

**List of Major Fairs and Festivals & Tourism Promotional Festivals for the year 2018.**

Sl no	Name of the Festival/ Venue	Date	Significance
1	Jorethang Maghey Mela, Jorethang, South Sikkim.	13-14 Jan 2018	Maghey Sankrati is celebrated all over Sikkim as one of the major festivals of the Hindu community. However, it is not confined to only one religious group. People of different religions come together to take part in this festival. There are fairs in almost all parts of Sikkim. People gather to take a holy dip in the rivers of Teesta and Rangit. One of the biggest celebration of this festival is in Jorethang, South Sikkim, which lies on the banks of river Rangit. The main activities during this mela are sale and exhibition of local handicrafts and handlooms, floriculture and horticulture products, cultural programme and competitions in local dance and music. The festival carries on for almost a week. People from neighboring State as well as tourists from all over the country as well as abroad visits Jorethang during this festival. Some of the adventure activities which are popular in this area are river rafting, paragliding and angling.
2	Sonam Losar	17 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2018	Lho means year or age and Sar means new or fresh. The word Lhosar means New Year or beginning of new era. Tamang community celebrates their new year on the first day of new moon or in other words the very next day after the no-moon day of month of Magh. This year it is 2848 <sup>th</sup> year of Tamang's New Year celebration. The Tibetan calendar is made up of twelve lunar months and Losar begins on the first day of the first month.
3	Losar	16 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2018	It is the Tibetan New year and is marked with a lot of gaiety and festivity across the State.
4	Losar cum Tourist Festival, Lama Amden Gumpa, Daramdin	Feb 2018	The Daramdin area, West Sikkim is embarking on a new journey of development with village tourism as their main focus in mind. The festival is celebrated at the Anden Woolung Gumpa premises with much fanfare. The theme of the festival is embarking into a new journey of sustainable tourism development – towards peace & prosperity.
5	Bhumchu at Tashiding Monastery,	1 <sup>st</sup> - 2 <sup>nd</sup> March, 2018	The Bhumchu which takes place on the 14 <sup>th</sup> and 15 <sup>th</sup> day of the first month of the Tibetan

	Tashiding , West Sikkim		lunar calander, is one of Sikkim's most intriguing festivals. The water contained in the sacred Bhumpa or vase is measured into 21 cups of equal measure. The level of water is studied to divine the fortunes of Sikkim for the next year. Devotees from Nepal, Bhutan and the neighboring hills all come for blessings.
6	Ram Nawami (Chaitey Dasain)	26 <sup>th</sup> March, 2018	This is one of the most auspicious festivals of Sikkim and is observed in the honor of Lord Rama. The grand celebrations commemorate the birth of the virtuous king Rama who is universally adored for his flourishing and righteous sovereignty. People from all over the state gather together to celebrate this festival with much excitement and vigor. Also known as Chaitey Dasain it is also celebrated as tourist festival. Devotees flock towards Tendong Hill, South Sikkim for offering prayers.
7	Lampokhari Paryatan Mahotsav, Aritar	March 2018	Located at a height of 5100 ft, Aritar is surrounded by lush green forest, lakes and paddy fields. The entire Khanchendzonga range can be viewed from this place. Aritar offers adventure sports, nature trails. Lampokhari is one of the serene lakes where one can enjoy boating. Added attractions are Aritar Monastery, Mankhim Dara, Phusray Lake, Pango Lakha and Rachela.
8	Baisakhi Festival, Makha Tumin -Lingee	April 2018	Organised to herald the spring season and the Nepali New Year. Cultural programme, traditional customs, local cusinies and other local activities can be experienced.
9	Sakewa	29 <sup>th</sup> April, 2018	Sakewa is celebrated with great fervor by all the Kirat Khambu Rai community. Also known as Bhumi/ Chandi Puja or land worshipping ceremony it is celebrated all over the State. It is celebrated at that time of the year when cranes migrate to the Northern Hemisphere this indicates sowing season of cucumber, pumpkin and other kharif crops. The festival begins with Shakrti Puja at Mangkhim (temple) performed by a Chief Priest (Mangpa) for good harvest followed by the Shova Yatra. Various traditional dishes like Wachipa, Bongchipa, Arakha Hengmawa, Baksa and Okrukma are served.
10	Saga Dawa	29 <sup>th</sup> May, 2018	Full moon day of the 4th month in the Tibetan Lunar Calendar, around end of May and early June. Saga Dawa is a very important festival for the Buddhists. This day is considered to be the holiest of the holy Buddhist Festival. On this day Lord Buddha took birth, achieved Enlightenment

			and passed away attaining Nirvana.
11	Bhanu Jayanti	13th July, 2018	A cultural festival organised to celebrate the birth anniversary of the Nepali poet, Bhanu Bhakta Acharya. Competitions for school children are organised in various field such as poetry, drama etc. Other programmes include cultural parade and culture programmes.
12	Drukpa Tshechi	16 <sup>th</sup> July 2018	This festival celebrates Lord Buddha's first preaching of the Four Noble Truths to his first five disciples at Saranath. The festival is held on the 4th day of the 6th month of the Tibetan lunar calendar. Prayers are conducted in the main monastery.
13	Guru Rinpoche's Thrunkar Tshechu	22 <sup>nd</sup> July, 2018	“Guru Thrunkar Tshechu is celebrated as the birth day of Guru Padmasambhava, reverentially referred as ‘Guru Rimpoche’ in Eastern Himalayan region and Sikkim in particular. Guru Rimpoche is revered and worshipped as guardian saint in Sikkim who blessed this land as ‘Bayul Dremojong’ (hidden valley of rice) and transmitted tantric Buddhism in the region adjoined by Bhutan and Tibet in the 8th Century AD. Among the galaxy of Buddhist monks, Arahats and Rimpoches, the prominence of Guru Padmasambhava as the principal associate and disciple of Lord Buddha stands out. It was his prominence that transformed this land into predominantly a Buddhist land. Guru Padmasambhava is not only revered by Buddhist but is held in high regard by the Sikkimese across all faiths.
14	Tendong Lho Rum Faat	08 <sup>th</sup> August, 2018	Tendong Lho Rum Faat is one of the oldest festivals of indigenous Lepchas. The festival is related with a legend of deluge. The indigenous Lepchas residing in the Himalayan belt had earlier named each and every mountain, hills, rivers, valleys and ravines which was known as Nye Mayel Lang Some of these mountains and rivers, hills and ravines have not only carried beautiful and romantic folk lore but historical significance as well. These mountains and valleys figure prominently in their local myths and folklores.
15	Pang Lhabsol	26 <sup>th</sup> August, 2018	Every year Pang Lhabsol is celebrated at Rabong, South Sikkim. Pang Lhabsol, a festival unique to Sikkim is celebrated to offer thanks to Mt Khanchendzonga, the Guardian Deity of Sikkim and to Yabdu, the Supreme

			Commander. Rabong is now emerging as one of the important Buddhist Pilgrimage Destinations. Situated at the base of Maenam Hill, a sub-divisional headquarter and transit point for beautiful spots such as Chozo Lake, Ralong Monastery, Manilakhang Sakyamuni Cultural and Pilgrimage Centre and various tourist destinations of South Sikkim, Base Camp for trekkers to Maenam Hill and Borong Hot Spring. A trek down to the sacred lake “Shar Chok Bhepu”, one of the four holiest caves in Sikkim, would be a memorable experience.
16	Bhadauria Purnima Festival - Tsomgo Lake	August on full moon day.	“Bhadauria Purnima Festival” which was revived by the Tsomgo Pokhari Samrakshan Samiti (TPSS) in 2013 after a hiatus of many years is celebrated with zeal and vigour at the premises of one of Sikkim’s best tourist spot that is Tsomgo Lake. Jhakris or Faith Healers performs rituals around the lake, the faith healers moves around the lake chanting hymns and synchronizing their bodies to the rhythm of their musical instrument , creating a picture that leaves most tourists in awe.
17	Janmasthanmi	3 <sup>rd</sup> September, 2018	This festival is celebrated in the state of Sikkim with as much pomp and show as that of the whole country. Dedicated completely to Lord Krishna this festival celebrates his birth with much adoration. The added attractions of this festival include raasleelas, kirtan, bhajan and various other local functions at various temples across the State.
18	World Tourism Day, Gangtok	27 <sup>th</sup> September, 2018	World Tourism Day is one of the main events for the Department as well as tourism stake holders. Workshops and Seminars based on World Tourism Day theme as declared by the UNWTO is conducted. Stakeholders from all over the State are invited to participate and interact with each other. Tourism & Civil Aviation Department presents the <i>State Tourism Awards of Excellence</i> for those who excel in this field. This is done with the view to encourage those involved in tourism promotion for quality service.
19	Indrajatra	23 <sup>rd</sup> September, 2018	Indrajatra is an important religious festival celebrated with pomp and fanfare by the Newar community in Sikkim. It is believed that many centuries ago, Indra (king of Heaven)’s mother needed specially scented flowers (Parijat). Indra looked for them but could not find them in heaven. Indra discovered Parijat flowers in the

			Kathmandu Valley and tried to steal them for his mother. He was caught and imprisoned by people in the Valley. Indra's mother came searching for him and people were shocked to know what they had done. They released Indra and dedicated one of the most colourful festivals of Nepal to him to calm down his anger.
20	Dasain ( Durga Puja)	26 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> October, 2018	Also known as Durga Puja, this fortnight long Hindu festival usually falls in the month of October. The festival symbolizes the victory of the Hindu Goddess Durga over evil. Barley seeds are sown in the soil on the first day of this festival and their growth foretells good harvest. A week later is "Phulpati "meaning the day of flowers, followed by Maha Astami and Kala Ratri and Navami. The 10th day of the festival is known as Vijay Dashmi and also marks the victory of Lord Rama over Ravana. During this day people smear their foreheads with colored rice and the barley sprouts, which was sown on the first day of Dasain, are picked and placed over the ears.
21	Namchi Mahotsav Namchi ,South Sikkim	October, 2018	Namchi – "Top of the Sky", nestled among the hills at an elevation of 4,400 feet. The town commands a panoramic view of the surrounding hills and snow capped mountains and stretches of the valleys below.It is an excellent place for short stay and village excursions. Samdruptse "The Wish Fulfilling Hill" has 135 ft high statue of Guru Padmasambhava which is the highest in the world. Siddheshvara Dham (Char Dham) is another state of the art pilgrimage centre wherein replica of all four Dham has been built around an eighty seven feet high statue of Lord Shiva. All 12 jyotirlingaas are also built around the temple complex .
22	Lhabab Duechen	31 <sup>st</sup> October, 2018	This festival epitomizes in a significant manner the descent of Buddha from the heaven of the thirty-three Gods after visiting his mother. It is universally believed that Lord Buddha through his spiritual powers came to know about the whereabouts of his mother who did not live for a long time after his birth. After gaining the necessary information about his mother he ascended to Heaven where he delivered sermons to his mother and other celestial beings. During this period the disciples of the lord could not bear his long separation and longed to hear his preaching. Buddha finally relented and descended on earth along a triple ladder that was prepared especially for the

			occasion by Viswakarma.
23	Diwali (Tihar)	7 <sup>th</sup> to 9 <sup>th</sup> November, 2018	Tihar is the “Festival of Light “and symbolizes the return of Lord Ram to his hometown from exile after victory over Ravana and covers a period of five days. The festival honors certain animals on successive days. The first days known as a “Kak Tihar is dedicated to crows and they are offered rice and some if caught are even garlanded. On the second day, which is known as “Kukkur Tihar”, dogs are garlanded. On the third day the cows are honored with garland and their horns are painted in bright colours. It is the turn of bullocks on the fourth day. Deepali, which falls on the third day is considered to be the most important day when goddess Lakshmi comes visiting every home which is lit bright with candles and electric lights. The fifth day is also known as Bhai Tika in which brothers visit the home of sisters and they apply tikas vermilion to each other’s forehead. It is also an occasion for exchanging gifts. During Tihar, traditional carols called Bailo or Deusi are sung.
24	Sikkim Red Panda Winter Carnival, Gangtok	December 2018	Sikkim has been declared “Destination for all Season”. Sikkim Winter Carnival is organized annually to promote winter tourism. Following programmes are organized-  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Cultural programmes and parade of different ethnic groups to showcase traditional costumes and culture</li> <li>2.Exhibition and sale of local handlooms and handicrafts</li> <li>3.Exhibition of agricultural and floricultural products</li> <li>4. Local Food festival.</li> <li>5.Adventure Sports</li> <li>6.Photo competitions/ exhibitions</li> <li>7.Tourism conclave/ workshop</li> </ol>
25	Kagyed Dance	6 <sup>th</sup> December, 2018	Kagyed dance, a customary dance festival, celebrated annually in Sikkim falls on the 28th and 29th day of the tenth month according to Tibetan calendar, which according to English calendar falls in the month of December. In the name of eight tantrik Gods and Goddesses commonly called Kagyed, lamas on these days perform dances and sing songs in different monasteries and offer prayers to them requesting these deities to save human beings from the tormenting evil spirits and to bless them for good health and fortune.

26	Namsoong Festival , Dzongu , North Sikkim	8 – 12 <sup>th</sup> December,2018	Namsoong is celebrated to welcome the good spirits for the New Year. Namsoong has now become an important festival where visitors from all over the world can get to see the local sporting events like archery, pole climbing etc Local cuisine, handicrafts, floriculture and cultural programmes are some of the added attractions during the festival.
27	Loosong/ Namsoong	8 – 12 <sup>th</sup> December,2018	Lossong/ Namsoong celebrated all over Sikkim marks the end of the harvest season at the end of the tenth month of the Tibetan Year. Taking cue from a good harvest and praying for even better prospects for the next crop, the festival is marked by religious masked dances in Enchey Monastery. The dances symbolize the exorcizing of the evil spirits and the welcoming of the good spirits for the new year. Lossong has now become an important festival where visitors from all over the world can get to see the local sporting events like archery, climbing of greased pole.  Local cuisine, handicrafts, floriculture and cultural programmes are some of the added attractions during the festival. The festival is organized by Tribal Youth Association of Gangtok.
28	Pelling Winter Tourism Festival	December, 2018	Pelling is one of the most popular tourist destinations. Visitors can enjoy a magnificent view of the mountains including Mt. Khangchendzonga, the 3 <sup>rd</sup> highest mountain in the world. There are numerous tourist spots in and around Pelling .A weeklong festival includes cultural extravaganza, sale of local handicrafts, handlooms and local cuisine.
29	Nyenpa Guzom	13 <sup>th</sup> to 14 <sup>th</sup> December, 2018	
30	Teyongsi Sirijunga Sawan Tongnam	22 <sup>nd</sup> December, 2018	It is the birth anniversary of Teongsi Sirijungha Singthebe he was a great social awakener of Limbu who revived reading and writing of the Limbu language. The puja is performed for long life and prosperity
31	Christmas	25 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas is celebrated with much fun & fervor along with the rest of the world. People visit different Churches in Gangtok like St.Thomas the Apostle Church, Bethlehem Fellowship Church, and the House of Grace Church to seek blessings. Gangtok wears festive look during the month of December since Lossong & Christmas fall in this month. Unique feature of Sikkimese

			people is that every one celebrates & enjoys all the festival with great pomp and show. M.G. Marg in Gangtok is the most happening place. It is wonderfully decorated with lights, candles and Christmas trees. You can see the arrangements till New Year and even beyond.
32	Barahimizong	27 <sup>th</sup> December, 2018	The festival of Barahimizong is celebrated by the Mangar community living in Sikkim. The celebration reflects the faith in almighty as the bestower and protector of mankind. Through this festival, the gratitude to God is expressed by offering fresh harvest and seek good fortune for the coming days.
33	Tamu Lochar	30 December, 2018	Harvest festival of Gurung community.