showers a blessing of longevity. It means one can prolong one’s life span by merely visiting this cave. In the same range, there are five other caves where one can meditate and acquire special blessings.

Lhari Nyingphug Holy Cave
Lhari Nyingphug is the northern cave of the Four Great Caves of Demchog. It literally means “Heart Cave of God’s Hill”. It is situated on the lap of Mount Narshing to the north of Tashiding hill and almost one and half day’s journey from Klang Labdang village, West Sikkim. Nyingphug has seven caves. There are three caves in the eastern side and four in the southern side. Each cave signifies an abode of different gods and goddesses. As per Sangwai Neyig (Secret Pilgrim’s guide text) described thus: “Dzongne Terkha Mangdu chee gyur lhan Lhari Rinchen Nyingphu Phugpo” meaning: “Precious heart cave of god’s hill is a place to open a vast treasure of Mt. Kharchendzonga”. Here one can offer prayer for the nourishment of the dharma in the country. As recorded in Dejong Neyig, the Great Guru Padmasambhava has hidden a great deal of precious article in this cave for the prosperity of this hidden valley. It is also believed that this northern cave is the holiest in the series. Here one can remove one’s secret defilement if prayer is offered with devotion.