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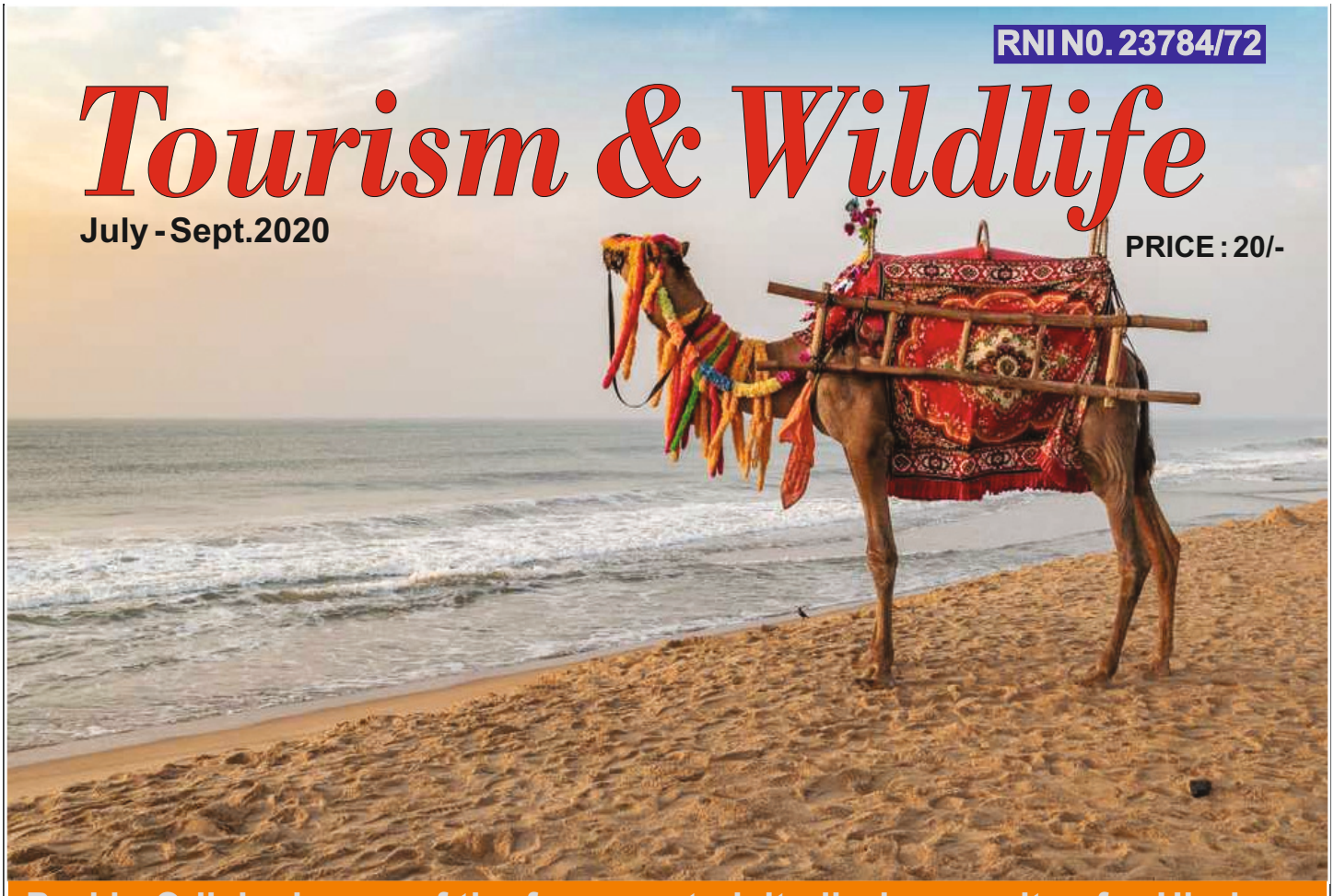

Puri in Odisha is one of the four must-visit pilgrimage sites for Hindus because of Jagannath Temple that forms the part of Char Dham in India

CHAR DHAM YATRA IN UTTRAKHAND

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and tireless feet,
to brave the raging seas every day
and walk side by side
with hearts that beat in time
with the waves.
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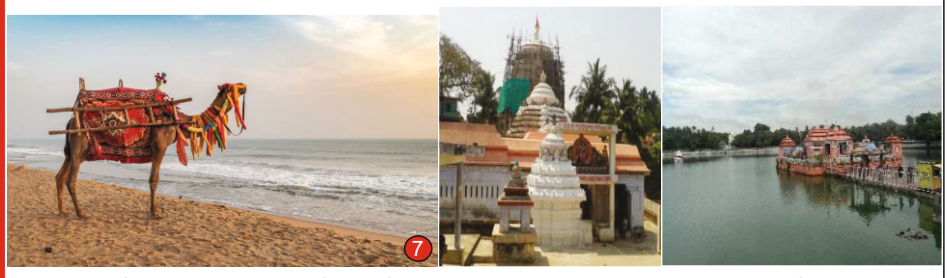

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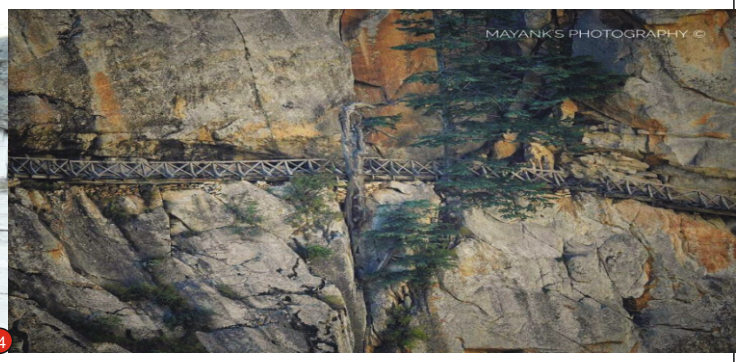

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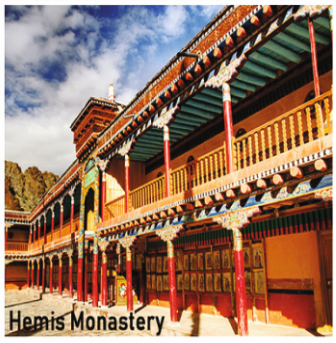

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Ladakh, or La-dvags as it is known in Tibetan,

Chief Editor : Tourism & Wildlife, Ph: 9634100338. E-mail:tourismandwildlife@gmail.com.Website:www.tourismandwildlife.in

Editorial

World wildlife awareness is important

Living in Iowa, one might not stop to think about wildlife that are on the verge of becoming extinct.

Geeta Bisht

In 2019 alone, nearly two dozen species were declared extinct or nearly so. Among the list are different types of birds, fish and many other types of animals. Adding onto the list, many of these animals have been declared 'possibly extinct' due to being unseen for decades.

Of course, when it comes to living in Iowa, many people don't think there is much we can do, so they simply brush it off and continue on with their lives. Most of the critically endangered animals live in other parts of the world, but that does not mean we should be ignorant about it happening.

In 2018, the French brand of Lacoste temporarily changed their signature crocodile logo to 10 threatened species. The company produced a specific number of shirts that represented the population of the remaining animals in the wild that corresponded with the logo. Wildlife experts said that they hoped this project would inspire other brands to start projects of their own that will help bring awareness to endangered species.

Since then, not many brands have taken after Lacoste's example, but there are multiple brands that provide funds in forms of donations for endangered animals without directly altering their brand for the cause. Nonetheless, some help is better than no help at all.

On a positive note, 'according to the worlds leading travel brand of Trafalgar, there are six animals that are no longer considered endangered.

Founder Editor
Late G.C. Verma

The first one is the Southern white rhinoceros. As of right now, their conservation status is considered to be near-threatened with population increasing. Giant pandas and Arabian oryxes (originally thought extinct) are now only considered vulnerable. Next, the Northern brown kiwi is no longer critically endangered, and its population seems to be growing at a steady pace. The Louisiana black bear was endangered due to loss of habitat, but with the restoration of its home, it seems to have made a comeback and is no longer considered endangered.

The last, but certainly not the least, animal on that list is the gray wolf. At the beginning, it became endangered due to lack of prey and conflicts with farmers. Since receiving protection from the Endangered Species Act, its population size has increased, but there are rising concerns that the gray wolf's numbers will once again decrease soon due to hunting.

Multiple people have been guilty of when they find out a species has been declared extinct, they share it on social media with a caption expressing how heartbreaking it is and that people need to do something about it. Although it is indeed heartbreaking, let that person be you who does something about it. You would be surprised of how loud your voice can be when you are passionate about something you want to see change in.

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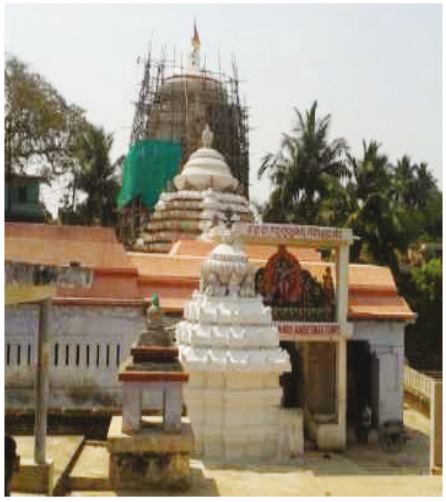
"Rath Yatra and the Beaches"

Puri Tourism

Puri in Odisha is one of the four must-visit pilgrimage sites for Hindus because of Jagannath Temple that forms the part of Char Dham in India. Puri is a beach city located on the coast of Bay of Bengal which is one of the favourites among people of West Bengal for a short trip.

Having gained popularity among hippies back in the 1970s due to the legalisation of Bhang, Puri is still a popular destination among backpackers, however, the availability of bhang is now limited. With a plethora of hotels and homestays, the local tourist like to stay near the New Marine Drive and the backpackers prefer to stay near Chakra Tirtha. The Rath Yatra (chariot festival) which takes place during the month of June-July should not be missed if you are planning to visit during this time.

Known as the resting place of Lord Shiva, the majestic history and heritage of Puri date back to the 3rd century B. C. Puri, Konark and Bhubaneshwar complete the Golden Triangle of Orissa, with their religious significance and cultural heritage being the centres of tourism in this state. There are a lot of places near Puri that one must visit, like the Chilika lake, Puri beach, Gundicha Ghar and the very famous Sun temple of Konark. Puri is soon turning into an industrial hub with major manufacturing companies coming here.



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Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry Overview

Located in the White Town of Pondicherry, Aurobindo Ashram has been named after its creator- Sri Aurobindo Ghosh. The foundation of this ashram was laid on 24th November in the year 1926 when he was surrounded by his disciples all over after he retired from politics and settled in Pondicherry. This ashram was set up with the aim of helping people attain moksha and inner peace. Thousands of tourists from all over the country visit the ashram to experience and achieve spiritual knowledge. The ashram is by far one of the wealthiest ashrams in the world. Also, the ashram does not have any branches and solely exists in Pondicherry.

The day this ashram was set up is known as the founding day of the ashram which has been described by Sri Aurobindo in his writings as "less been created than grown around me as its centre". Mirra Alfassa who was one of Aurobindo's followers

played a vital role in the establishment of the ashram. Soon after Sri Aurobindo Ghosh's death in 1950, she took care of the Aurobindo Ashram and was known as the 'Mother' of the ashram. At present, the Ashram has over five hundred devotees, five hundred students involved in the democratic progress school and thirteen hundred patients. All these people live in the Ashram's main building which comprises of a block of houses which are connected with each other. These houses are located nearby the ashram at walking distance.

Some of the facilities offered by the Ashram including the library and the main building can be accessed only after receiving a gate pass from the Bureau Central or guest houses of the Ashram. In addition to this, the ashram also has a spiritual centre which consists of four houses which were inhabited by the Mother and Sri Aurobindo for different intervals of time. There exists a samadhi as well in the courtyard under the frangipani tree where the bodies of Mother and Sri Aurobindo were buried. People come to pay their respect every day by laying flowers on it.

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Facilities at Aurobindo Ashram

1. Collective meditations at Ashram- 7:25 PM - 7:50 PM on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday (no pass required)
Collective meditation at playground- 7:45 PM - 8:15 PM on Thursday and Sunday (accessible to Ashramites and people residing in the guest houses only)

2. Meals in the dining hall
Breakfast- 6:30 AM - 8:00 AM
Lunch- 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM
Dinner- 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM
(Can be accessed after obtaining a pass from Bureau Central)

3. Exhibition and Video programs at Bureau Central - An exhibition is organised as an introduction to the life of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother using their writings. It also gives an insight into the Ashram and the daily tasks undertaken within. Except for Sunday, a video presentation takes place on all the other days which depicts the life and literary works of Sri Aurobindo as well as the Mother, flowers and their significance, the Ashram and much more.

4. Tours - Two tours are provided every week by Autocare Services at 8:15 AM to witness the Ashram as well as other departments related to the Ashram. At 2:00 PM, Auroville is visited. The Auroville trip does not wait for the meditation (i.e. from 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM) at the Matrimandir because first-time visitors are not allowed.

Best Time To Visit Aurobindo Ashram

The best time to visit the Aurobindo Ashram is during the winter months when the climate is pleasant and not sticky. The time between November and March is the most favourable. In addition to this, 15th August which is the birthday of Sri Aurobindo is another very busy time of the year for visiting the ashram.

Tips For Visiting Aurobindo Ashram

1. Cameras cannot be carried inside and the bags should be kept outside only. 2. Children below 3 years are not allowed inside the Sri Aurobindo Ashram

Detailed History of Aurobindo Ashram

Sri Aurobindo Ghosh was a philosopher and poet who was born in Kolkata in 1872 and began practising yoga in 1905. Most of his time went in writing and meditation. He moved to Pondicherry after 5 years where he was followed by three or four very young men who believed in his ideals. These men lived with him and looked after the house. A French writer Paul Richard along with 'The Mother' met Aurobindo in 1914 and proposed a monthly review to him. However, after World War I, they had to leave India, and he had to take care of the review all by himself with a little help from the men staying with him. The Mother came back to Pondicherry in April 1920 when the community started turning into an Ashram because the 'Sadhaks' entrusted their inner and outer lives to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. After being established in 1926, the ashram witnessed a rapid growth from the headcount rising from 24 in 1927 to 150 in 1934.

All those years, the Ashram followed a routine wherein at 6:00 in the morning, the Mother would appear on the balcony of the ashram to begin the day with her blessings. Sadhaks had to wake up very early and complete a part of the day's work along with meditation and then assemble under the balcony to receive her blessings. As the ashram kept on growing new departments kept on getting added including the library, dining room, printing, workshops, offices, sports playground, nursing homes, farms etc.

which were all looked after by the Sadhaks as a part of their Sadhana. Heads of the various departments met the Mother in the morning and took her blessings as well as her orders. She addressed the Sadhaks on an individual level at 10:00 AM and at 5:00 PM, she would conduct meditation and meet the Sadhaks again. Also, Sri Aurobindo, as well as the Mother, would go out and give public Darshan to all the devotees gathered so as to receive their blessings four times a year.

How To Reach Aurobindo Ashram

The Aurobindo Ashram is situated next to the Bay of Bengal in the eastern Pondicherry. It lies at a distance of 160 km in Southern Madras. One can easily hire a cab or take a local transport which moves to and fro at short intervals and reach the ashram.

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"The Scotland of India"(Karnatka)

Scotland of India

Coorg was called Scotland of India by the Britishers during their visit in the 19th century to this quaint little town of Karnataka. Once you enter the geographical boundaries of this hill town, you will realise the place has done true justice to its nickname. Coorg is famous for the surreal beauty of nature and the hills of the Western Ghats covered by the mist of clouds and accompanied by the pleasant weather. To enjoy the best views that Coorg has to offer, you must visit Raja's Seat - a small garden adorned with the flowers affording a view of the majestic hills of the Western Ghats. Mandalpatti viewpoint is another spot which offers the awe-gaping view of the lush green beauty of Coorg along with the experience of trekking amid the hills of Western Ghats.

Coffee Plantations

If there is one thing that defines Coorg the best, then it has to be the infinite regal fields of coffee plantations. Coorg is one of the highest producers of coffee in India. You must visit the Tata plantation trails of coffee in Coorg and enjoy the freshly brewed coffee made from the fresh cocoa beans. To gain the best experience you can also choose to stay at one of the resorts located right in the centre of coffee fields. The coffee grown in Coorg is apparently the best mild coffee in the world, as it is grown in the shade. Coorg is popular for the plantation of 'Arabica' (which requires an altitude of 3,300 feet to 4,900 feet above the sea level), and 'Robusta' (requiring an altitude of 1,600 feet to around 3,300 feet above the sea level). It is necessary for coffee to be grown around a lot of trees and shade, as it would prevent soil erosion. Coorg has about 270 species of trees listed. An ideal rain of 60 to 80 inches is required for the plantation of coffee. Very cold weather is not suitable for the growth of coffee. The temperature ideal for the growth of coffee is between 23 degrees Celsius, and 28 degree Celsius.

Kodava Culture The Kodavas (a local clan in Coorg), are considered to be absolutely the most hospitable people. What makes Coorg as a tourist destination better, is the fact that the Kodavas are markedly different from other cultures. For instance, it is said that attending a Kodava marriage, wherein the ceremony is conducted not by a priest but by the elders of the two families, is considered as an enriching experience. The marriage takes place after the cutting of banana stumps by a

representative. Dancing commences on tribal beats and instruments post the feast. The concept of "Kanyadaan" is absent. The Kodavas also happen to be different because of their different dressing style. For instance, the women wear their saris in a different way wherein the pleats are tucked at the back, and the loose end of the sari is drawn under the left shoulder and secured over the right. This community also happens to be animal and ancestor worshippers, and have a number of festivals celebrated, the most important of which are: Puthari (harvest festival), Kail Polud (celebrating end of the paddy transplanting season), and Kaveri Sankramana (celebrating the birth of the river Kaveri). The Kodavas, a martial arts race, lay a lot of importance on their weapons, and hence have a festival dedicated to them - Keil Podh.

Restaurants and Local Food in Coorg

Coorg is the home of authentic Kodava cuisine. Like most areas in and around the town, the platter revolves around the staple rice. A speciality of the area is *Sannakki*, a fragrant kind of rice. Non-vegetarian preparations of pork, meat and fish are also popular.

Other local favorites include *Akki Oti* (Rice chapatis), a huge variety of *Pattus* (a steamed dish), *Pulvas*, preparations of pork, dried fish, crab meat, *Baimbale Curry* (a preparation of Bamboo Shoots), *Kumm Curry* (a preparation of wild mushrooms) and *Chekke curry* (made using unripe jackfruit).

A number of restaurants also serve many vegetarian dishes along with typical Indian, Chinese, Continental and Tibetan cuisines as well as popular South-Indian cuisine consisting of dishes like *dosa, vada, idli, sambhar and rasam*.

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CHAUKORI

Located at a height of 2010 meter, and 173 km away from Nainital, Chaukori is a dream, surrounded by the towering Himalayan peaks with an unbound view of the Nanda Devi and Panchchuli peaks and dense forests.

Chaukori is one of the few places in Kumaon, where you will find tea gardens. As the name suggests, it's like a bowl, cupped within the Himalayan heartland. It is an idyllic holiday resort amidst unspoilt nature – a land bestowed with natural abundance, fruit orchards, and the forests of Pines, Oaks and Rhododendrons.

One of the most magnificent aspects of holidaying in Chaukori is the fabulous sunrise and sunset that you are treated to. Chaukori is a somnolent, peaceful hamlet in Pithoragarh district of the Kumaon Hills of Uttarakhand.

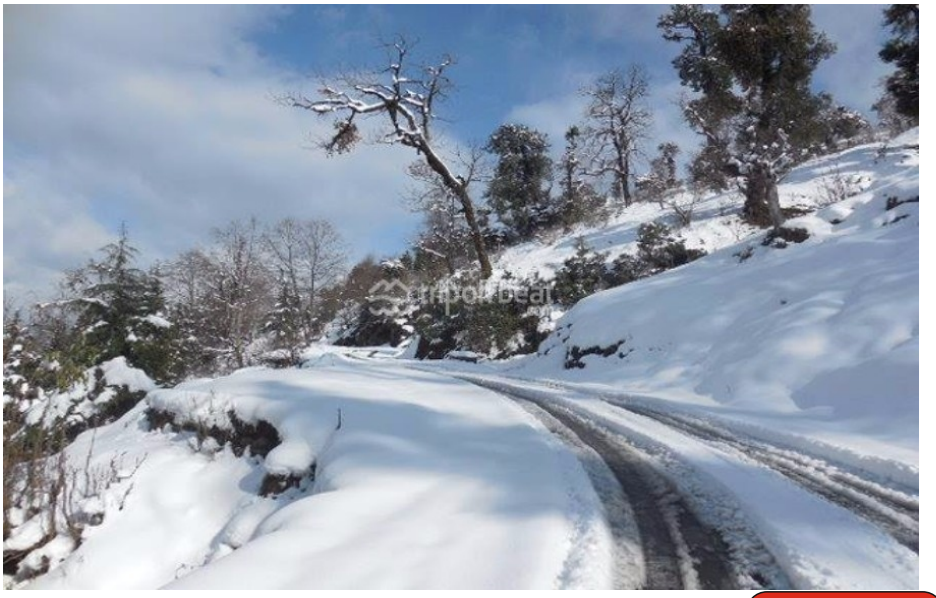
City Facts

State: Uttarakhand

District: Pithoragarh

Famous for/as: Temples

Languages: Hindi Best



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Lansdowne the cleanliness of the town and its natural beauty

Nestled in the lap of the Himalayas, experience the calmness in the air, the laid-back lifestyle, the disconnect from the technologies and the mood of just doing nothing in this Garhwali town of Lansdowne, located in the Indian state of Uttarakhand.

The Garhwal Rifles Regiment of the Indian Army has a unit stationed here since the British colonial era. Every effort has been taken to preserve the cleanliness of the town and its natural beauty. The tourist attractions include vantage view points for the mighty Himalayas, namely Tip in Top and Snow View.\r\n\r\nThe British era churches of St. James and St. Mary remind us of the charm of old days. The holy temples of Santoshi Mata and Kaleshwar Mahadev are the local centers of devotion for Hindus. Bhulla Lake and Bird watching at Lover's Lane display the rich flora and fauna of the region. The Army Museum has on display the weapons and war memorials of the Garhwal Rifles Regiment, used during the first and the second world wars. Ideal for nature walks and treks, the breath-taking terrain of Lansdowne is the perfect getaway from the hustle and bustle of life, to refresh your mind.

Binsar is a beautiful and quiet hill station

A popular hill station situated in the holy state of Uttarakhand, Binsar is a beautiful and quiet hill station famous for its breathtaking and picturesque scenery. Lush green vegetation surrounds the entire town, and Binsar is also home to a wide range of rare animals, birds, and exotic wild flowers. This makes the Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary a major attraction for national and international tourists alike. \r\n\r\nVisitors bask in the tranquil beauty of the magnificent Himalayas while the adrenaline junkies get their fix through trekking down challenging trails or by attempting to climb the different Himalayan peaks such as Nanda Devi, Nanda Kot, Kedarnath, Trishul, and Panchchuli. Besides the wildlife sanctuary, the Bineshwar Mahadev Temple, Binsar Sanctuary Museum, and Kasar Devi Temple are some of the other major tourist attractions in Binsar. \r\n\r\nThe snow-laden peaks of the Himalayan range along with the other mountains that surround the scenic town of Binsar are a breathtaking view that would leave the tourists in awe. Binsar is an ideal location for writers, thinkers, nature lovers and adventure enthusiasts alike.

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Chopta is also a base for trekking to Tungnath

Chopta is a small settlement and valley that is located in Uttarakhand, which is very popular among tourists, mainly because of the number of options it provides for exploring, adventure buffs and trekking enthusiasts. The entire region is a haven of beauty, specially for the ones who are looking for a good place to relax, without the hustle and bustle of a typical tourist hotspot. One can visit Chopta valley and gaze in awe at the many peaks located a short distance away from the valley.

Chopta is also a base for trekking to Tungnath, third temple of Panch Kedar, which lies 3.5 kilometres uphill.

This unspoiled natural destination lying in the lap of Himalayas, offers vistas of the imposing Himalayan range including Trishul, Nanda Devi and Chaukhamba.

It is located at an elevation of 2,680 metres (8,790 ft) above sea level. Chopta village is surrounded by forests of pine, deodar and rhododendron and is rich in flora and fauna include rare species of birds and musk deer. Chopta also popularly known as 'Mini Switzerland' of India, lies 29 km from Ukhimath and 162 kms from Rishikesh on the road from Gopeshwar to Guptkashi.

The Chopta – Tungnath – Chandrashila trek is a famous destinations for trekkers. The Chopta region has many treks and trails cutting through jungles and grasslands.

Chandrashilla, Tunganath and Devariyatal are the best known trekking routes in the Chopta region. Because of an abundance of birds, Chopta is becoming popular among birdwatchers.

Some activities in Chopta are:

Camping and trekking, yoga, survival activity
Snow trekking, snow skiing
Rock craft, rock climbing, rappelling
Photography of rare himalayan species of monal bird, musk deer and Pika Mouse
During your trip to Chopta valley, a trek to the nearby region of Deoria Tal (which is a very famous lake surrounded entirely by forests on all sides) can be taken.

State: Uttarakhand
District: Rudraprayag
Famous for/as: Hill Station
Languages: Garhwali, Kumaoni, Hindi
Best Season: Apr – Jun, Sep – Nov
Weather: Summer 15 to 24°C,
Winter: -15 to 5°C
Altitude: 2900 m

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Human walk after 1962 in Gertang Gali of Nilang Valley ..!

This bridge is a witness to hundreds of years of old business of India-Tibet trade!

*** Tourists reach Gartang Gali for the first time after 59 years!**
*** A Rajasthani Tilak Soni has been involved in promoting Gartang Gali and Nilang Valley for the last 10 years!**
*** Tourism Department releases 25 lakh rupees to organize Gartang Gali!**
*** District Magistrate Uttarkashi Ashish Srivastava opened the path to Gartang Gali at his risk!**

Of course, you become obsessed when you see the mountain and plateau reconcile together. On one side there are high peaks and on the other side, there is such a plateau where there is not a slight foot slipping, that your flesh and bones are not detected as soon as the miles fall into the deep ditch! One such valley filled with immense curiosity, the history of those thousands of years of the Tibet-India silk trade is in its end, the valley of which the Gartang Gali is one of the most famous streets of the world, whose big engineers see the construction art of the bridge. Are surprised.

The Bhairon Valley has located on Uttarakhand's capital Dehradun to Uttarkashi and 90 km from Uttarkashi to Gangotri Road. Just before the steel bridge over the 'Jad Ganga' of the Bhairon Valley goes a walkway to the left to the Nilang Valley from where the distance of Nilang is said to be about 28 km while only two km from the Bhairon Valley. Further, at one end of the 'Jad Ganga', a 150-

meter long wooden bridge named Gartang Gali has been built, which would surely have remained a mystery-thrill from hundreds of years ago. After seeing this bridge, it seems that its creator, Peshawari Pathan, must have been a magician who built a bridge in that period which is impossible to even think about in the present!

This bridge has been the most mysterious link of Indo-Tibet trade, through which the business relations of the two countries continued for hundreds of years. Two routes are suitable to reach here, the first route from Haridwar via Narendranagar, Tehri, Dharasu, Uttarkashi, Bhatwadi, Gangnani, and Harsil. Neelang Valley can be reached from Dehradun via Mussoorie, Chamba, and Tehri, while others reach Uttarkashi via Dehradun, Mussoorie, Nanbagh, Damta, Naugaon, Badkot, Radi Danda. In 2015, Dinesh Aggarwal, who was the Forest Minister of Uttarakhand, announced to open the valley to the sight of wildlife tourism, while this valley was completely closed for human travails in 1962, during the China-Indian War as a highly sensitive zone. ! The biggest surprise is that even after a dispute arose on this border of Uttarakhand bordering the Tibet-China border, not a single shot was fired till date, yet this terrain was kept closed for almost 47 years.

It is said that the Nilang Valley was always dominated by Tibetan intruders. The residents of this valley have been called Jadh Bhotia, who have never had good relations with Tibetans. There is a temple of Lal Baba here, which some local residents believe to be a lama, and some call it Hanuman. The Nilang Valley was called 'Chonsha' by the Tibetan

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highest peak in the world, but in 1939 the Second World War broke out. The British government kept both these climbers imprisoned in Dehradun. The family also did not support him and even Herr's pregnant wife Ingrid sent divorce papers for him from Austria. In 1944, Herrer and Offsenator managed to escape from prison. They reached Tibet through the hidden Nilang valley. Herrer was also the Guru of the Dalai Lama. Later, he wrote a book on the days of his escape from jail and then reaching Tibet through the difficult Himalayan paths, Nilang Valley, etc. and was called 'Seven Years in Tibet'. Later in 1997, a film with the same name was also made.

Last September 27, 2017, on World Tourism Day, a 25-member team led by SP Uttarkashi has again made a stroll in this area, which includes Vikram Malik, a well-known resident of Gurgaon, Tilak Soni, group promoter of Ware Eagle Dare, Times of India Editorial Subodh Ghildiyal of the group, blogger Mayank Arya, director of High feed Udit Ghildiyal, Seema Sharma of Times of India, Shailendra Thukral from Delhi and his wife from Delhi Rajasthan and foreign tourists joined!

After 49 years, the first tourist group reached Gartang Gali

It is not that the entry of common people in this valley has been forbidden, but outsiders have not been able to enter this valley before this, on the sources believe. People here say that this bridge of Gartang Gali is so wide that you can take a yak laden with luggage in it, while Udit Ghildiyal says that there is so many such Danger Zone in this street, where there are many meters of wood visible in the air. He told that the team went only two or three meters to the bridge of Gartang Gali because the work of repairing this bridge is going on very fast which will definitely be able to bring tourists from all over the world in the coming years!
Remind you that until this street was built, the Tibetan merchants used to measure miles of Himalayan highlands and reach India for trade with their yaks. Many times yaks and traders were buried in snow due to those inaccessible paths. That is why this street was constructed earlier by the Peshwari Pathans. Information about when this construction work started has not been received in reality, yet the natives here consider it a bridge hundreds of years old. There are many villages of Jadh Bhotia people in which Sonam, Tripani, Pulam, Sang, Sumla, Mendi, etc. are prominent. Built on the plateau terrain of the Ganges Ganga, 25 km away from Gartang Gali, 8 km from Nilang and Nelang, Naga and 15 km from Naga are Jadung and Nilapani! People believe that the Garhwali army, under the leadership of Madhau Singh Bhandari and Veer Bhad Lodhi Rikhola, continued the conquest of Dwapa (Tibet) by this route.

Rare Sheep Argali

Wildlife Institute of India has captured the movement of the very rare sheep Argali in this area by its cameras. For your information, let us know that this wild sheep named Argali, it is believed that it lives in the same part of the Uttarakhand state of India besides Tibet and Kazakhstan in the world.
However, in the coming days at a height of about 10,800 feet above sea level, many climbers will have their feet fixed but they will have to wait a bit more because Uttarakhand tourism has allocated the budget to develop it and Work is also going on fast to settle. At the same time, the district administration Uttarkashi has started working on it with the tourism department. Tourism Minister Satpal Maharaj and tourism secretary Meenakshi Sundaram deserve congratulations!

By Manoj Ishtwal

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people. It had two villages named Nilang and Jadung. An Englishman, A. Gerrad, referred to it as 'Chunasakhago' in 1820, while F. Wilson, who was familiar with the area in the vicinity of the region around the 1850s, called 'Chungsa Khaga'. Due to the blue mountains, the locals knew it as Nilang. Another foreman, J. B. Fraser, first attempted to visit the region. He went as far as Gangotri but made people aware of the geographical location of the region. He wrote about Nilang i.e. Chonsha and the 'Jadh Bhotia' residents of that area. According to records, Captain John Hudson and Lieutenant James Herbert of 'Survey of India' were the first Europeans to reach 'Gomukh'. He arrived there on 31 May 1817. Lieutenant Herbert had returned after two years to find out about the region and finally reached Nilang on 13 September 1817.

British soldier Wilson, who settled in Harsil, also came here after fleeing from the Afghanistan war. Who later bought Harsheel and the surrounding area from Tehri King to make it his fiefdom and brought his currency in circulation with the Tehri King. Legend has it that Wilson was a spy of the British government in the British period and was entrusted with the responsibility of this very inaccessible area by the British government so that the Russian army could not reach India by this route, on the other hand, it is said that Wilson Around 1850, the Tehri King also entrusted the responsibility of settling the area.

The work of repairing the Gartang Bridge is going on at war level

Wilson had built several bridges in this area and had paved the way between Harsil and Nilang. Wilson propagated his self-proclaimed king here and produced a large number of apples of Wilson species known in this area even today Harsil's Wilson apple is famous. Wilson also wrote a book 'Mountaineer' based on his experiences on the region. It is also a coincidence that District Magistrate Ashish Srivastava had worked hard in the last few months to declare Chanshal of Aarkot Bangan region of his district as Trek of the Year 2017, which resulted in the Dronagiri Trek of the Year. Along with 2017, it also had to be declared Trek of the Year.

Udit Ghildiyal on Gartang bridge

At the same time, Udit Ghildiyal, director of High Feed, says that reaching Gartang Gali is really like a dream come true because this 150-meter bridge does not seem less than a Miracle. Udit says that it is the result of the efforts of Tilak Soni that the government was able to focus on it. He is the only person who has left no stone unturned to make Gartang Gali and Nilang Valley important from a tourism point of view.

Journalist Dharmendra Pant writes that CL Griesbach, associated with the Geological Survey of India, visited the Nilang Valley in 1882 and 1883 and did a detailed study here. He has written in 'Geology of the Central Himalayas' that when he went to Nilang, the relations between the local inhabitants of Jadh and the Tibetan people were not good. A map of the entire region was drawn up in the 1930s. The British explorer J. B. Ouden (younger brother of the great poet Wiston Hugh Ouden) reached the Nilang Valley in 1939 exploring the tributaries of the Bhagirathi. He later played an important role in getting the map prepared here.

There is also an interesting incident involving Nilang Valley. Two Austrian mountaineers, Heinrich Herrer and Peter Offsenator came to India to climb Nanga Mountains, the ninth

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Wildlife in Uttar Pradesh

Uttar Pradesh gives an opportunity to the travellers to explore the rich flora and fauna and make the most of their wildlife holidays at its well-conserved national park and wildlife sanctuaries. The wildlife tourism in the state brings one close to the dense forests with a varied lush vegetative cover. The prime fauna of Uttar Pradesh consists of Cats, Antelopes, Tigers, varied Deer species, Wild Boars, Elephants, Rhinos and more. The state is even a home to bird sanctuaries that let the bird lovers spot a variety of birds including Painted Storks, Black and White-necked Storks, Great Indian Horned-owl, Jungle Owlet, Minivans, Colorful Woodpeckers, Saras Cranes, Barbets, Kingfishers, Bee-eaters and Bulbuls.

The Dudhwa National Park being the largest tiger reserve, acquires fairly large territory on the Indo-Nepal border and has species such as Tigers and Swap Deer that are worth seeing in the park. It can also be said, it is in Dudhwa National Park where these two animals can be spotted. Other than Dudhwa, Chandra Prabha Sanctuary is yet another important reserve in the district of Mughal Sarai which is home to panther, chinkara, chital, partridge and peafowl. Even though, the park is devoid of any member of the cat family but one can come across other species including Deer and Antelopes Chinkara, Sambar and Chital. Coming to Kaimoor Wildlife Sanctuary which yet another wildlife destination in Uttar Pradesh is stretched along the districts of Mirzapur in UP and Bhojpur in Bihar.

On visiting the sanctuary, tourists will get an opportunity to witness Tarai Panthers and Black Buck because of which the sanctuary is famous. Heading to the the City of Nawabs, Lucknow also let the travellers get an amazing wildlife experience by visiting the Martyr Chandra Shekhar Azad Bird Sanctuary which is also known as Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary, boasting a delightful variety of beautiful winged bird species in India while hearing their sweet voices. One can spot Pochard and Shoveller which is found in abundance in Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary.

Other than these major wildlife reserves in Uttar Pradesh, tourists can make a visit to Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary in Bahraich which is blessed with natural beauties, the National Chambal Wildlife Sanctuary along the Chambal river is rich in the crocodilian species Gavialis gangeticus (Gharial) and is one of the few places where one can spot Gangetic Dolphins. Pilibhit Tiger Reserve and Wildlife Sanctuary which is a home to over 127 animals, 556 bird species and 2,100 plants, Okhla Bird Sanctuary which houses number of bird species out of which 160 bird species are migratory, travelling from Tibet, Europe and Siberia, Soor Sarovar Bird Sanctuary which is reckoned to be a place where Lord Krishna and Radha used to meet. Tourist visiting the wildlife will have enough of things to do while strolling in the wildlife sanctuaries and national parks that will let one experience thrill and adventure at the same time.

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Dudhwa National Park

Dudhwa National Park or the Dudhwa Tiger Reserve residing the areas of Lakhimpur & Kheri district of Uttar Pradesh, lying adjacent to the Indo-Nepal border bringing together two most incredible sanctuaries of the area namely, Kishanpur and Katerniaghat Wildlife Sanctuaries to represent the excellent natural forests and greenery along the Terai region. Quite impressively, the northern boundary of the park is being constituted by the Mohana River flowing along the Indo-Nepal border whilst the Southern boundary is formed by the river Suheli. The Kishanpur Sanctuary lies in the Lakhimpur- Kheri and Shahajahanpur districts in Uttar Pradesh.

Spreading across an expanse of 811 sq km beholding the nature lovers with marshes, grasslands and dense forests, the area is actually meant for tremendous counts of Swamp Deer and Tigers species. The area of the Park is composed of a vast alluvial plain along the tributaries of Mohana and Suheli, interspersed with numerous rivulets, lakes and pools. The rich and extremely fertile Indo-Gangetic plains support a flamboyant growth of forests diversity of fauna. The park has some of the best forests of 'Sal' tree in the world, amongst other flora; and is a virtual unexplored paradise for nature lovers, wildlife enthusiasts and bird watchers.

Dudhwa attracts the visitors with its two core area as Dudhwa National Park and Kishanpur Wildlife Sanctuary which are separated by each other with an area of 15 kms agricultural land. Unlike other celebrity parks of India like Corbett, Kaziranga, Bandhavgarh etc, the uncommercialized ambience of this park makes it an ideal habitat for the wild creatures to find nature's serenity & comfortability in a more natural way.

The Post-Independence era witnessed tremendous encroachment towards the Dudhwa jungle. As a result the forest was converted in an agricultural land. Additionally, due to its location on the Indo-Nepal border the chances of poaching and hunting enhanced to greater extent and the trading of the wild animals increased to a massive extent who sell their products in Nepal, which being a tourist place gives them a huge market for these things. It was the perfect money-making place for the poachers but it was "Billy" Arjan Singh whose single handed efforts made this park to reach at its richness. The great conservationist initiated an idea of converting this land into a wildlife sanctuary in the year 1965

and thus received a lot of appraisal from the wildlife conservationists and wildlife lovers across the world. In 1977, Arjan Singh approached the erstwhile prime minister, Indira Gandhi to declare the forest as a National park. In 1984-85, seven rhinos were relocated from Assam and Nepal to Dudhwa to rehabilitate a rhino population which lived here 150 years ago. Four years later, it was declared a Tiger Reserve under the Project Tiger and currently is a major habitat for tigers in India.

Wildlife

Dudhwa being spread over an expanse of approximately 811 sq km of marshes, grasslands and dense forests, is an ideal and protected home for over 38 species of mammals, 16 species of reptiles and numerous species of birds.

Tiger, Rhinoceros, Swamp deer, Elephant, Sambar, Hog deer, Cheetal, Kakar, Wild pig, Rhesus monkey, Langur, Sloth bear, Blue bull, Porcupine, Otter, Turtles, Python, Monitor lizard, Mugger, Gharial etc.

Of the nearly 1300 birds found in the Indian subcontinent, over 450 species can be seen in Dudhwa Reserve. These include Hornbill, Red Jungle Fowl, Pea fowl, Bengal Florican, Fishing eagle, Bengal Florican, Serpent eagle, Osprey, Paradise flycatcher, Woodpeckers, Shama, Indian Pitta, Orioles, Emerald dove etc. During winter the vastand varied water bodies attract a large variety and number of migratory birds making the reserve a favorite haunt of bird watchers.

Flora of Dudhwa

Dudhwa Reserve represents some of the best natural forests and grasslands left in the Terai district of Uttar Pradesh. The vegetation is of the North Indian Moist Deciduous type, containing some of the finest examples of Sal forests (Shorea robusta) in India, as well the most extensive tracts of moist grasslands that remain in this region.

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Attractions in Dudhwa

Frog Temple : From Dudhwa national Park, the tourists can make a fine excursion towards the unique Frog Temple at Oel town which is 12 kms from Lakhimpur on the route from Lakhimpur to Sitapur. This is one of its kind of temple based on the Maduk Tantra and was built by the former king of Oel state during 1860-1870. The temple is actually dedicated to Lord Shiva and is believed to be built on the back of a large frog. The Temple is constructed within an octagonal lotus. The Shivling installed in the temple was brought from the Banasur Prati Narmdeshwar Narmada Kund. The architecture of this temple is based on Tantra Vidya with its main gate opening in the east and another gate in the south as an exit.

Surat Bhawan Palace : Built in 1894, the Surat Bhawan Palace near Dudhwa National Park is made in Indo-Sarasenic style and is composed of ten bedrooms, one large dining room with pantry and two lounges. The palace set in a large green, nine acre retreat is eight kms away from the park with its eastern entrance facing the reserve.

Excursions

Lucknow - the city of the nawabs is the most visited place for the tourists coming to Dudhwa Reserve where the tourists can find multiple attractions in the name of Bara Imambara, Chattar Manzil, Jama Masjid, Rumi Darwaza, Moti Mahal and much more. The main hub of multiple facets of industries Lucknow is best known for the ancient historical importance.

Safari in Dudhwa Tiger Reserve

Safari in Dudhwa is the best option for the wildlife lovers to catch the amazing species of the dense ambience. Jeep safari in Dudhwa could prove as the perfect option for a wildlife safari. But for the sake of information and convenience, it is to remind that the forest officials do not provide any jeep safari or guides for assistance. One has to arrange privately for safari conveyance. Elephant rides through the Park are also offered and the mahouts or Elephant drivers also act as guides.

Safari Timing : - Daily jeep safaris in Open 4WD safari vehicles, 7:00 AM to 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM.

Park Opening Time : (Nov till May) the best time to visit the Dudhwa Tiger Reserve is from February to April. You can also visit during mid November to mid June.

Other activities to be enjoyed in the park:

- Guided jungle walks

- Elephant safari
- Bird Watching in the area
- Tribal village walk
- Excursion to Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary

Travel Information

By Air : Lucknow is the nearest airport at a distance of 238 km.

By Rail : Dudhwa Railway station at a distance of 4 kms is the nearest railhead. It is well- connected to Lucknow and Nainital via Mailani (37 km.) on the metre gauge. Another option is to undertake a 301 km. journey from Delhi to Shahjahanpur by rail, and then proceed by road to Dudhwa, which is another 107 km.

By Road : The nearest town is Palia at a distance of 5 kilometers which is linked to Lucknow directly from the distance of 238 km. UPSRTC and private buses ply between Palia and Lakhimpur-Kheri, Shahjahanpur, Bareilly (260 km.) and Delhi (430 km).

Hotels in/around Dudhwa Tiger Reserve

Dudhwa Reserve which is quite closer to the city of the Nawabs- Lucknow provides the ample amount of reasons for staying at this region. The other major attractions also allure the tourists to spread their magnanimous moods during their stay at this region. And the provision of different hotels & resorts make the journey more wonderful at its excellent level. Not so far away from the city's crowd, the accommodation options are accosted with beneficiary services and luxury amenities. Find the best one that suits your needs and enhances your pleasure during your stay in the Dudhwa Reserve area.

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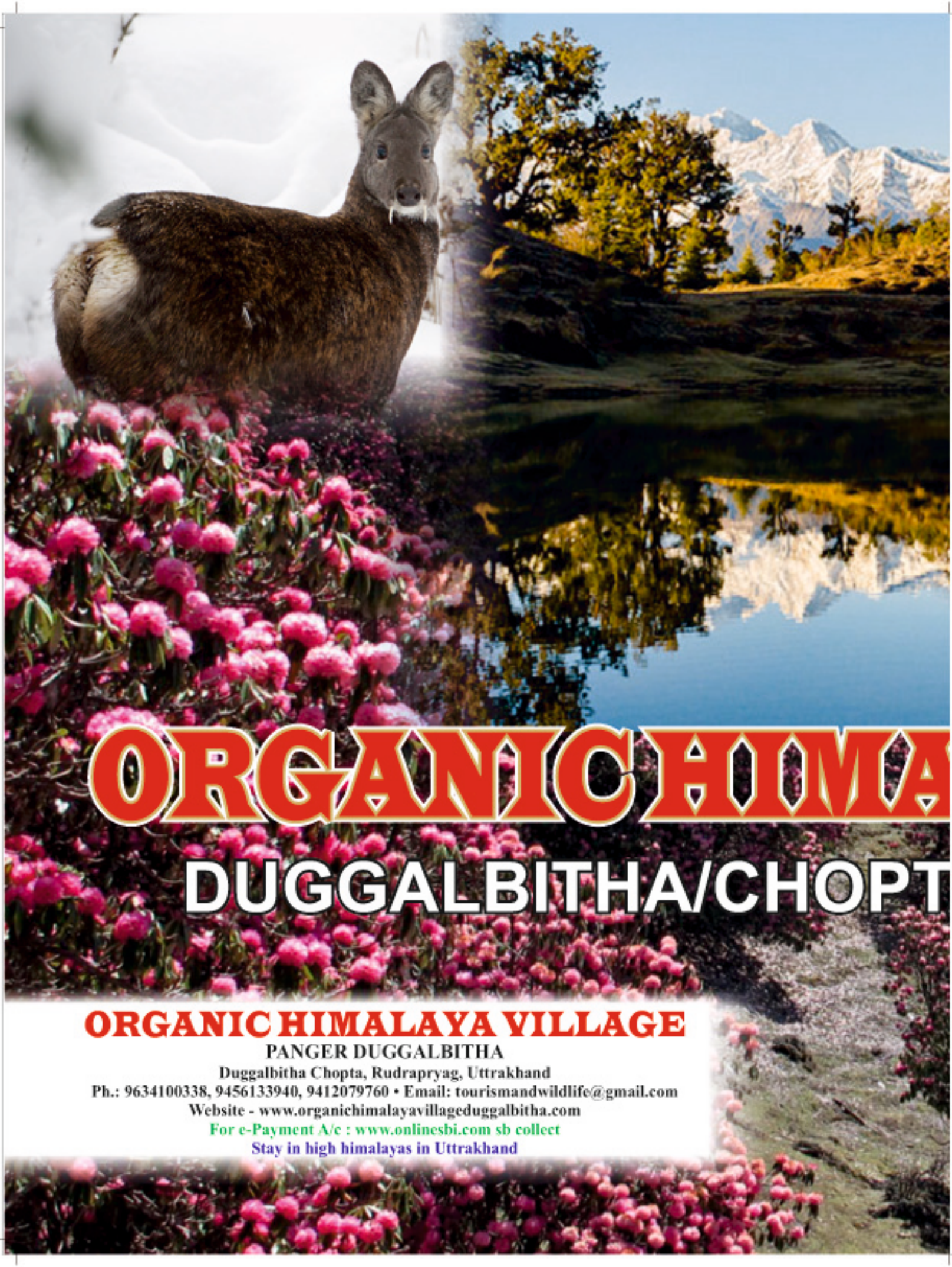
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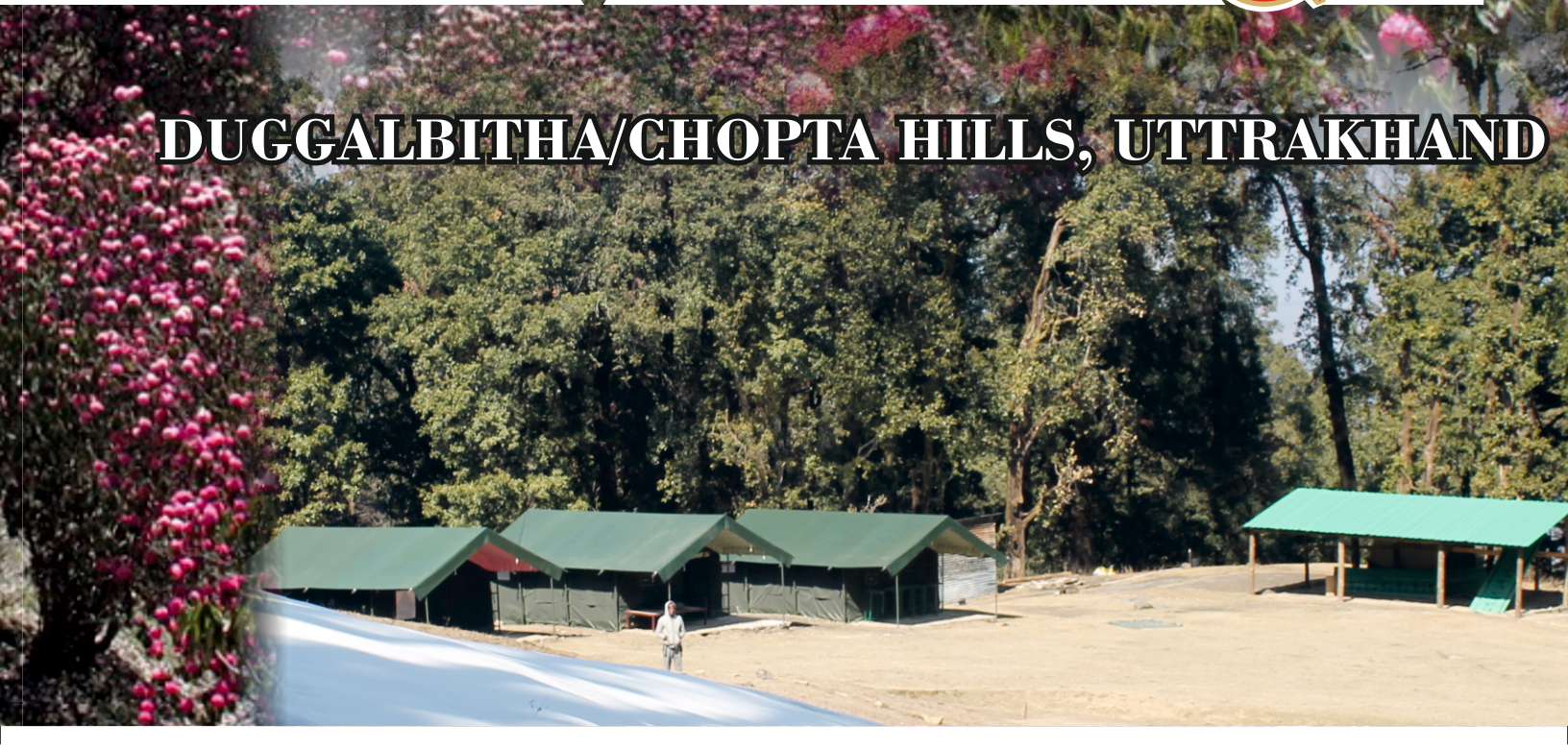
LAYA VILLAGE

DUGGALBITHA/CHOPTA HILLS, UTTRAKHAND



"Garden city of India"

Bangalore Tourism

Having evolved gradually from being the Garden city to the Silicon Valley of India, Bangalore is India's third-largest city. Bangalore is loved for its pleasant weather, beautiful parks and the many lakes here. Bangalore is renowned for its eateries, street food corners, quirky cafes, coffee roasters and pubs dotting every corner of the city, serving cuisines from all over the world. Brunches, buffets, burgers, rooftop cafes, late-night eats - Bangalore has it all.

Here, one can choose to take a long stroll through the beautiful Cubbon Park, shop in the many malls or street markets or hop into one of the many acclaimed breweries for a cold and refreshing drink. There are a huge number of beautifully decorated parks in the city that are ideal for going on a morning stroll or a jog. One walk through the 300-acre Cubbon Park, or the botanical gardens of Lalbagh, and you'll know precisely why Bangalore is so famously called India's 'Garden City'.

But just like every big city, the unprecedented growth of IT in Bangalore has reshaped quite a few things including rising temperatures, polluted lakes and heavily congested roads, especially in the newer areas. Aside from the central business and commercial districts (and the roads leading up to them), the neighbourhoods of Bangalore are mostly quiet and serene, especially the older parts of the city like Jayanagar and J.P Nagar.

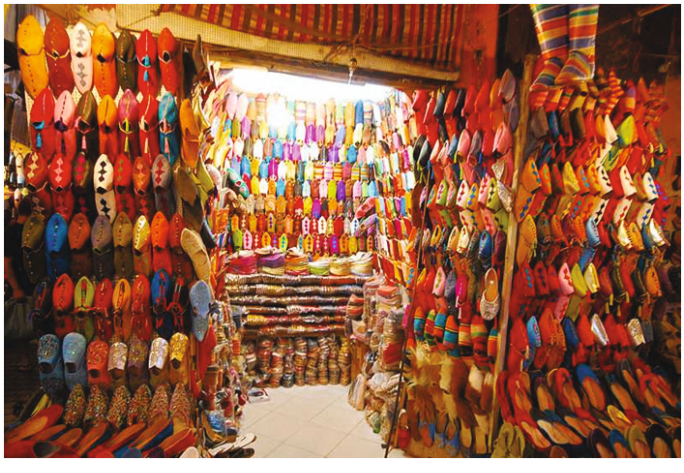
Nightlife in Bangalore

Apart from being a hub of IT professionals, Bangalore has the best nightlife in India. It has amazing dance floors for you to groove on and many pubs and clubs which will surely guarantee a fun-filled night after sundown till a little past midnight.

Abiding by the early curfew i.e. 1 AM, this is when all the pubs and restaurants in Bangalore shut down. But fret not, there are other afterparties which you can head over to.

If you're a shopaholic, Bangalore is the place for you to be. Be it brand shopping or street shopping, Bangalore has plenty of shopping destinations scattered throughout its perimeter, where one can buy everything from clothes to footwear to jewellery, and even priceless antiques. From the simplest of trinkets to the trendiest of outfits, Bangalore has it all.

Tips



1. The streets are busy and chaotic hence; you need to have a good hold of time. The traffic never lets you reach your destination on time. Be wise enough and leave early.

2. Travelling via rickshaws is considered to be an ideal choice. Be a good negotiator as the driver might charge you a higher fare.

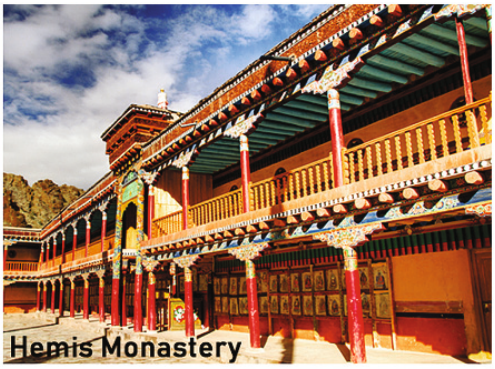
3. Do not roam around alone after 11:00 PM unless you are in a group or with a trusted guide.

Language

Though Kannada is the regional language of the city, people have a good hold of the English language as well. Hence, you won't face any difficulty while speaking to the natives. Apart from Kannada and English, a few other languages spoken here are Telugu, Tamil and Hindi as there are many migrant residents here.

Ladakh Tourism

Likir Monastery


Hemis Monastery

Shanti Stupa

The Majestic Heights Of Ladakh

Ladakh, or La-dvags as it is known in Tibetan, is the 'land of high passes' and that has always been its biggest draw for tourists. A land known for its monasteries, its mountain peaks, its adventure and thrills, it calls out to the adrenaline seeker within us, and becomes a destination that deserves a pilgrimage of sorts at least once in a lifetime. Come summer or winter, Ladakh tourism is a magnet all year round. Give heed to its untouched beauty and fulfil your call to the pristine land with your visit to these majestic heights.

Places Of Worship

Buddhism is the most followed religion and the numerous monasteries stand testimony to that. The rugged terrain did nothing to stop the monks and nomads from traveling the landscape and building their dwellings that have stood the test of time. Among the world-renowned places to visit in Ladakh are Hemis Monastery, Karma Dupgyud, Matho Monastery, Rangdum Gompa, Lamayuru Monastery, Phyang Gompa, and the Likir Monastery.

Explore And Shop

Once you have had your fill of spirituality, allow the bazaars to pull you in. The sheer range of artefacts and skills will leave you mesmerised. Explore Ladakh as you drift from stall to stall, talking to the owners and taking in the beauty of the myriad creations of the people of this land. If you are looking for a keepsake, perhaps we could interest you in a pashmina shawl or dress. Hand-woven caps, sweaters, gloves and carpets are also a big rage, with stunning colours and intricate designs all clamouring for attention. Silver and turquoise jewellery, Thangka paintings, prayer wheels and Buddhist masks are all excellent reminders to mark your time spent here.

Cuisine

Ladakh's cuisine, while greatly influenced by Tibetan culture, still has a voice of its own. You must absolutely taste Thupka, a delicious noodle-soup made using boiled vegetables, chunks of chicken, pork, and meat. People here are friendly and when they invite you for a cup of tea, don't refuse but also don't expect a typical cup of steaming brew. Ladakh is famous for its butter tea – a pink coloured, fragranced liquid made from tea leaves, butter, salt and water. Quite unexpected, right? Momos might be popular in the rest of India today but they originated here, and you must sample them. Simple daily fare, these are made from flour and water, and come stuffed with minced meat, vegetables or cheese.

Nature

Wildlife enthusiasts are drawn to Ladakh as bees to honey. The land is home to many exotic species of flora and fauna. Adventure enthusiasts can trek along the steep slopes to catch a glimpse of the wildlife of the land. Adrenaline junkies can explore corners of the hitherto unexplored land that calls out to thrill-seeker and amateur explorers. Whether it's trekking, mountaineering, white water rafting, motor biking, jeep safaris, camping or sports like archery and polo, Ladakh is adventure brought to life.

Festival

Ladakh is a land of festivals that includes traditional dancing, singing and an explosion of colourful masks. Buddhism has a say here and the visitor can see the strong influence that the religion brings into the many fairs and festivals that are celebrated by its people. Most Ladakhi festivals take place in winters, and the land is replete with various expressions of dance and dramas. The most famous festivals include the Losar festival, Hemis Tsechu festival, Sindhu Ladakh festival and Darshan festival. If you wish to see Ladakh enjoying itself in its splendour and complete abandonment, then planning a trip in winter is a great way to understand its rich and unique culture.

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Interesting Facts About Ladakh:

- Ladakh is the highest residential point in India and it is situated along the banks of the Indus River.
- It is also the least populated area in India.
- Despite being a dry place, Ladakh is home to more than 200 species of birds.
- It is home to the world's highest optical, in-framed and Gamma ray telescopes.
- The twin-humped camel can only be found in India in Ladakh.
- Have you heard of the Magnet Hill? This 'gravity hill' located near Leh creates such an optical illusion that the downhill road actually seems to look like it is going uphill. Objects, especially cars when left in neutral, appear to roll 'uphill', defying norms of gravity.
- The Khardung La Pass at 5,359 meters is the world's highest motorable road.

Ladakh tourism helps bring out the best of the land showcasing its rugged and stark beauty to all those who visit these lands. Plan a sojourn here and fill your memories with Ladakh famous places and experiences.

Location: Rivers And Roads Meet Mountains

Ladakh is a mountainous region in India that covers land from the Siachen Glacier in the majestic Karakoram Range to the main Great Himalayas further down to the south. The highest plateau in Jammu & Kashmir, it dates back nearly 45 million years back when the Indian plate collided with the Eurasia plate to form these ranges. The Indus River flowing through the ranges forms a backdrop for most historical and current towns that make up the inhabited parts of this region.

Timings: Best Time To Visit

There are those who swear by winters in Ladakh and then there are those who prefer summer. At the end of the day, it depends on your preferences – the region offers unprecedented beauty and thrilling experiences whenever you visit. While winters are harsh, the region brings to life adventures and exhilarating experiences that are one of a kind. Winter is also when there are fewer crowds, allowing you to enjoy the hills and valleys at your pace.

Undoubtedly, summer is when tourism in Ladakh is most exciting as the city is buzzing with more activity. The district explodes with colours and warmth. You have more access to every corner and the beauty of the place is simply breathtaking.

Winter is from mid-October to March when the temperatures drop to sub-zero, and most hotels and sightseeing places are closed. Summer, or the peak tourist season, begins from April and goes on till July. You can also visit from mid-September to mid-October when the true beauty of Ladakh can be experienced.

How To Get To Ladakh

By Road - Ladakh is at a distance of 434 km from Srinagar and 494 km from Manali, and it is quite convenient to hire a cab or a jeep from either of the two cities. You can also book a seat on a JKSRTC bus. If you are feeling adventurous, you can bike to Leh from Srinagar, Manali or Chandigarh. Winters might not be a good idea for this as the highways are shut due to heavy snowfalls. If you do have to take the road, May to September is the ideal time.

By Rail - You can take a train up to Jammu Tawi (700 km from Ladakh) from most of the major stations in India, such as Delhi, Kolkata or Mumbai. From there you can hire a cab or once again, board a JKSRTC bus to head further on.

By Air - Leh is the nearest airport and has good connectivity to Delhi, Jammu, Srinagar, Chandigarh and many other major cities in India. From Leh, you can book yourself a cab to any of the places that you are interested in visiting.

History: Coveted Land, Since Time Immemorial

The walls of caves in Ladakh tell stories from Neolothic times, when man first made an appearance on earth. Shift to many years later and the people here find a mention in India's ancient scriptures, the Puranas. Such is the history of this land.

Ladakh enjoys proximity to Tibet and has always been predominantly Buddhist, later giving way to Islam after repeated Islamic invasion. Its physical proximity notwithstanding, it has held its distinct geographies and cultivated cultures and traditions that belong to this region alone. Despite the many rulers and invaders, this part of the country has always held its sovereignty and established itself as an independent kingdom.

Post-independence, with China and Pakistan both breathing heavily down the Indian subcontinent, the region today sees a heavy Indian army presence to keep a check on stand-offs and skirmishes along the border.

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Bhutan is also popularly known as 'Land of Thunder Dragon.'

A sovereign state in South Asia, Bhutan is also popularly known as 'Land of Thunder Dragon.' It is a landlocked country situated in the Eastern Himalayas, bordered along the People's Republic of China to the north, having India to the south, east, and west. The land consists mostly of high and steep mountains crisscrossed by a network of swift rivers, which form deep valleys. The country has the world's highest unclimbed peak, Gangkhar Puensum, at 24,836 feet.

An interesting fact about Bhutan - the general prosperity of the country is measured by the 'Gross National Happiness' index, explained by its four pillars - sustainable development, good governance, cultural preservation and environmental protection. Also, continually ranked as the happiest country in Asia and the eighth-happiest country in the world according to a survey by Business Week.

Bhutanese have a strong reverence towards nature and the country leads in environmental conservation. People use cotton bags instead of plastic bags to keep the environment free of non- biodegradable items.Also, the Tobacco Control Act regulates tobacco, banning the cultivation, harvesting, production, and its sale in Bhutan.

Bhutanese cuisine is known for its spiciness, most Bhutanese people do not enjoy a meal if it is not spicy. Rice and chillis are the main ingredients of most meals, accompanied by side dishes consisting of vegetables or pork, beef, and chicken. Ema Datshi is the national dish of Bhutan. Rich in cultural diversity, every village in Bhutan has a unique festival, Tshechu is the most important and widely celebrated of all festivals.

Dwelling on its tourism industry, Bhutan attracts many travelers from across the globe because of its untouched mountains, serenity, and vibrancy. The Punakha Dzong- arguably the most beautiful Dzong in the country, Trashi Chhoe Dzong, the Paro Dzong and the

Taktshang Goemba also known as the Tiger's Nest Monastery are the main attractions of the country.

Located in the Paro valley of Bhutan, the eponymous town of Paro is dotted with several historical sites. Paro is the perfect destination for anyone who prefers to spend time by themselves in the lap of nature, far from the madding crowd. The main street is adorned with colourful wooden shops, houses and restaurants. The Taktsang Palphug Monastery popularly known as Paro Taktsang is a Buddhist temple situated in the upper portion of the Paro Valley and is a beautiful monastery. Guru Padmasambhava, who introduced Buddhism to Bhutan, meditated here for three years, three months, three weeks, three days and three hours. \n\nYou will be able to witness the famous dzong style of architecture if you visit Rinpung Dzong, which is an intricate wooden structure made of large beams that are held together without a single nail! The National Museum of Bhutan is actually a 'ta dzong' (meaning Watchtower) that was later renovated to host the museum. Shaped like a conch shell, the museum has an excellent collection of Buddhist thangkas. However, note that you will not be allowed to enter with a camera, but you can click pictures of the building and its surrounding areas.

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Welcome to Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh, the fifth largest state of India is spread over an area of 275,068 sq. km. Situated on the Deccan plateau, the state is bordered by Tamil Nadu on the south, Karnataka on the west, Maharashtra on the north and northwest, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa on the northeast, and the Bay of Bengal on the east. Andhra Pradesh India is known for its glorious past. The ancient temples, monuments, forts, palaces, old markets are the testimony to its rich history, culture and architecture. There are many sacred pilgrimage shrines in Andhra Pradesh of which Tirumala and Puttaparthi are visited by millions of devotees from all across the world. Andhra Pradesh is blessed with breathtaking natural beauty. Surrounded by misty hills, dense forests, undulating mountains, silvery cascades, and shimmering rivers, Andhra Pradesh is home to many famous hill stations, wild life sanctuaries, national parks and, virgin beaches.

The ancient city of Visakhapatnam or Vizag is

located in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. It is a city charting its course by navigating the waves of traditional culture with a fresh breeze of cosmopolitanism. Visakhapatnam boasts several ancient Buddhist establishments such as Sankaram, Bojjannakonda, Bavikonda, Totlakonda, Boudharamam, Saligudam, and Devipuram which are at least two millennia old.

It is blessed with pristine beaches such as Lawson's Bay, Rushikonda, Bheemili and Gangavaram beaches ideal for sea bathing and surfing. \r\n\r\nOne can unwind at Keertana Vanamu Beach Resort, while Bheemunipatnam is a beach town ideal for spending weekends. Step inside Dolphin's Nose Lighthouse and visit the scenic parks of Vishakhapatnam such as Kailasagiri Hilltop Park, comprising acres of varied flora, fauna and tropical trees beside presenting a fabulous view of the city. Vishakhapatnam is blessed to have Araku Valley hill station, the Borra Caves and Tyda, an eco-tourism park. Visakha Museum, Matsyadarshini Aquarium and INS Kursura Submarine Museum will unfold the pages of history to you, while movie buffs will be enthralled by Dr. Ramanaidu Film Studios. Peek into the animal kingdom at Indira Gandhi Zoological Park, Kambalakonda Wildlife Sanctuary, and Kondakarla Ava Bird Sanctuary. For a touch of spirituality, there is the ISKCON Temple, Arasavalli Temple, Ross Hill beside others.

Rajahmundry or going by its official name, Rajamahendravaram city, is located in the Indian

state of Andhra Pradesh, India. It is blessed with a plethora of historical, agricultural, economic and cultural influences and hence has taken on its lithesome shoulders the onus of being the cultural capital of the state.\r\n\r\nTake a tour through Town Hall, cross the Havelock Bridge and the Godavari Bund (Bridge), which is Asia's second largest road cum rail bridge.

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"The Ancient Seat of Knowledge"

Nalanda Tourism

The most popular Mahavihara of the ancient times, a significant Buddhist seat of academic excellence and a modest pilgrim center, all wrapped in a wisp of spirituality, Nalanda continues to be an equally enriching location in the present. It offers vibrant substance of spirituality, history, culture, architecture, and tourism.

This city houses one of the world's oldest and finest residential universities which itself was an architectural masterpiece. Although in ruins, the entire complex presents a pretty picture and is flocked by tourists day in and day out. It has “viharas” or monasteries to the east and “chaiyas” or temples to the west. In addition to this, the complex houses a charming little museum, which has a collection of several of original Buddhist stupas, Hindu and Buddhist bronzes, coins, terracotta jars, a sample of burnt rice etc. The district is believed to be a cradle of religions. Apart from Buddhism, it is an important center for Jainism, Hinduism, and Sufism as well. Considering the rich heritage and the historical importance, it is a hot tourist destination.

The Ancient City of Learning

Situated in the state of Bihar, Nalanda is an ancient city renowned for education and boasts of the world's first university. Influenced by various empires, especially the Maurya Dynasty, Nalanda emerged as an educational hub in medieval times. Still a major site for spiritual learning, the small city is a hotspot of Buddhism and Jainism.

Named after 'Nalam' or lotus and 'Da' meaning giving away, Nalanda is also the birth place of Sariputra and has a stupa to his name. A fantastic fusion of various forms of architecture, influenced by different religions and beliefs, it is one of the most enchanting

features observed in the ancient town today.

History of Nalanda

Nalanda was originally just a village that ran past the route of Rajgriha (modern-day Rajbir) which was then the capital of Magadha (modern-day Bihar). It is believed that the 24th Jain tirthankar- Mahavir Jain spent 14 rainy seasons in Nalanda. Also, Gautam Buddha delivered his lectures in the area. Not much is known about the territory in the centuries to follow. However, it is believed that in the 17th century King Ashoka- the great Mauryan and Buddhist emperor, built a temple at Nalanda in reverence for Buddha and his belief in the religion. He placed famous philosophers and intellectuals like Nagarjuna and Aryadeva as the head of the institution to impart education. But the notable history of Nalanda begun supposedly during the Gupta era, according to the seal found in the name of King Kumargupta. His successors expanded the empire by building many more monasteries and temples. Post Gupta period, Nalanda flourished under the reign of emperor Harsha. But the place suffered a big blow under the rule of Pala dynasty when it was plundered and destroyed by the Muslim Mamluk Turkish kings. Later in 1915, the Archaeological Survey of India studied the site and excavated 6 temples and 11 monasteries. The site is still a popular tourist destination in India.

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Tourist Places to Visit in West Bengal

Darjeeling, Kolkata, Jalpaiguri, Siliguri, Kalimpong, Bagdogra, New Digha, Yambong, Hooghly, Bishnupur, Birbhum, Sundarban, Bankura, Midnapore, Murshidabad, and many more.

Places to visit in West Bengal are considered to be the favourite haunt of the globetrotters all across the world due to its famous attractions and ruthless beauty. From the quaint little town of Midnapore that has a number of eco-parks and forests to the scenic town of Bakura that is home to umpteem number of terracota temples, you'll be greeted with some of the best options to explore over here. Hooghly is one of the places in West Bengal as it has a vast number of colonial buildings and shopping lanes. Birbhum is another popular city that harbours several wildlife sanctuaries and national parks that are home to a wide variety of flora and fauna.

There are some of the most popular places to see in West Bengal that have something for every kind of traveller. From the royal palaces to museums and scenic Ghats, you'll be intimidated with the tons of options to explore over here. The vast expanse of tea gardens and the beautiful parks and forests further allure the visitors to gasp into the endless beauty of this place.

West Bengal is also the abode to some of the divine temples that offer spiritual bliss and solace to the visitors. It is dotted with some of the best hotels and lodges where you can have a relaxing stay. If you're in West Bengal, then exploring its food scene is a must; the streets of West Bengal are replete with premium cafes and restaurants where you can have the best local cuisines.

On a summer day, the fragrance of tea leaves lifts off the hills and hover over Darjeeling like a hat and the wonderful things breathes unsaid inside that, like the bent trees, the happy earthworms, the reluctant tea-colored puddles, flowering Rhododendrons and Magnolia plants and the wild garden flowers blooming in different colors of rainbow and a British bungalow growing a fragile façade of greenery for ages amidst a sprawling tea garden. The tourist places in Darjeeling will leave a traveler mesmerized and awed with the beauty that the place offers.

And when the heavens' open up to hammer the water down, the grass looks wet-green and pleased, loose earth shapes off its edges, the washed off dust-green trees smiles afresh and the green countryside glitters in the traces of sunshine.Covered with the dense evergreen forests of Sal and Oak, with ducks and teals creating waves in water, and with rare breeds of orchid spreading colors on a moist soil, Darjeeling, a previous summer capital of India under the British Raj holds the incredible panoramic views of Kanchenjunga snow peaks, beautiful colonial architecture including mansions and churches, an influence of diverse cultures in the majestic craft and cuisine, a beautiful women, the taker of the seeds with a yellow scarf on her head and tea-bag on her shoulders, and a vast expanse of Tea estates in its root.

This “Mecca of Tea” with over 80 operational tea gardens spread across acres of land, writes on a foggy day sitting inside a vintage Toy Train from 1880s, a whimsical poem, of what is delightfully read as the "Champagne of tea". The northwest winds visit Darjeeling to tear it full of holes but the new beautiful things come in the first spit of spring on the northwest wind, and the old leaves go, not one lasts but the beauty stays with the new and lasts for eternity. Darjeeling is a beauty that won't let your heart stop, from beating in ecstasy, and the tourist places in Darjeeling shall always ensure that!

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Kanyakumari Tourist Places

Vivekananda Rock Memorial – Serene, Sublime Experience

The southernmost tip of the Indian peninsula, Kanyakumari is one of the best tourist places in Tamil Nadu. A simple search on places to visit in Kanyakumari gives you a long list of top tourist places here. It is indeed the reason why innumerable history buffs who love to delve deep into the rich history of Kanyakumari and also admire the architectural beauty of the various temples and monuments dotting this city, flock hear. Travel photographers and other leisure travellers also fancy a mini-vacation in Kanyakumari to enjoy and capture its raw and rustic beauty, witness the spectacular view of the various beaches and most importantly, enjoy the scintillating sunrise in Kanyakumari.

Among the various places to visit in Kanyakumari, one cannot miss the breathtakingly beautiful Vivekananda Rock Memorial and the amazing view of the India Ocean from there. Along with it, the towering idol of Tamil poet Thiruvalluvar built amidst the sea is also worth a watch.

The history of Kanyakumari can be dated back to the Sangam Period, and it is also a well-known fact that this city was ruled by mighty kings from the Chola Dynasty to the Pandya Dynasty. Today, Kanyakumari has developed into an attractive tourist centre but it also preserves its rich cultural heritage.

If you are planning a trip to this immensely beautiful coastal city, we bring you an extensive list of the best places to visit in Kanyakumari. So sit back and scroll through.

Vivekananda Rock Memorial – Serene, Sublime Experience

Famously known as the place where Swami Vivekananda attained enlightenment, this rock memorial was built in the year 1970 to commemorate this saint and is a well-known tourist place in Kanyakumari. It has a separate Dhyan Mandap (meditation hall) and the statue of Vivekananda in one of the inner chambers. The legend also has it that Goddess Kumari (Parvathi) performed austerity on this rock which is why a separate temple with the deity's footprint is also created in rock memorial.

Visiting time: 8 AM to 4 PM
Price: Rs 50 for regular tickets; Rs 200 to skip boat queue

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"Enchanting Tamil Nadu"

Tamil Nadu- A land of cultural and religious heritage, offers every chance to its tourists and pilgrims to be enchanted with the vast plethora of history and beauty that it has. It is a blend of both- the modern and the ancient, which makes Tamil Nadu a beautiful destination to explore and experience our past cultural heritage with all the amenities of the present.

Lying along the Bay of Bengal, Tamil Nadu has a glorious history that spans to a millennium and a present, that is paving a way for it in becoming one of the most promising states in the country. This state has seen the rise and fall of many dynasties such as the Cholas, the Cheras and the Pallavas. Each dynasty has enriched the place with its customs and traditions. Tamil Nadu sees a lot of tourists coming from all over the world to see the famous Meenakshi Temple, the tip of India - Kanyakumari or the beautiful hill station of Ooty. There is a great fascination to explore the ruins of the forts and palaces of the then great dynasties. The intricately carved structure of Mahabalipuram offers an insight into the architectural splendour of the Indian Civilization.

Kodaikanal Tourism

Located in the state of Tamil Nadu, Kodaikanal is one of the most famous honeymoon destinations in India. A Lakeside resort town of Tamil Nadu, Kodaikanal has a beautiful climate, mist-covered manicured cliffs and waterfall that come together to create the ideal setting for a perfect getaway. Kodaikanal means 'the gift of the forests'.

Nestled amidst the rolling slopes of the Palani Hills, Kodaikanal stands at an altitude of 7200 feet above sea level, and once you visit this hill station, you will find that every bit of what you have imagined it to be is real. Kodaikanal is a place you can go to take a break from the rigours of daily city life, and this hill station lets you sit back and connect with nature as you head out on biking or trekking trails or take a stroll through the vast forests surrounding the town.

Rameshwaram Tourism

Rameshwaram is one of the holiest places in India and is located on a beautiful island. It is separated by a small Pamban channel from Sri Lanka. According to the Hindu mythology, this is the place where Lord Rama created a bridge across the sea to Sri Lanka.

Rameshwaram is located on a beautiful island in the lower side of India. Lord Shiva too is worshipped in this place. Renowned for its magnificent prakaras with massive sculptured pillars on either side, The Ramanathaswamy Temple houses the longest corridor in the world. Agniteertham is famous for its sacred waters and Pilgrims perform poojas in honour of their ancestors at this seashore.

The Five-faced Hanuman Temple holds the floating stone which was used to build the bridge between India and Sri Lanka.

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What to see in Varkala & Around

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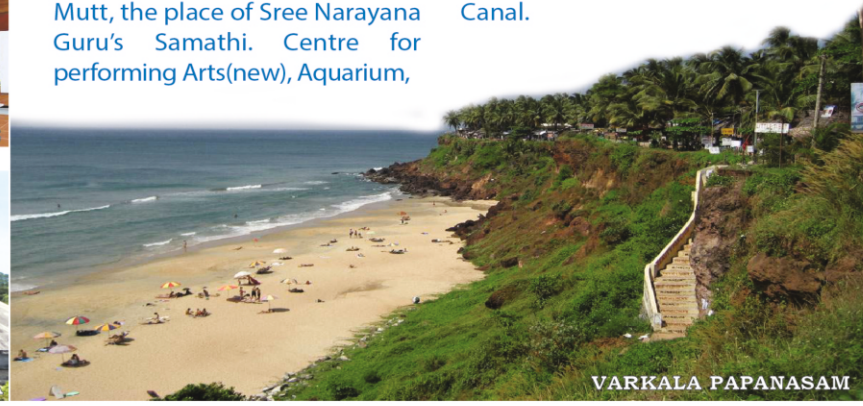
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We're moments

We're timeless

We're Egypt
Hello,
I'll never forget the look of awe on my wife's face when we took our first Nile cruise thirty years ago. Special moments like that made this one of our favourite trips. It's like you're time travelling as you go through different historical dynasties on the Nile's banks.
Now, my granddaughter is back from the pool. She wants me to tell her stories about our ancient kings and the Karnak Temple... for the fifth time!
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