

TODAY'S traveller

CORPORATE, BUSINESS, AVIATION, LUXURY & LEISURE TRAVEL MAGAZINE

MAY 2024 - ₹50

CELEBRITY
WEDDING
HOTSPOTS

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HYDERABADI
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AS YOUR OWN LOVE STORY!**

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BEST CELEBRITY WEDDING DESTINATIONS IN THE WORLD

When it comes to tying the knot, celebrities are renowned for their spectacular choices, often opting for Celebrity Wedding Destinations that blend privacy, breathtaking views, and exclusivity

KAMAL GILL



Monte Carlo, Monaco

These glamorous locales not only cater to the elite with their top-tier services but also offer a peek into what could be a fairytale setting for anyone looking to add a sprinkle of stardust to their special day. From the rustic charm of Tuscany to the royal splendour of Udaipur and the ritzy glamour of Monte Carlo, and the sun-soaked beaches of the Caribbean, let's journey through the six best celebrity wedding destinations in the world.

MONTE CARLO, MONACO

Monaco, particularly its glamorous quarter Monte Carlo, is a playground for the rich and famous, and a coveted destination for celebrity weddings. This small principality on the French Riviera exudes luxury and sophistication, with its stunning Mediterranean coastline, opulent casinos, and the legendary Monte Carlo Casino adding to its allure.

Celebrities like Grace Kelly and Prince Rainier III set the bar high with their iconic royal wedding here, transforming Monaco

into a symbol of ultimate luxury and romance. The Hotel de Paris and the Monte Carlo Bay Hotel & Resort are favourites among those looking to tie the knot in a setting that boasts a blend of modern luxury and classic European elegance.

Monaco's strict privacy laws and high-security measures also make it an ideal location for celebrities and high-profile individuals seeking discretion and exclusivity for their special day.

PLANNING YOUR WEDDING IN MONACO : To plan your wedding in the gracious settings of Monaco, start by choosing the perfect season, ideally between April and October when the weather is most favourable. Engage a local wedding planner who specializes in luxury events to navigate the intricacies of Monaco's prestigious venues. They can assist in securing locations such as the exclusive Hotel de Paris or the private beaches along Larvotto for your ceremony.

Incorporate a yacht cruise into your itinerary for a truly Monegasque experience, treating guests to stunning views of



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the Riviera. Lastly, ensure your celebration meets Monaco's high standards of elegance with gourmet catering, sophisticated décor, and perhaps a performance by a renowned musician to round off your lavish celebration in style.

USP: LUXURIOUS PRIVACY - Monaco, particularly Monte Carlo, is the epitome of luxury and privacy, perfect for celebrities and high-profile individuals. Its glamorous setting, strict privacy laws, and high-security measures ensure an exclusive and discreet celebration.

LAKE COMO, ITALY

Nestled in the Lombardy region, Lake Como has long been a beacon of romance and luxury, attracting A-list celebrities like John Legend and Chrissy Teigen, who chose this picturesque locale for their lavish nuptials. Known for its dramatic scenery, framed by the Alps and lush gardens, Lake Como offers an intimate yet grand setting. The allure lies in its majestic villas and palatial estates like Villa del Balbianello, which provide privacy and exclusivity, key considerations for celebrities seeking to avoid the public eye.

PLANNING YOUR WEDDING: Opt for a spring or early autumn wedding to enjoy mild weather and fewer tourists. Engage a local wedding planner familiar with the area's premium vendors and venues to ensure a seamless experience.

USP: TIMELESS ELEGANCE - Lake Como is synonymous with timeless elegance, featuring classical villas and lush Mediterranean foliage. The serene lake setting offers a

panoramic backdrop that can transform any wedding photo into a breathtaking masterpiece.

THE BAHAMAS

The Bahamas, with its chain of islands, is a jewel in the Atlantic, providing a paradise-like ambience that's perfect for a serene wedding. Celebrities such as Penélope Cruz and Javier Bardem have exchanged vows against the backdrop of crystal-clear waters and white sand beaches. The islands offer an array of private villas and resorts that can be rented out for ultimate privacy, making it a favoured choice for those desiring a tropical getaway.

PLANNING YOUR WEDDING : Consider an exclusive resort on less frequented islands like Eleuthera or Exuma to maintain



Gaulding Cay Beach, North Eleuthera, Bahamas



Villa del Balbianello, Lake Como, Italy

privacy. Local wedding planners can help with the logistics of a beach wedding, particularly important for managing the tides and weather considerations.

USP: TROPICAL PARADISE - The Bahamas offer pristine beaches and private islands, making it a tropical paradise ideal for an intimate and secluded wedding. The vivid turquoise waters provide a dreamy setting that is both refreshing and extraordinarily romantic.

CABO SAN LUCAS, MEXICO

Cabo San Lucas is a favoured hideaway for many celebrities looking to celebrate their love with a touch of adventure amidst luxury. With stunning coastal views, upscale resorts, and excellent weather, it's no wonder stars like Jennifer Aniston often retreat here. Resorts like Esperanza, and An Auberge Resort, offer complete packages that include everything from a stunning venue to exquisite dining options, ensuring a stress-free celebration.

PLANNING YOUR WEDDING : Timing your wedding between October and May can help you avoid the hurricane season. Consider a wedding package from resorts that specialize in luxury weddings to leverage their expertise in crafting bespoke experiences.

USP: DESERT MEETS OCEAN - Cabo San Lucas, where the desert meets the ocean, offers unique landscapes with dramatic cliffs and expansive beaches. This location combines adventure with luxury, providing endless activities and breathtaking views.

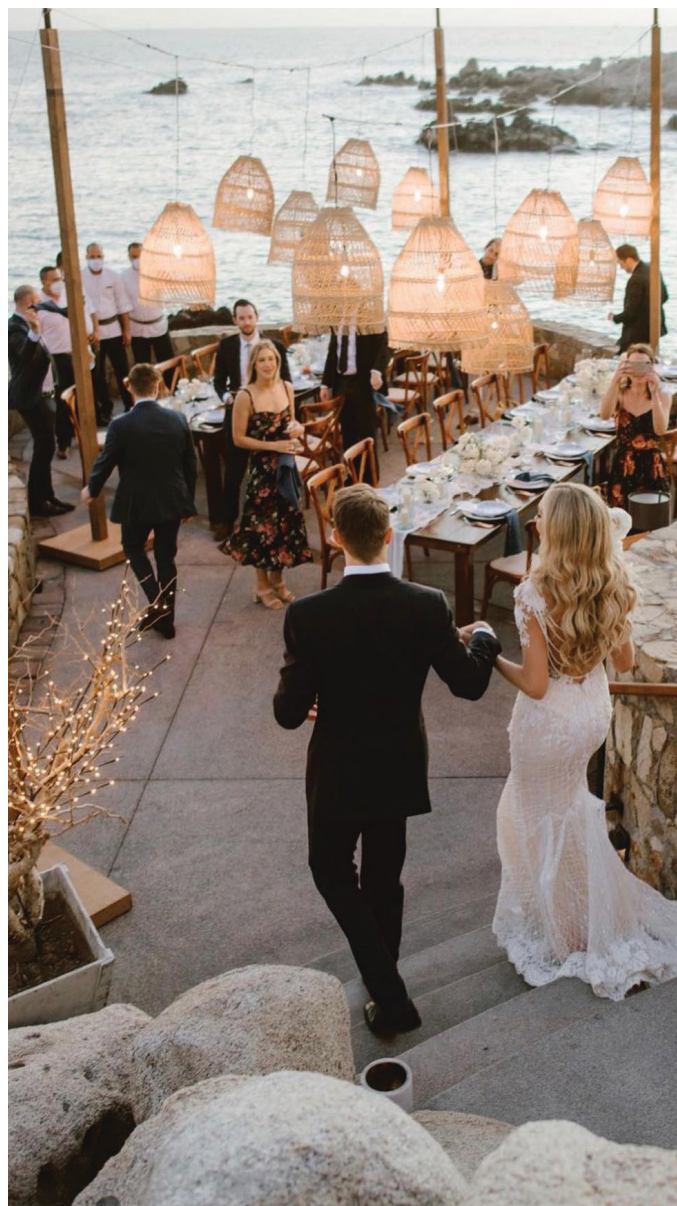
PROVENCE, FRANCE

Provence offers a blend of rustic romance and timeless beauty, making it a top choice for celebrities such as Keira Knightley. The lavender fields, historic châteaux, and the warm Mediterranean climate provide a storybook setting for any wedding. Château de Tourreau, one of the exclusive venues in the region, encapsulates the quintessential French country charm ideal for a private and picturesque wedding.

PLANNING YOUR WEDDING : Summer is the prime time in Provence, especially in June when the lavender fields are in full bloom. Engage a local florist to incorporate the region's natural beauty into your wedding décor, enhancing the enchanting French country vibe.

USP: LAVENDER FIELDS AND FRENCH SOPHISTICATION

- Provence is famed for its stunning lavender fields and the quintessential French sophistication. This destination offers a mix of natural beauty and provincial charm, perfect for a serene and chic wedding.



Esperanza Resort, Mexico

UDAIPUR, INDIA

Udaipur, often referred to as the "Venice of the East," is famed for its magnificent palaces and serene lakes, making it a spectacular choice for celebrity weddings. With its royal backdrop and traditional Rajasthani hospitality, Udaipur offers a unique blend of cultural heritage and luxurious settings. Celebrities like Parineeti Chopra - Raghav Chadha and Raveena Tandon - Anil Thadani have chosen this enchanting city to celebrate their union, captivating the world with their opulent festivities. The majestic City Palace extending over the serene Lake Pichola adds a regal charm to any celebration, while the luxurious Taj Lake Palace, situated on an island, offers an exclusive escape.

PLANNING YOUR WEDDING : The winter months from November to February present an ideal time for weddings in Udaipur, offering pleasant weather and comfortable temperatures. Opting for a heritage palace as a venue provides not only a breathtaking setting but also an experience



Taj Lake Palace, Udaipur

steeped in the grandeur of Indian royalty. Engaging a local wedding planner can help integrate traditional elements like Rajasthani folk music and dance, enhancing the cultural richness of your celebration.

USP: ROYAL HERITAGE - Udaipur is known as a city of lakes and palaces, offering a royal heritage that lends a majestic aura to any wedding. The grand palaces and tranquil lakes provide a regal backdrop that celebrates India's rich history and romantic landscapes.

AN UNFORGETTABLE CELEBRATION OF LOVE

These celebrity wedding destinations offer more than just a touch of glamour; they provide a canvas for an unforgettable celebration of love. With careful planning, a touch of local flavour, and perhaps a bit of star-inspired magic, your wedding can be as breathtaking as any celebrity's. Each location offers unique elements that cater to the grandeur and privacy celebrities often seek.

With the right planning and a dash of creativity, your wedding can indeed be a glamorous, once-in-a-lifetime event echoing the dazzle of a celebrity wedding.

STAR-STUDED 1 DOS: ICONIC CELEBRITY WEDDING VENUES ACROSS INDIA

As the glamour of Bollywood descends upon the historic sands of Jaisalmer, Sidharth Malhotra and Kiara Advani exchanged vows at the stunning Suryagarh Hotel. This heritage property, famed for its luxurious ambience, is not just a hotspot for celebrity weddings but also a must-visit for those enchanted by royal backdrops and sumptuous architecture.

Jodhpur's Umaid Bhawan Palace is not far behind in grandeur, which famously hosted the lavish three-day wedding of Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas. This heritage

palace, equipped with over 300 luxurious rooms and amenities like a library, indoor pool, and squash courts, is the epitome of regal luxury.

For those seeking an unconventional yet luxurious setting, Aman-i-Khas in Sawai Madhopur offers just that. Nestled next to the Ranthambore National Park & Tiger Reserve, this venue provided the romantic backdrop for Katy Perry and Russell Brand's nuptials, featuring luxurious tent accommodations and exquisite local cuisine.

Goa's Hilton, perched atop a hill with sweeping views of lush terraced slopes, has seen numerous celebrities like Mouni Roy celebrate their beachside weddings. Nearby, the historic Fort Aguada adds to the charm of this dreamy location.

In Rajasthan, the Six Senses Barwara Hotel stands out not only for hosting Katrina Kaif and Vicky Kaushal's widely celebrated wedding but also for its blend of luxury and history within a 14th-century fort setting.

Hyderabad's Taj Falaknuma Palace, where Salman Khan's sister celebrated her wedding, offers a glimpse into the grand lifestyles of the Nizams with its majestic ballroom and sprawling gardens. Close to Mumbai, The Mansion House in Alibaug is a favourite for celebrities like Varun Dhawan and Natasha Dalal, offering luxury and exclusivity a short cruise away from the city buzz.

Lastly, the Raffles Udaipur, a private island in Udai Sagar Lake, combines English country estate elegance with Rajasthani royal flair. This venue, where cricketer Hardik Pandya and actor Nataša Stanković Pandya celebrated their union, offers a blend of cultural heritage and contemporary luxury, making it a pinnacle of wedding destinations.

These venues offer a slice of the lifestyles of the rich and famous, making them perfect for those dreaming of a wedding steeped in luxury and star power.

A BIT OF SPARKLE

Small, stylish and superbly elegant – this pair of cufflinks by William Penn can uplift any humble white shirt. Made from tough Basildon steel and inlaid with mother-of-pearl, this nifty piece is a must-have in any gentleman's wardrobe.



HAPPY RABBIT TIE BY HERMES

Perhaps the most visible piece of formal garment is also the most neglected one. But not anymore. Hermes is on a mission to save men from stylistic disasters and its new range of quirky ties is the perfect tool in its arsenal. Wear it with pride!

HONEYMOONS AS SPECIAL AS YOUR OWN LOVE STORY!

Are you dreaming of a honeymoon that's as one-of-a-kind as your romance? We've curated a list of breathtaking honeymoons - destinations and experiences - that promise to make your first adventure as newlyweds unforgettable

TT BUREAU

You both could be watching the Northern Lights in Greenland, exploring ancient temples in Bhutan, or finding peace in the quiet beauty of Slovenia's lakes. You can be sure that each destination is a treasure chest of memories waiting to be opened.

So, go ahead, check out these honeymoon experiences that defy the ordinary, where every destination and experience tells a story, and every story begins with you.

GREENLAND: A FROSTY FAIRYTALE

Imagine cuddling under the Northern Lights, in a landscape blanketed in snow, with nature's light show flickering above you. Greenland is the perfect destination for couples who find romance in adventure and solitude. Days can be spent dogsledding across vast ice fields, kayaking in the company of whales, or exploring the quaint, colourful villages that dot

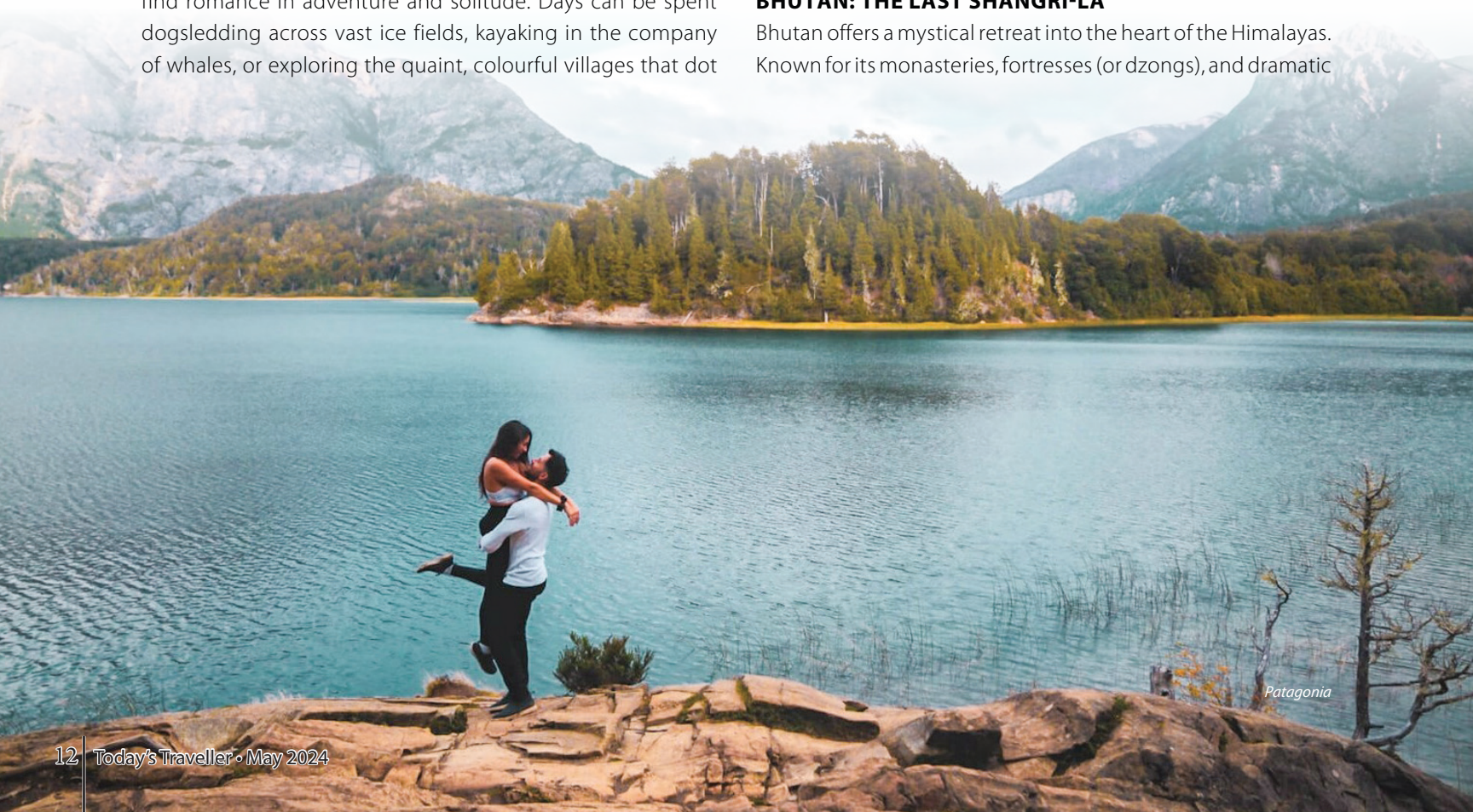
the coastline. Nights are for aurora hunting—an ethereal experience that will bond you and your partner in awe.

PATAGONIA: THE WILD SOUTH

Straddling Argentina and Chile, Patagonia is the gateway to some of the most spectacular landscapes on the planet. It's a paradise for adventurous couples, with its windswept plains, towering peaks, and glaciers that seem to tumble into the ocean. Hike the renowned trails of Torres del Paine National Park, or navigate the remote fjords by kayak. The remote beauty of Patagonia makes it an ideal spot for couples to disconnect from the world and connect deeply with each other.

BHUTAN: THE LAST SHANGRI-LA

Bhutan offers a mystical retreat into the heart of the Himalayas. Known for its monasteries, fortresses (or dzongs), and dramatic



Patagonia



Madagascar

landscapes, Bhutan also stands out for its strong emphasis on national happiness and the preservation of culture. Trekking through Bhutan's serene landscapes, visiting serene temples, and engaging with the local traditions will provide a deeply spiritual start to your marital journey, surrounded by the philosophy of peace and happiness.

MADAGASCAR: AN ISLAND UNTO ITS OWN

Off the eastern coast of Africa, Madagascar is a world apart. Its forests are home to species found nowhere else on earth, such as lemurs, ghostly baobab trees, and otherworldly landscapes.

Explore the Tsingy de Bemaraha Reserve, a UNESCO World Heritage site, known for its limestone karst formations. For beach lovers, the island's secluded beaches offer a romantic escape with a backdrop of turquoise waters and vibrant coral reefs.

LADAKH: THE MOONLAND OF INDIA

In the northernmost part of India lies Ladakh, a region of unparalleled beauty and serenity. Nestled in the Himalayas, this high-altitude desert is renowned for its stark landscapes, vibrant Tibetan Buddhist culture, and majestic monasteries like Hemis and Thiksey.

Couples can embark on a camel safari across the Hunder dunes, enjoy a serene boat ride on the Pangong Tso lake—a stunning high-altitude body of water that changes colours with the sunlight—or simply indulge in the peaceful ambience of the mountain towns. Ladakh offers a tranquil and adventurous honeymoon, set against some of the most breathtaking backdrops on the planet.



Couple at Pangong Tso Lake, Ladakh

SLOVENIA: EUROPE'S GREEN GEM

Slovenia is a small but stunningly diverse country nestled between the Alps and the Mediterranean. It's a haven for those who wish to immerse themselves in nature and enjoy the outdoors together. Slovenia's enchanting landscape features emerald rivers, deep lakes, and dense forests, all relatively untouched by mass tourism.

Couples can explore the fairy-tale beauty of Lake Bled, discover the vast caves of Postojna and Škocjan, or wander through the charming streets of Ljubljana, the country's



Luxury Private Island

heartwarming capital. For a romantic retreat, the vineyards of the Goriska Brda offer a picturesque setting for tasting some of Europe's most underrated wines.

EXPLORE TOGETHER

Choosing a unique honeymoon destination is more than just escaping the crowds; it's about discovering a place that speaks to the heart of your relationship. Whether it's through shared adventures in Greenland, spiritual awakenings in Bhutan, wildlife encounters in Madagascar, the mystical landscapes of Ladakh, the natural paradise of Slovenia, or explorations in the wild terrains of Patagonia, these destinations offer experiences that are as unique as your own love story. Beyond the beaten path lies a world of unforgettable memories, waiting to be made by those daring enough to explore them together.

DARE TO DREAM

Dreaming of a honeymoon that defies the ordinary? For couples who dare to dream big, we've curated the ultimate list of out-of-the-box luxury honeymoon ideas that promise unparalleled experiences and unforgettable memories!

RENT A PRIVATE ISLAND

Envision yourselves on a secluded private island where the beaches are exclusively yours. From sunbathing in complete privacy to enjoying dinners on the beach prepared by your chef, this experience combines intimacy with impeccable service. Popular



Underwater Suite Dubai

destinations like the Maldives, Fiji, and the Caribbean offer private island getaways, perfect for those who want solitude and luxury.

SLEEP UNDERWATER

Experience the tranquil beauty of marine life from the comfort of your bed in an underwater suite. These unique accommodations, available in places like the Maldives and Dubai, feature transparent walls offering panoramic underwater views. It's an enchanting environment, ideal for couples who seek a mesmerizing and peaceful retreat.

SOAR ABOVE IN A HOT AIR BALLOON

Take to the skies in a private hot air balloon ride over the sprawling savannas of Africa. From the Serengeti to the Masai Mara, you'll witness wildlife and breathtaking landscapes at sunrise, followed by a luxurious champagne breakfast upon landing. It's a thrilling and romantic adventure that provides a new perspective on nature's wonders.

CHILL IN A LUXURY ICE HOTEL

Venture into a winter wonderland and stay at a luxury ice hotel in Sweden, Norway, or Canada. Each suite is a unique art exhibit, carved each season by different artists. The hotels often feature ice bars, chapels, and sculptures, with cosy reindeer skins and thermal sleeping bags to keep you warm. It's an extraordinary setting for adventurous couples who enjoy the serenity of a snowy landscape.



Vineyards of the Goriska Brda



Couple Enjoying on Superyacht

JET SET WITH A PRIVATE JET

Customize your honeymoon by jetting off to multiple destinations with a private jet. This ultimate luxury allows you to explore several places without the hassle of commercial flights. Whether it's hopping between European capitals, island-hopping in the Caribbean, or discovering remote locations worldwide, a private jet gives you flexibility and privacy.

SLOW TRAVEL ON A LUXURY TRAIN

Travel back in time aboard a luxury train like the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express or the Rocky Mountaineer or the Maharaja Express. Enjoy the romance of a bygone era with modern comforts, gourmet dining, and scenic views through panoramic windows. This slow-travel experience allows you to savour each moment as you pass through stunning landscapes.

LIVE LIKE ROYALTY IN A PRIVATE CASTLE

Rent a castle in the Scottish Highlands, French countryside, Rajasthan royalty or Irish greenery for a truly memorable retreat. Many castles offer full staff, including a chef, butler, and housekeeping, allowing you to focus on each other in a setting filled with historical grandeur and luxury.

STARGAZE AT EXTRAORDINARY DARK SKY SPOTS

Embrace the cosmos as a newlywed couple by venturing to some of the world's premier Dark Sky parks. Locations like the Namib Desert in Namibia, Sedona in Arizona, or Aoraki Mackenzie in New Zealand are known for their pristine stargazing conditions.

These areas, protected against light pollution, offer not only spectacular views of the Milky Way but also provide luxurious accommodations nearby. Whether it's a desert lodge or a mountain retreat, you can enjoy days exploring the natural beauty of the area and nights under a canopy of stars, making for a truly celestial honeymoon experience.



Stargazing in Sedona, Arizona

CRUISE IN A SUPERYACHT

Charter a superyacht and sail the Mediterranean, Caribbean, or even more exotic locales like Southeast Asia. Enjoy the freedom to explore coastal towns and hidden coves with all the amenities of a five-star hotel on board, including a crew to cater to all your desires.

SNUGGLE IN AN ARCTIC LUXURY POD

Stay in a luxury pod or glass igloo in Finland or Iceland, designed for watching the Northern Lights in comfort. These unique accommodations provide stunning views of the aurora borealis from the warmth and comfort of your bed, surrounded by snowy landscapes for added romance and mystery.

Each of these honeymoon ideas offers a unique blend of adventure, luxury, and personalization, ensuring that your first journey as a married couple is as unique and memorable as your love story.

WORLD IN BLOOM: STUNNING FLOWER FIELDS

Discover the world's most breathtaking flower fields! These stunning landscapes are a feast for the eyes and soul

TT BUREAU



Valley of Flowers- India

As the spring season blooms, meadows worldwide are draped in a vibrant tapestry of colours. There's no better time to travel than these months, with its ideal weather and stunning floral displays in certain countries where spring truly blossoms.

During a brief magical period in the Northern Hemisphere's springtime, fields of tulips, sunflowers, lavender, and other flowers burst into spectacular landscapes. The vivid hues create a painterly scene that every flower lover and photographer dreams of capturing. Choose your favourite flower field and start planning your next journey to witness these extraordinary blooms.

VALLEY OF FLOWERS- INDIA

Located high in the West Himalayas of Uttarakhand, India, the Valley of Flowers National Park is a breathtaking destination

renowned for its endemic alpine flowers and diverse wildlife. Travellers in pursuit of the most breathtaking natural wonders, the Valley of Flowers offers more than just stunning vistas, it serves as a spiritual sanctuary amidst the pristine beauty of nature.

FLORAL EXTRAVAGANZA

The real stars of the Valley of Flowers are, without doubt, the flowers themselves. From late June to early September, the valley transforms into a carpet of vibrant colours spread across 87.5 square kilometres. The valley is home to about 300 different varieties of alpine flowers including the famed blue Primula, the Himalayan blue poppy, and the Brahma Kamal, Uttarakhand's state flower. This time of year is not just about the visual splendour but also the aromatic scents that fill the air—a truly multisensory experience.

The optimal time to visit the Valley of Flowers is between July and early September. During these months,



Monet's Garden- France

the monsoons bring the dry landscape to life, initiating the blooming of flowers across the entire valley. While the trek can be challenging during the monsoon due to slippery paths and occasional landslides, the scenic beauty and vibrant flora make the journey worthwhile.

ACTIVITIES FOR VISITORS

- **Trekking:** The main activity is trekking through diverse terrains, starting from Govindghat, moving up to Ghangaria, and finally reaching the valley. Each step offers panoramic views and encounters with nature that are both rare and profound.
- **Photography:** For photography enthusiasts, the valley offers endless opportunities with its sweeping landscapes and detailed macro shots of exotic flowers and occasionally wildlife.
- **Flora and Fauna Exploration:** Enthusiasts can have a field day identifying various species of flowers, birds, and butterflies. The region is also home to animals like the Asiatic black bear, snow leopard, and blue sheep.
- **Visit Hemkund Sahib:** A challenging trek from Ghangaria leads to Hemkund Sahib, a significant pilgrimage site for Sikhs that boasts a picturesque lake and a serene Gurdwara.

MONET'S GARDEN- FRANCE

For anyone captivated by the Impressionist movement, or simply in love with gardens, a visit to Monet's Garden at Giverny is a profound journey into the world where Claude Monet painted some of his most famous works. Travellers deeply interested in exploring historical and picturesque locales can visit Giverny for an immersive experience of the life and inspirations of Monet.

THE FLORAL PALETTE OF GIVERNY

Monet's artistic vision extends into the layout and variety of plants in his gardens. The property is divided into two main parts: the "Clos Normand" and the "Water Garden". The Clos Normand fronts the house with its kaleidoscope of colours and shapes, designed around central alleys leading to the main doorway. Here, the beds mix and match flowers of varying heights and colours, creating a living painting that changes with the seasons.

The garden blooms all season, but each part of the year offers a different experience. Spring (April to May): The garden awakens with the blooms of tulips, irises, and cherry blossoms, providing a fresh palette of colours.

The best time to visit would be late spring or early summer when the flowers are in full bloom and the crowds are smaller than the peak summer tourist season.



Mainau Island- Germany

ACTIVITIES FOR VISITORS

- **Guided Tours:** Learn about the history of Monet's life in Giverny and his approach to gardening which influenced his art.
- **Art Classes:** Participate in drawing and painting classes offered on-site, allowing visitors to try their hand at capturing the beauty of the gardens just as Monet did.
- **Photography:** Early mornings or late afternoons are perfect for photographers looking to capture the ideal lighting over the gardens and pond.

MAINAU ISLAND- GERMANY

Mainau Island, located in the stunning Lake Constance (Bodensee) in Germany, is more than just a botanical garden, it is a vivid tapestry of colours, scents, and history. Known as the "Island of Flowers," a visit to Mainau is an enchanting escape into a world where nature and human creativity harmoniously intertwine.

FLORAL SPECTACLES

Mainau Island spans about 45 hectares and is renowned for its year-round floral splendour. The gardens are meticulously designed to ensure a continuous display of blooms.

- Spring showcases over a million tulips, hyacinths, and daffodils, creating vibrant carpets of colour. The Orchid Show, with thousands of exotic orchids, is particularly spectacular.



Bluebonnet Fields- Texas

- Summer brings roses to the forefront, with over 500 varieties in the Rose Garden. The Italian Rose Garden combines architectural beauty with the elegance of floriculture.
 - Autumn sees the Dahlia Garden take centre stage with around 12,000 dahlias in bloom, offering a fiery display of reds, yellows, and oranges.
 - Winter might seem quieter, but the Palm House remains a green tropical world even in the coldest months, with its collection of around 1,000 orchids and other tropical plants.
- The best time to visit Mainau depends on personal preferences for floral displays. For tulip lovers, spring is ideal. If you prefer roses and lush greenery, then early to mid-summer is perfect. For those who love the rich colours of late blooms, visiting in early autumn to see the dahlias is advisable. Each season offers a unique charm, ensuring Mainau is a year-round destination.

ACTIVITIES FOR VISITORS

- **Butterfly House:** One of the island's highlights is the Butterfly House, where visitors can wander among hundreds of free-flying exotic butterflies in a tropical setting.
- **Guided Tours:** Learn about the island's flora, fauna, and history with expert-guided tours that provide deeper insights into Mainau's natural and cultural heritage.
- **Boat Tours:** Take a scenic boat ride around Lake Constance to see Mainau Island from a different perspective.
- **Children's Activities:** Mainau offers numerous activities for younger visitors, including a petting zoo, pony rides, and adventure playgrounds, making it family-friendly.

BLUEBONNET FIELDS- TEXAS

For those enchanted by the allure of wildflowers, a visit to the bluebonnet fields in Texas offers a vibrant spectacle that epitomizes spring in the Lone Star State. Dedicated to seeking out picturesque landscapes, a journey through these iconic fields is not only a visual delight but also a deep dive into the cultural heart of Texas.

The optimal time to visit the bluebonnet flower fields is at the start of May when the blooms are at their peak. This period not only promises the most vibrant displays but also the best weather for flower viewing—mild temperatures and plenty of sunny days. The season is brief, lasting only until early May, so timing your visit is crucial to catch the full glory of the blooms.

ACTIVITIES FOR VISITORS

- **Photography:** The fields provide perfect scenes for photography enthusiasts. Many visitors and professionals alike flock to these fields to capture the quintessential Texas spring landscape. Early morning or late afternoon provides the best light for photos.
- **Picnicking among the Bluebonnets:** Many areas like the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center and various state parks allow visitors to enjoy a scenic picnic among the flowers, making for a perfect family or romantic outing.
- **Bluebonnet Festivals:** Towns such as Chappell Hill, Burnet, and Ennis host annual Bluebonnet festivals, which include parades, arts and crafts, music performances, and local food. These festivals offer a deep dive into local traditions and community spirit.

HALLERBOS BLUEBELL FOREST- BELGIUM

Tucked away near Halle, just a short drive from Brussels in Belgium lies a magical forest known as Hallerbos. Renowned for its enchanting carpet of bluebells that bloom each spring, this forest offers a fairy-tale experience that captivates photographers, nature lovers, and wanderers alike. For

travellers with a penchant for unique natural phenomena, the journey through Hallerbos is both mesmerizing and unforgettable.

FLORAL SPECTACLE

The star attractions of Hallerbos are undoubtedly the bluebells, known scientifically as *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*. Each spring, usually from mid-April to early May, the forest floor transforms into a stunning sea of blue as these flowers bloom in unison. The timing can vary slightly depending on the weather conditions leading up to the season.

The prime time to visit Hallerbos is during the brief bluebell blooming season in the spring. The exact timing can fluctuate each year, so it's wise to check local updates for the peak bloom period. Early in the morning or later in the afternoon are the best times to visit to avoid the crowds and to catch the best light for photography.

ACTIVITIES FOR VISITORS

- **Photography Walks:** Capture the stunning beauty of the bluebell carpet under the towering beech trees. Photography enthusiasts will find endless inspiration in the interplay of light, shadow, and colour.
- **Guided Tours:** During the bluebell season, free guided tours are often available, providing insights into the forest's ecology, history, and the lifecycle of the bluebells.
- **Hiking and Biking:** Hallerbos has well-marked trails for both walking and cycling. These paths offer a great way to explore the larger area of the forest and enjoy its tranquillity and diverse wildlife.



Hallerbos Bluebell Forest- Belgium



Wedding Couple

MEHNDI TO MANDAP: GUJARATI WEDDINGS

Gujarati weddings, where vibrant traditions paint every ceremony with joy and unite families in a spectacular celebration

TT BUREAU

Grand Indian weddings are a dreamlike spectacle. Each region's distinct traditions add to its unique charm, and India's vast cultural diversity makes them truly remarkable. In Gujarat, a region celebrated for its vibrant colours, rich cuisine, and lively culture, weddings are conducted with great pomp and show.

Overflowing with fun and happiness, the festive spirit of the Gujarati people shines brightly in their wedding customs and celebrations. As the festivities commence, the air fills with the melodious tunes of traditional folk music, setting the stage for a celebration that is both grand and intimate.

The joyous laughter of relatives mingling in stunning outfits creates a kaleidoscope of brilliant hues, from the radiant reds to the gleaming golds. These weddings are not just ceremonies but a splendid fusion of rituals and revelry.

From the enchanting "Garba" dance that lights up the night to the poignant "Vidai," each moment is steeped in meaning

and merry-making. The aroma of delectable Gujarati dishes wafts through the air, promising a feast as lavish as the visual spectacle.

Amidst this whirlwind of activities, the couple, adorned in exquisite attire, exchanges garlands under a beautifully decorated mandap, symbolizing an unbreakable bond. Each Gujarati wedding is a unique celebration of life and love, offering an unforgettable experience that dazzles the senses and leaves a lasting impression on every heart. Engaging in this exuberant celebration, one can truly feel the essence of Gujarat's rich cultural heritage and the warm hospitality of its people. Here is a guide to Gujarati wedding traditions:

PRE-WEDDING RITUALS

The pre-wedding traditions and rituals of a Gujarati wedding are an exciting start to the grand festivities that follow, offering a glimpse into the cultural depth of Gujarat and a chance for both families to come together and celebrate. Here are the pre-wedding rituals that herald the start of the festivities and celebrations.



GOVERNMENT OF INDIA MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRIES **KANDLA SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE**

Kandla Special Economic Zone bearing the distinction of being the first SEZ in the Asia-Pacific region, was inaugurated by Late Prime Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri on 7th March, 1965 as an Export Promotion Zone which was seamlessly converted into a Special Economic Zone in 2006. KASEZ has been awarded as "First Green Industrial City of India" in Platinum Category for the year 2021-2026, under IGBC Green Cities rating for existing Cities in industrial cities category. This zone is home to 281 exporting units providing employment to over 28,000 persons.

Kandla Special Economic Zone offers opportunity to set up new manufacturing units in various sectors such as engineering, pharma and chemical, Textiles, timber and plywood and new emerging technologies including E-Vehicles and their accessories. 36.92 Ha (100 Acres) is being developed into 75 plots of size ranging from 2800 sqm to 6300 sqm which is an opportunity ready to be seized by investors.

BENEFITS AVAILABLE/SALIENT FEATURES:

- Exemption from various Central & State duties & taxes.
- Single window clearance concept.
- Proximity to two major ports, viz., Kandla Port & Mundra Port.
- Well connected to NH 8-A, Railway Station- 2km away.
- Un-interrupted Power Supply and water supply
- Round the clock security by Ex-servicemen.
- Installation of Software based LED streets lights
- Single point entry and exit
- 24x7 Customs clearance at doorstep

COMPLETE EXEMPTION FROM :-

1. All customs duties levied upon all imported goods.
2. Both basic custom duty as well as IGST on goods for development, maintenance and authorized operation of SEZ units.
3. Stamp duty levied on lease deed and other documents from SEZ units.
4. GST on goods brought from Domestic Tariff Area to a SEZ unit.
5. GST on services provided to SEZ units consumed within SEZ

More than 25 Ready to move Factory Buildings & Warehouses are available in Kandla SEZ, Vacant land/plots are available in Adani Port SEZ, Sterling SEZ, Dahej SEZ and other SEZs in Gujarat. Kandla SEZ also Notifies available space from time to time on website.

CONTACT DETAILS

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Tel: (02836)-252475 | **Mobile:** +91-9717055199

CHANDLO MATLI

The Chandlo Maatli marks the beginning of the wedding ceremonies with a formal announcement. In this ritual, the bride's father and four male relatives visit the groom's home carrying a steel container (maatli) filled with sweets and gifts for the groom and his family. The bride's father then places a Chandlo, or red circle, on the centre of the groom's forehead, signifying the family's acceptance of him. Additionally, a token of love, known as Shagun, is given. It is during the Chandlo Maatli ceremony that the wedding date is set.

GOL DHANA

This ceremony is equivalent to an engagement. The 'Gol Dhana,' a mix of coriander seeds and jaggery, symbolizes the couple's official union. In this event, the groom's family visits the bride's home, bringing sweet and savoury gifts in a Matli. The bride and groom exchange rings and receive blessings from five married women. Naturally, the occasion is capped off with a delicious Gujarati feast, making the ritual even more memorable.

GANESHA STHAPAN – LORD GANESHA POOJA

The Ganesh Sthapan, also known as Ganesh Maatli, marks the commencement of the wedding rituals. In this ceremony, both families hold a Ganesh Pooja at their respective homes a few days before the wedding. The couple and their families come together to pray for a joyful and prosperous married life.

MEHNDI AND SANGEET

Highlight the communal joy during the Mehndi ceremony, where intricate henna designs are applied to the bride's

hands and feet, and the Sangeet, which is filled with dancing and singing.

PITHI

This ceremony is the Gujarati version of the Haldi ceremony. The room glows with the bright, warm yellows of the Haldi paste, and the air is fragrant with sandalwood and rosewater. Seated on a Bajat at their respective homes, the bride and groom present their hands and feet, while relatives take turns applying the Haldi paste, adding to the festive atmosphere.

MOSALU AND MAMERU

Also referred to as Mosaalu, the Mameru ceremony occurs one or two days before the wedding day. During this ritual, the bride's maternal uncle visits her and presents sweets and gifts, including a saree, jewellery, and other garments.



Ganesha Sthapan



Haldi Ceremony



Kanyadaan

WEDDING DAY RITUALS

Varghodo: Varghodo is the Gujarati equivalent of the Baraat. In this vibrant procession, the groom rides a horse to the bride's house, accompanied by his family and friends who dance joyfully along the way. The procession is further enlivened by a band of musicians playing lively instrumental music.

Jaimala: The bride and groom formally meet for the first time on their wedding day by exchanging floral garlands during the Jaimala ceremony. They swap the garlands twice while engaging in a playful game where their relatives lift them up, each trying to avoid being the first to be garlanded.

Kanyadaan and Hasta Milap: In this ritual, the bride's father formally entrusts his daughter to the groom, asking for a promise that the groom will care for her as he has throughout her life.

POST-WEDDING RITUALS

Vidaai: This ceremony marks the bride's departure from her family home after the wedding. It's an emotional moment, often filled with tears, as the bride and her family bid farewell.

Ghar Nu Laxmi: In this Gujarati post-wedding ceremony, the bride is welcomed into the groom's home as Goddess Lakshmi, who is believed to bring prosperity and good fortune. At the entrance, the mother-in-law sets a vessel filled with rice, which the bride is asked to knock over with her right foot. This act symbolizes abundance and the bride's acceptance of her new duties in her marital home.



Vidaai

Aeki Beki: Following the Ghar Nu Laxmi ceremony, the newlyweds play a game called Aeki Beki. In this game, a tray filled with water, milk, and sindoor (vermilion) is prepared, and coins along with a ring are added. The couple then tries to find the ring, and it is believed that whoever finds the ring four out of seven times will dominate household decisions. The day ends with prayers to God, seeking blessings for the newly married couple.

These weddings are an exuberant display of love, commitment, and Gujarati heritage. As the rituals unfold, from the colourful pre-wedding ceremonies to the poignant moments of the wedding and the cheerful post-wedding games, each tradition is imbued with deep meaning and cultural significance.

TIMELESS HYDERABADI PEARL JEWELLERY

Hyderabad, known as the “City of Pearls,” stands as a testament to its rich cultural tapestry and the intricate craftsmanship of its pearl jewellery

TT BUREAU

Hyderabad, known as the “City of Pearls,” stands as a testament to its rich cultural tapestry and the intricate craftsmanship of its pearl jewellery. This city, India’s premier pearl trading hub, is famous not only for its beautiful jewellery but also for its deep historical roots in the pearl trade.

The nearby village of Chandanpet, where nearly the entire population is dedicated to the skilled craft of pearl drilling—a practice passed down for generations—highlights this tradition. Such dedication has made Hyderabad one of the largest pearl drilling locations in the country.

The flourishing of the pearl industry in Hyderabad was significantly supported by the patronage of the Qutub Shahi kings and the Asaf Jahis. Their love for sparkling jewels helped establish the city as a centre for exquisite pearl jewellery.



Model Wearing Hyderabad Pearl Jewellery



Rassi

Notably, pearls were traditionally part of the royal regalia and believed to possess healing and beautifying properties. Mir Osman Ali Khan, one of the wealthiest Nizams, famously stored sacks of pearls in his palace basements. During their birthdays, princesses were weighed against pearls, underscoring the deep cultural significance of these gems.

Historically, Hyderabad's rise as a pearl trading centre came after the decline of the pearl industry in Basra, Iraq. Initially, pearls were imported from Basra, valued for their hardness compared to the softer, less durable pearls from the Bay of Bengal. However, the advent of the oil industry and subsequent pollution in the Persian Gulf diminished Basra's pearl trade, leading merchants and skilled artisans to relocate to Hyderabad.

This migration enriched Hyderabad's own practices, with artisans continuing to hand down traditional pearl cultivation and jewellery-making techniques through generations.

Today, Hyderabad pearl jewellery is celebrated worldwide for its lustrous sheen and delicate beauty. More than mere adornments, these jewels are cherished heirlooms that weave together the history and heart of an ancient city, making Hyderabad pearls a symbol of heritage and timeless elegance.

Here we explore the origin, craftsmanship, and stunning variety of ornaments that make Hyderabad pearls a coveted treasure in both traditional ceremonies and high fashion.

THE PROCESS

The crafting of Hyderabad pearl jewellery begins with the skilled Kharradars, master craftsmen who incorporate age-old family techniques of drilling, sorting, and stringing into their work. These artisans, integral to the city's heritage, first drill the pearls, which are then boiled for about four days to bleach and remove their dark colour.

Next, the pearls are placed in glass bottles containing a mix of hydrogen peroxide, water, and ether and left to the



Chandbali

sun for four to five days in glass sun boxes with mirrored bases. After sunning, the pearls are washed and meticulously sorted by shape and size.

Pearls, often called the "Queen of Jewels," hold a revered place in Hyderabad's culture. Their romantic allure and unmatched lustre have made them a favourite among women for generations. Pearls are categorized into two types: real or cultured. Each pearl is carefully drilled, either horizontally or vertically, and graded on aspects like sheen, glaze, shape, size, lustre, and uniformity.

In recent developments, many pearl producers in Hyderabad have begun exporting processed pearls to markets in Europe and the US. The profits from these sales are reinvested into purchasing advanced machinery for pearl refining.

This new equipment often uses enzymes from thermophiles, which significantly improves the pearl refining process, ensuring the continuation of Hyderabad's legacy in the global pearl market.

FAMOUS HYDERABADI PEARL JEWELLERY PIECES

RASSI

The Rassi is a distinguished piece of Hyderabad pearl jewellery, featuring a long, elegant rope design. This ornament is crafted with multiple strands of finely drilled pearls, expertly woven to create a sleek, flowing effect. It's a versatile piece, often worn in both traditional and contemporary settings, symbolizing grace and sophistication.

CHANDBALI

The Chandbali, a quintessential Hyderabad pearl jewellery piece, epitomizes the city's regal heritage. Resembling the shape of a crescent moon, these earrings are adorned with lustrous pearls and often complemented by other gemstones. The

intricate metalwork and pearl embellishments reflect traditional craftsmanship, making Chandbali a sought-after accessory for its elegance and ability to add a royal touch to any ensemble.

CHATAI

The Chatai is a remarkable piece of Hyderabad pearl jewellery, known for its distinctive mat-like design. It features tightly woven rows of small, shiny pearls that create a flat, textured surface similar to a woven mat. Renowned for its fine craftsmanship and elegance, the Chatai showcases the skilled artistry of Hyderabad jewellers and is a prized piece in traditional jewellery collections.

VADDENAM

The Vaddenam is a striking piece of Hyderabad pearl jewellery, serving as a traditional waist belt that adorns ceremonial attire. This ornate belt is elaborately decorated with pearls, often interspersed with precious stones and intricate gold work. Designed to showcase wealth and status, the Vaddenam is a masterpiece of craftsmanship.

PANCHLADA

The Panchlada is an elegant Hyderabad pearl necklace, distinguished by its five-layered strand design. Each strand is meticulously adorned with fine pearls, often interspersed with precious gems to enhance its allure. This traditional piece symbolizes grace and opulence, making it a favourite for brides and an essential in formal Hyderabad attire.

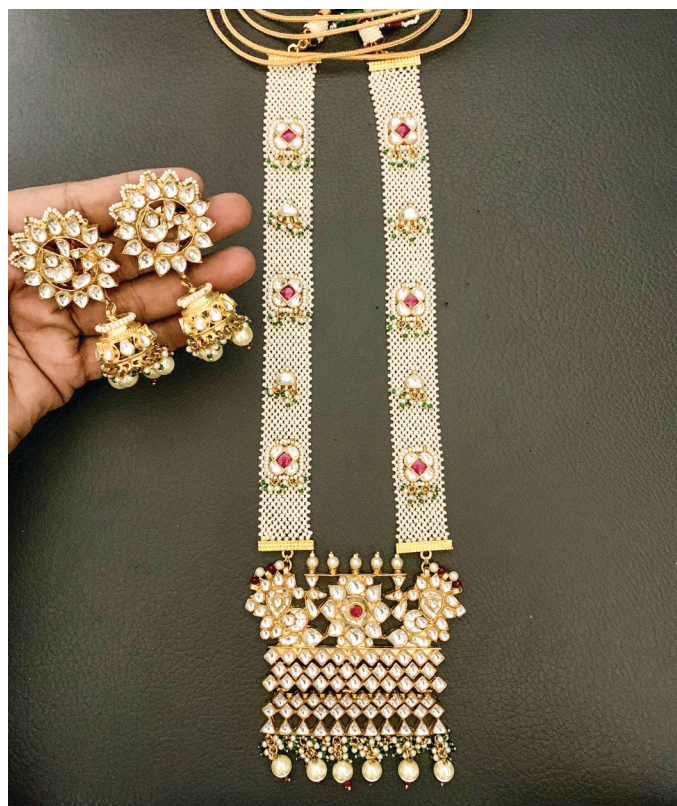
SATLADA

The Satlada is a luxurious Hyderabad pearl necklace that features seven cascading strands of pearls, embodying opulence and grandeur. This elaborate piece is often interwoven with gold and punctuated with precious

gemstones to enhance its splendour. Traditionally worn by royalty, the Satlada is a testament to the exquisite craftsmanship of Hyderabad artisans and remains a popular choice for weddings and formal occasions.

CHANDRA HAAR

Characterized by its moon-like pendants on multiple pearl strands, this necklace is a wedding favorite, believed to bring peace and joy to the wearer. These ornaments are not merely decorative; they are steeped in cultural significance, often worn during weddings and festivals, symbolizing purity, elegance, and a connection to Hyderabad's royal heritage.



Chatai Set



Vaddenam



Jhumka

JHUMKA

The Jhumka is a classic piece of Hyderabad pearl jewelry, characterized by its iconic bell shape. Adorned with layers of fine pearls, these earrings are designed to gracefully dangle and shimmer with every movement. Embellished often with gold and other gemstones, Jhumkas add a touch of traditional elegance to any outfit, making them a beloved choice for festive occasions and bridal wear alike.

TIKKA

Tikka is a stunning Hyderabad pearl jewellery piece worn on the forehead. It consists of a delicate chain with a central pearl pendant that sits beautifully on the forehead, usually starting from the hairline. Often decorated with pearls and sometimes precious stones, the Tikka adds elegance and is frequently worn at weddings and festive events.

Hyderabad pearl jewellery is more than just an adornment, it is a legacy of art and history. As modern demands evolve, the pearl industry in Hyderabad is adapting, blending traditional craftsmanship with contemporary designs to meet the global market. The future of this luminous craft looks promising, bridging the past with the present, and continuing to enchant the world with its timeless beauty.

HOW TO CHECK IF A PEARL IS REAL

To determine if a pearl is real, you can use several methods that test its authenticity. Here are some key points to consider:

LUSTER TEST

Real pearls have a deep, luminous sheen, meaning they reflect light beautifully and have a glowing surface. Fake pearls often have a surface that's too shiny or too dull, lacking the subtle inner light of real pearls.



Tikka

TEXTURE TEST

Run the pearl gently along the edge of your teeth. Real pearls usually have a slightly gritty or sandy texture due to their natural layers. Fake pearls, made from glass or plastic, will feel smooth and glasslike.

SHAPE AND SIZE

Genuine pearls are rarely perfect. They often have slight irregularities in shape or minor variations in size. Perfectly round and identical pearls are often a sign of manufacturing.

TEMPERATURE TEST

Real pearls usually feel cool to the touch initially and warm up slowly when held. Synthetic pearls tend to be at room temperature consistently.

WEIGHT TEST

Real pearls have a noticeable weight when held. They should feel heavier than they look. Fake pearls are typically lighter and feel less substantial.

DRILL HOLE EXAMINATION

Look closely at the drill holes. Real pearls typically have sharp and clean edges around the holes, and you might see slight ridges inside. Fake pearls often have painted drill holes that can peel or show signs of chipping around the edges.

RUB TEST

Rub two pearls gently against each other. Real pearls will give off a powder-like substance and still maintain their sheen. Synthetic pearls will feel smooth against each other and won't produce powder.

These tests can provide clues about a pearl's authenticity. However, for a definitive answer, especially if the pearls are valuable, it's wise to have them appraised by a professional jeweller or gemologist.

GOLDEN STITCHES: ZARDOZI

Discover the rich heritage of Zardozi, India's traditional art of gold and silver embroidery, embodying centuries of craftsmanship and cultural pride

TT BUREAU



Workers Perform Custom 'Zardozi' Embroidery Work on a Saree

Zardozi is a common form of needlework in Iran and the Indian subcontinent. The term zardozi originates from two different Persian words Zar or Zarin, which means "gold," and dozi, which means "sewing." Zardozi is a style of heavy and intricate metal embroidery that is often done on a fabric foundation of silk, satin, or velvet.

Zardozi embroidery is a stunning kind of metal embroidery that was once used to beautify the clothing of Indian kings and other members of India's royal family. In addition to that, it was used in the decoration of the walls of the royal tents, as well as scabbards, wall hangings, and equipment for the royal elephants and horses.

An important part of zardozi embroidery is making complicated patterns with gold and silver threads. The work is made even more magnificent by the pearls and precious

gems that are set into it at irregular intervals. Since the time of the Rig Veda, India has been home to the intricate needlework technique known as zardozi.

The usage of zari embroidery as a decoration on the clothing of gods is mentioned in several different historical accounts. Initially, the stitching was completed with wires made of pure silver and leaves made of actual gold. However, modern-day artisans now employ a mix of copper wire that has been polished to a golden or silver finish and silk thread in their work. This is because there is a much-reduced availability of gold and silver on a scale comparable to that of the past.

HISTORY OF ZARDOZI EMBROIDERY IN INDIA

Zardozi is a kind of needlework that originated in Persia and reached its pinnacle in the 17th century when it was



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The Threads Are Knotted Under The Fabric To Firm The Stitch

supported by the Mughal Emperor Akbar. The lack of royal sponsorship that occurred under Aurangzeb's administration was a major factor in the subsequent deterioration of the craft.

Craftsmen couldn't finish the embroidery process on their own because the raw materials were so expensive and hard to come by. In search of employment, a great number of artisans left Delhi and travelled to the royal courts of Rajasthan and Punjab. Another obstacle was thrown in the path of the craft when the 18th and 19th centuries saw the rise of industrialisation. After India got its independence in 1947, the government did not do anything to promote Zari embroidery.

MAKING OF ZARI

To be skilled in the trade, one must not only have excellent stitches, but one must also have an awareness of the fundamental procedures that are used to construct them. Zari is a flattened wire made of either silver or gold that is twisted around a silk thread to create intricate embroidered designs.

Zardos are responsible for the creation of stunning patterns that shine out like a peacock on a cloudy day. These designs include inspiration from Persian art, and as a result, the primary sources of inspiration for the themes are flowers and climbing plants.



Hand Zardozi Works on Saree

In addition to the thread itself, the frills are what give the work of zardozi its additional splendour and opulence.

Pearls, precious stones, and silk thread not only offer a touch of colour but also give the design a regal sheen and a sense of opulence.

In contrast to the majority of traditional embroideries, the artisans who work on these garments need a pattern that is first sketched on butter paper, and then chalk powder and kerosene oil are used to trace the design onto the fabric that will be stitched. The fabric is then spread out on a wooden frame called an adda, which is quite similar to the khatiya that is used in the countryside.

After this step has been completed, around 6-7 of them divide the pattern into sections and begin the process of embroidering with zari in each section.

In contrast to the majority of traditional embroideries, the artisans who work on these garments need a pattern that is first sketched on butter paper, and then chalk powder and kerosene oil are used to trace the design onto the fabric that will be stitched.

The fabric is then spread out on a wooden frame called an adda, which is quite similar to the khatiya that is used in the countryside.

After this step has been completed, around 6-7 of them divide the pattern into sections and begin the process of

embroidering with zari in each section. When working with Zari, a tiny hook needle is required to create the rapid chain stitches.

A finger is used to hold the thread on the underside of the cloth, and an aari, which is a needle that resembles an awl but has a sharp tip, is used to hold the thread on the top of the fabric.

A single pull on a loose thread might cause the whole pattern to unravel in a matter of minutes, which can signal catastrophe for the project. The alternative method involves using a regular needle to secure the stitches, which is both time-consuming and costly.

Zardozi uses many different types of stitches, such as chain, surface satin, and couching, depending on what the design needs. Like any other kind of hand needlework, Zari embroidery takes some time to complete.

EVOLUTION OF ZARDOZI

The zardozi art form has had an incredible resurgence in popularity throughout the previous half-century. This needlework has not only made its way into trendy boutiques, but it is also making a comeback in the world of interior design, home décor, and extravagant weddings.

The materials used now may not have the same elegance as those used by the Mughals, but the work is done to satisfy the need for highly adorned clothing embellished with sparkling beads and sequins. In the most recent versions of zardozi embroidery, which are being made in different parts of the country right now, there is a lot of intricate gold threadwork.

WHERE TO BUY

- Old Delhi's marketplaces have several tiny lanes with shops.
- Kinari Bazar has zari zardozi embroidery.
- Bombay Beads Centre, a large emporium for beads and sequins, supplies zari embroidery. It's Asia's biggest such store.

Despite these changes, zardozi remains a symbol of luxury and cultural pride, embodying a historical continuum that highlights the artistic prowess and rich cultural heritage of its regions.

Thus, zardozi not only preserves a decorative tradition but also carries forward a legacy of intricate artistry and cultural significance, making it a timeless jewel in the crown of textile arts.



Karigar Doing Zardozi



Tools for Crafting Zardozi

PALITANA: HOME TO 900 INCREDIBLE JAIN TEMPLES

Palitana in Gujarat is a revered pilgrimage hub, boasting over 900 Jain temples atop Shatrunjaya Hill, each a masterpiece of intricate marble carvings and devout spiritual heritage

TT BUREAU

India is indeed a religious and spiritual nation, here in this country, people of more than twelve religions believe in approximately 33 million Gods. That is the reason the country is justifiably referred to as the spiritual heart of the universe. India has prominent temples found across the quietest corners and rough hilly terrains such as Sabarimala in Kerala and Vaishno Devi in Jammu & Kashmir.

Shatrunjaya Peak in Palitana, Gujarat is another such mountain not one but 900 temples. These temples, made primarily of marble, represent an incredible feat of devotion and architectural prowess. This pilgrimage is considered one of the most sacred in Jainism, with the hill itself believed to be sanctified by visits from Adinath, the first Tirthankara, and other spiritual leaders.

PALITANA TEMPLES

This sacred destination in Gujarat's Bhavnagar district is a city with 900 temples distributed throughout Shatrunjaya

Mountain. It covers around 20 acres of land and has nine hilltops. The well-organized temple complex, a tirtha (holy spiritual location) of the Jain community, was created by Jain forefathers during the 11th and 20th centuries.

The notion that the mountain has been bestowed by 23 Tirthankaras is responsible for this unwavering loyalty and devotion (Tirthankaras who have attained a complete state of nirvana and guide others to find the same, as per Jain mythology).

The temples are composed of marble and display the incredible architectural skill of past craftsmen. With their exquisite carvings, jewel-encrusted sculptures, stunning idols, and towering walls around them, the temples appear to be a mix of vast European mansions and formidable Indian monuments.

Almost every tourist here, whether a Jainism adherent or not, agrees that the 3.5-kilometre upward trek on Shatrunjaya mountain is an otherworldly journey. The cluster of well-





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Sacred Serenity - Palitana Temples

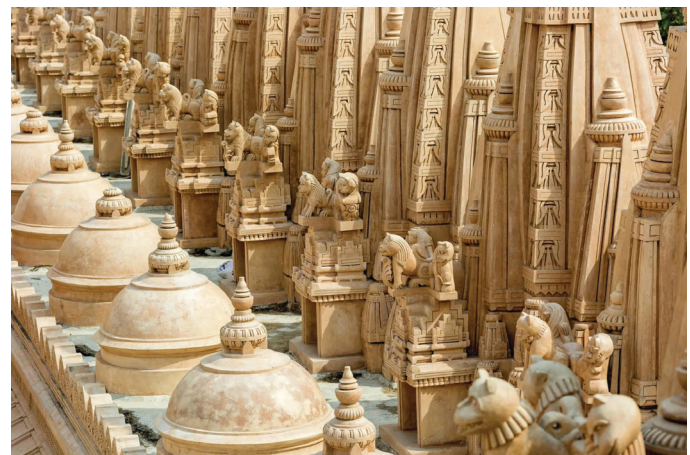
ordered and magnificent 900 temples is a view not to be skipped. It takes almost 3,750 stone stairs to get there which adds to the spectacular encounter.

Most days, thousands of devotees attempt the journey. Especially during Kartik Purnima, which symbolizes the conclusion of Chaturmas, a four-month time of religious retreat, pilgrims are seen in huge numbers.

Once you reach there, the major entrance, Ram Pole, is to the left, but the finest sights are to the right, where you can witness the Gulf of Cambay on a sunny day. One passage within the Nav Tonk Gate leads left to the shrine of Angar Pir, a Muslim prophet who defended the sites during a Mughal invasion.

The Chaumukhji Tunk, located to the right, houses the Chaumukh (Four-Faced Shrine), which was established in 1618 by a Jain trader. Adinath, the first Jain Tirthankar (assumed to have acquired enlightenment here), is represented with images facing the four cardinal points. You could simply spend a few hours up here roaming through the hundreds of temples. The Adinath Temple, on the highest altitude on the far (south) side, is the largest, perhaps one of the most spectacular and significant sites with a great amount of exquisite sculpture.

This temple is popular not only with Jains but also amongst Hindus and Muslims. On top of the peaks, there lies a little Siva shrine. Muslims also visit here to pray at Angar Peer Baba's Dargah. Angar Peer Baba, a Sufi saint, is revered as Palitana's rescuer.



Ancient Marvels - Palitana Temples

HISTORY OF THE PALITANA TEMPLES

The Palitana temples on Shatrunjaya Hill were constructed over 900 years beginning in the 11th century. The first temples in this location were erected by Kumarpal Solanki, a famous Jain devotee. The temples were demolished by Turkish Muslim invaders in 1311 AD when the shrines were ruled over by the monk Jinaprabhasuri, who was 50 years old, but they were eventually reconstructed to their splendour.

Following that, Jain temples were constructed again in the area. Over time, the location became a major spot for Jain pilgrims from around the globe. Palitana was formally recognized as the world's first fully vegetarian community in 2014. It also holds the distinction of being the only



Faithful Elegance - Palitana Temples

hillside city to have a thousand temples. The most notable temple complex is dedicated to the first Jain Tirthankar, Rishabhanatha of Jainism's 24 Tirthankaras. His name is derived from his mother's 14 fortunate dreams wherein a bull (Rishabha) arrived before his birth. Foreign tourists are only permitted to access the main temple compound.

HOW TO REACH PALITANA

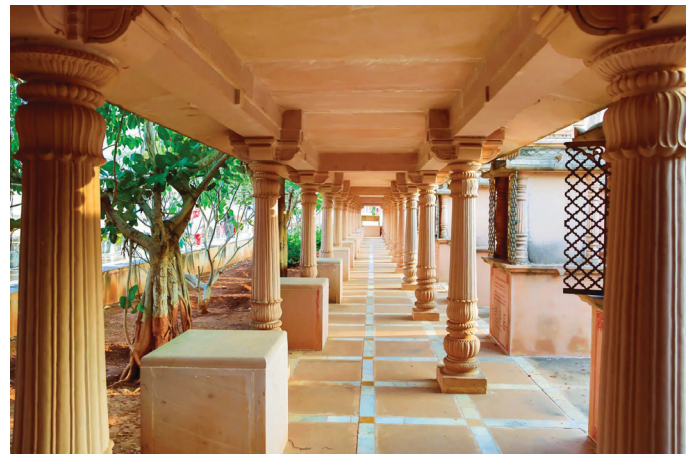
- You may go to Ahmedabad by train or plane (airports in Ahmedabad and Bhavnagar) and then call a taxi to Palitana town in the Bhavnagar district.
- Rest at Dharamshala, which is around 5-10 minutes from Shatrunjaya Hill. They offer their on-time Jain food options.
- From October through March, it is the best time to come. During the monsoon season, the yatra is closed for four months.

SOME TIPS TO REMEMBER WHILE VISITING PALITANA TEMPLES

- Wear traditional or complete attire as a mark of respect toward Jain culture.
- Bring enough water for your hike.
- You can't eat anything on the hill, so eat a little before you start climbing.
- You might climb without shoes or footwear, therefore, wear protective socks.
- After you return, recharge yourself with sugar water (Sakar nu paani) or sugarcane juice at a booth (Bhatu Ghar) near the Taleti, which is complimentary for all the devotees.
- Taking photographs inside the temple is against the law.
- Pilgrims are not permitted to bring food into the temple.
- Everyone, even the priests, is required to return by sunset.
- It is forbidden to slaughter animals for food in this location since meat is outlawed. The selling of eggs or chicken is prohibited. The region belongs mostly to Jain. The prohibition occurred as a result of a hunger strike by Jain priests seeking an end to the usage of meat, which they believe is against their ideas and traditions.



Divine Whispers - Palitana Temples



Timeless Grace - Palitana Temples

- From October through March, it is the best time to come. During the monsoon season, the yatra is closed for four months.

Reflecting on the hill, home of serenity and harmony with the ability to purify one's soul and pave the route to Moksha. It is appropriate to refer to it as a magical creature that one must visit once in their lifetime.

As the world's largest and only mountainous complex entirely dedicated to temples, the place embodies the spirit of ancient traditions and enduring faith, making it an essential destination for anyone seeking to experience the profound sanctity and historical depth of Indian religious practices.

These temples in Gujarat stand as a monumental testament to the depth of Jain devotion and architectural brilliance. This sacred site not only offers a pathway to spiritual elevation but also showcases the rich cultural heritage of India. The painstakingly carved marble structures, set against the backdrop of Shatrunjaya Hill, provide a breathtaking panorama that attracts pilgrims and tourists alike.

BIRDWATCHING WETLANDS

Discover the best wetlands for bird watching in India featuring stunning biodiversity and scenic landscapes

TT BUREAU

As a bird lover in India, you'll find yourself in the heart of biodiversity, especially in the vibrant wetlands. These areas are teeming with life and offer an unrivalled spectacle of birds in their natural habitats.

This guide is your ticket to discovering these feathered treasures, offering practical tips and highlighting exciting nearby attractions. Be Ready with your binoculars and prepare for an unforgettable adventure in India's great outdoors.

KEOLADEO NATIONAL PARK, RAJASTHAN

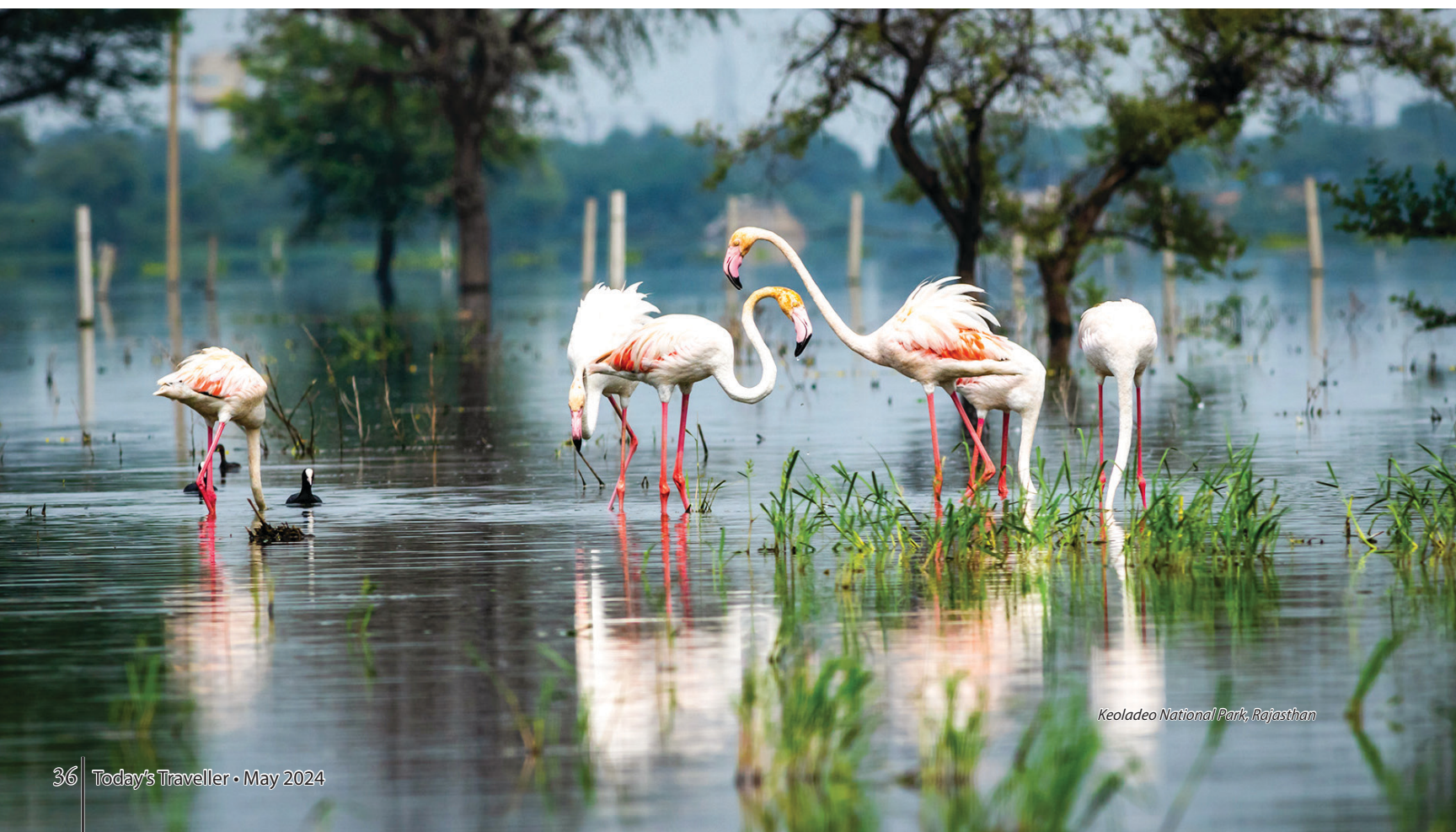
Keoladeo National Park in Rajasthan is a paradise for bird enthusiasts, celebrated for its extensive array of bird species. As a birdwatcher, you can spot everything from waterfowl to raptors, including the iconic Siberian Crane during its winter migration, and other fascinating species like the Sambar

Deer and Painted Storks. The park also provides a habitat for numerous other birds such as the Indian Courser, the Sarus Crane, and the Grey Francolin, making it a thrilling destination for bird lovers to explore diverse avian life.

Reaching Keoladeo is quite convenient. Located in Bharatpur, it is accessible by both rail and road. The closest airport is in Jaipur, about a three-hour drive away, while Bharatpur's railway station connects the town to several major cities including Delhi and Agra.

To enhance the travel experience, visitors can explore the rich cultural heritage of Bharatpur. The Bharatpur Palace offers a splendid display of Rajput and Mughal architecture and serves as a fascinating complement to the natural beauty of Keoladeo.

BEST TIME TO VISIT FOR BIRDWATCHING : The best period for watching resident breeding birds at the park is from August



Keoladeo National Park, Rajasthan

to November, whereas October to February is the ideal time to witness a variety of migrant birds.

SPECIES HIGHLIGHT : Keoladeo National Park hosts an impressive range of 370 bird species. The park is a crucial wintering ground for numerous aquatic birds from Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Siberia, and China. It stands out as the sole location in India where the critically endangered Siberian Crane is observed during the winter months. Visitors can expect to see a variety of birds such as the pelican, cranes, wagtail, eagles, rose-ringed parakeet, painted stork, magpie robin, white-breasted kingfisher, spotted bill duck, moorhen, honey buzzard, partridge, and the green footed yellow pigeon.

CHILIKA LAKE, ODISHA

Chilika Lake in Odisha, Asia's largest brackish water lagoon, is an idyllic spot for bird lovers, offering an unparalleled birdwatching experience. Each winter, the lake becomes a bustling hub for over a million migratory birds, making it a vibrant spectacle.

Birdwatchers can delight in sightings of rare and exotic birds such as flamingos, white-bellied sea eagles, and the elusive Irrawaddy dolphins. The lake's Nalabana Island, a bird sanctuary within the lagoon, is particularly noteworthy for its dense concentrations of feathered visitors.

Reaching Chilika Lake is relatively straightforward. The nearest major city with an airport is Bhubaneswar, about 116 kilometres away. From there, visitors can take a scenic drive to Chilika, which offers breathtaking views along the way.

For those looking to extend their journey beyond birdwatching, the surrounding area offers numerous attractions. The ancient city of Puri, famous for its Jagannath Temple and pristine beaches, is nearby, offering cultural and spiritual enrichment.

BEST TIME TO VISIT FOR BIRDWATCHING : The best time to visit Chilika Lake in Odisha for birdwatching is from November to February. During these months, the lake welcomes a large number of migratory birds, making it a prime spot for observing a diverse array of avian species in their natural habitat.

SPECIES HIGHLIGHT : Between November and February, Chilika Lake becomes a prime destination for birdwatchers, attracting a wide array of migratory birds. The lake's waters are dotted with numerous flamingos, adding a pink hue to the landscape. The skies buzz with the presence of Northern Pintails, Gadwalls, Ospreys, and White-bellied Sea Eagles. Along the shores, Black-tailed Godwits and Sandpipers abound, while rare species like the Goliath Heron and Bar-headed Goose also make an appearance.

RANGANATHITTU BIRD SANCTUARY, KARNATAKA

Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary in Karnataka is a true delight for birdwatchers, known for its dense population of diverse bird species. Located on the banks of the Kaveri River, this small yet



Yellow wagtail, Chilika Lake, Odisha



Pelican in Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary, Karnataka

vibrant sanctuary hosts an array of both migratory and native birds. Visitors can enjoy close encounters with rare birds such as Painted Storks, River Terns, and the coveted Spoonbilled Pelican during boat rides that meander through the islets.

Getting to Ranganathittu is easy, as it is just about 19 kilometres from Mysore, which is well-connected by road and rail to the major cities of Karnataka, including Bangalore, the nearest airport city. The drive from Bangalore to Ranganathittu takes approximately three hours, making it an ideal day trip destination.

BEST TIME TO VISIT FOR BIRDWATCHING : The ideal time for birdwatching at Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary in Karnataka is from December to March, when migratory birds visit, enhancing the sanctuary's diverse avian population.

SPECIES HIGHLIGHT : Between December and March, Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary in Karnataka teems with avian life, featuring Painted Storks, Spoonbills, Pelicans, and Kingfishers. This period also sees the arrival of distinctive migrants like the Eurasian Spoonbill and Stork-billed Kingfisher, offering exceptional birdwatching opportunities.

HARIKE LAKE, PUNJAB

Harike Wetland in Punjab, also known as Harike Pattan, is an internationally recognized sanctuary and one of the largest wetlands in northern India. It's a crucial stopover for migratory birds and offers an impressive array of avian species, making it a paradise for birdwatchers.

Some of the star attractions among the birds include the Indus River Dolphin, the rare and elusive species that finds a haven here, as well as more common sightings like the Pintail, Common Teal, and the majestic Siberian Crane during the migratory season.

To reach Harike Wetland, travellers can fly into the nearest major city, Amritsar, which is about 60 kilometres away. From Amritsar, the wetland is easily accessible by road. This proximity makes it a great day trip for visitors staying in Amritsar.

BEST TIME TO VISIT FOR BIRDWATCHING : The best time for birdwatching at Harike Lake in Punjab is from October to March, when a diverse range of migratory birds, including ducks and waders, flock to the area.

SPECIES HIGHLIGHT : During the peak migratory season, around 45,000 ducks are spotted here. In the winter months, species like the wigeon, common teal, pintail, shoveler, and Brahminy ducks are frequently observed. The lake is renowned for its population of diving ducks, including the crested pochard, common pochard, and tufted ducks, which are found in large numbers. Additionally, approximately 375 bird species have been recorded in the area.

BHIGWAN, MAHARASHTRA

Bhigwan, a small town on the backwaters of Ujani Dam in Maharashtra, is often referred to as the "Bharatpur of Maharashtra" due to its fantastic bird-watching opportunities. Located about 100 kilometres from Pune, Bhigwan is particularly famous for the flocks of Flamingos that grace its waters during the winter months. Bird enthusiasts can also spot a wide variety of water birds such as the Bar-headed Goose, Osprey, and the Indian Cormorant, making it a sought-after destination for avian photographers and watchers alike.

Reaching Bhigwan is quite convenient it's best accessed by road from Pune, which is well-connected by air and rail to major Indian cities. The drive to Bhigwan offers scenic views and a chance to escape into the tranquillity of nature.

BEST TIME TO VISIT FOR BIRDWATCHING : The optimal time for birdwatching at Bhigwan, Maharashtra is from December to March, when migratory birds like flamingos and bar-headed geese arrive, enhancing the area's vibrant birdlife.

SPECIES HIGHLIGHT : Bhigwan in Maharashtra is a birdwatcher's delight, attracting species such as the vibrant flamingos and majestic bar-headed geese. The wetland also hosts a variety of ducks, waders, and raptors, including the osprey and marsh harrier, making it a rich tapestry of avian biodiversity.



Duck, Harike Wetland



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Carl F. Bucherer Manero Central Counter is a sporty chronograph in manly shades of green and black with just the right hint of glamour. With a hybrid rubber strap, domed sapphire crystal and stainless steel casing, this is a limited-edition timepiece.

PATHWAYS TO PANORAMA

Trekking trails of the Western Ghats of South India, offering rugged mountain vistas and unforgettable adventures

TT BUREAU



Kumara Parvatha Trek, Karnataka

Situated along the southwestern stretch of India, the Western Ghats are not just one of the world's eight 'hottest hotspots' of biological diversity, but also a trekker's paradise with trails offering everything from misty mornings to panoramic sunsets.

Trekking through the Western Ghats, designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site offers an extraordinary experience that showcases the ancient and diverse landscapes of this mountain range, which is older and more diverse than the Himalayas.

This mountain range boasts some of India's most untouched waterfalls, forests, lakes, and valleys. It serves as the source for many major rivers and houses India's last pristine evergreen tropical forest, the Silent Valley National Park.

For those eager to put on their hiking boots, the Western Ghats offer an array of trails that promise both challenge and charm, all while navigating through some of South India's most breathtaking landscapes.

KUMARA PARVATHA TREK, KARNATAKA

A challenging trek that spans 22 kilometres and typically takes 2 days to complete is the Kumara Parvatha trek in the Western Ghats of Karnataka. Trekkers are drawn to Kumara Parvatha for its diverse terrain, encompassing dense forests,

vast grasslands, and even a captivating waterfall, promising a trekking experience like no other.

Kumara Parvatha is home to the revered Kukke Subrahmanya temple at its base. This ancient temple, steeped in history, holds deep significance for locals and draws devotees from across the country, particularly South India, who flock here to offer prayers and make wishes.

Adjacent to the temple stands Shesha Parvatha, cloaked in the verdant foliage of the Pushpagiri Wildlife Sanctuary. Kumara Parvatha, also known as Pushpagiri, remains hidden behind Shesha Parvatha, only revealing itself after crossing the latter. However, the entire trail is commonly known as the Kumara Parvatha trek.

Rising to over 1,700 meters, Kumara Parvatha is Kodagu district's second-highest peak and Karnataka's fourth-highest peak. As dawn breaks, the sight of Shesha Parvatha hints at the thrilling adventure ahead, setting hearts racing.

MEESAPULIMALA TREK, KERALA

Get on the enchanting Meesapulimala Peak trek, a journey through lush valleys, blooming Rhododendrons, and charming tea estates. Located at an altitude of 8,661 feet in Kerala's Idukki district, Meesapulimala offers serene landscapes as you traverse eight hills, straddling the border of Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

This 8-kilometer trek from Rhodovalley guides you through high-altitude grasslands, dense rainforests, and diverse wildlife habitats. Despite its name suggesting a tiger's face, don't expect any tiger sightings here; "Meesa" means moustache, "puli" means tiger, and "mala" signifies hill, hence the unique name.

Ideal for trekkers of all ages, this day trek promises scenic vistas and memorable photo opportunities along the way. With an easy to moderate difficulty level, it's a trek achievable without major challenges.

TADIANDAMOL TREK, COORG, KARNATAKA

Standing at approximately 1746 meters above sea level, Tadiandamol claims the title of the highest peak in Coorg district, Karnataka, and ranks as the second highest in the entire state. Situated around 8 kilometres from Kakkabe town and roughly 35 kilometres from Madikeri, Tadiandamol lies in the southeastern part of Coorg.

For trekking enthusiasts, Tadiandamol offers an exhilarating adventure and ranks among the best hikes in India. Upon reaching the peak, visitors are treated to awe-inspiring views of the surrounding landscape amidst a serene and refreshing ambience. The peak is best explored between December and May, with early winter being the preferred time for trekking. It's located around 30 kilometres from Virajpet.

During the trek, trekkers can find accommodation at the Nalknad Palace, a historic two-storied structure built by Dodda Veerarajendra in 1792, serving as a convenient base

camp for the night. In the morning, trekkers can resume their journey by ascending the steep path from the palace, eventually leading to the peak.

AGASTHYAKOODAM TREK, KERALA

Trekking to Agasthyakoodam in Thiruvananthapuram promises an extraordinary wildlife experience, making it a must-try adventure for your bucket list. Legend has it that Sage Agastya, one of the Seven Sages in Hindu



Agasthyakoodam Trek, Kerala



Meesapulimala Trek, Kerala



Dudhsagar Trek, Goa

mythology, meditated in this place, giving rise to the name Agasthyakoodam. As one of the highest peaks in Kerala, Agasthyakoodam boasts rich biodiversity and captivates trekking enthusiasts with its adrenaline-pumping trails. Located within the Neyyar Wildlife Sanctuary, this scenic peak holds a prominent spot on Kerala's tourism map.

Set within the grandeur of the Western Ghats, the trekking path leads through varied terrain, spanning lush forests, open grasslands, and rugged rocks. As you journey, you'll discover enchanting waterfalls, bubbling springs, and towering trees, enveloping you in a mystical forest setting that tests the mettle of even experienced trekkers.

The trek begins from the Bonacaud Forest Picket Station, covering a distance of approximately 50 kilometres over three days. Due to its protected status under the Kerala Forest Department, entry is restricted. The trek typically starts during the Makaravilakku festival at the Sabarimala temple in mid-January and concludes on Sivarathri, usually after mid-February.

Over the three-day journey, trekkers progress from Bonacaud to the Athirumala Base Camp on the first day, ascend to the Agasthyakoodam Peak and return to the base camp on the second day, and finally return to Bonacaud on the third day. Food and accommodation are provided by the Forest Department, ensuring a comfortable and memorable trekking experience.

DUDHSAGAR TREK, GOA

The Dudhsagar Trek, Goa is popular and centred around the Dudhsagar Falls. The falls cascade through Bhagwan Mahaveer

Sanctuary and Mollem National Park in the Western Ghats, marking a dramatic point in the Mandovi River's journey from the mountains to the Arabian Sea at Panjim. This area, rich in biodiversity, is cloaked in deciduous forests, offering a lush backdrop to the river's scenic passage.

Dudhsagar waterfall is one of India's tallest waterfalls. It's a haven for nature enthusiasts seeking solace in the lush forest jungle, fulfilling their cravings for trekking and natural wonders. The name "Dudhsagar" translates to "sea of milk," aptly describing the waterfall's appearance as water cascades down the mountain in a voluminous flow resembling milk.

With the arrival of the monsoon, a beloved season for trekkers, nature adorns itself in vibrant greens and vivid colours, offering clear and refreshing views. Trekkers eager to explore new destinations will find this article particularly appealing.

To reach Kulem railway station from Mumbai, there is no direct train route. Travellers must first reach Madgaon railway station in Goa and then take a passenger train to Kulem. However, it's worth noting that the frequency of trains from Madgaon to Kulem is limited.

Local Guides: Hiring a local guide not only enhances the trekking experience with insights into the local flora and fauna but also ensures safety.

Each step on these trails offers not just natural beauty, but also a closer look at the diverse ecosystems and cultures of South India. Whether you're a solo adventurer or travelling with companions, the trails of the Western Ghats are sure to leave you with memories that last a lifetime.



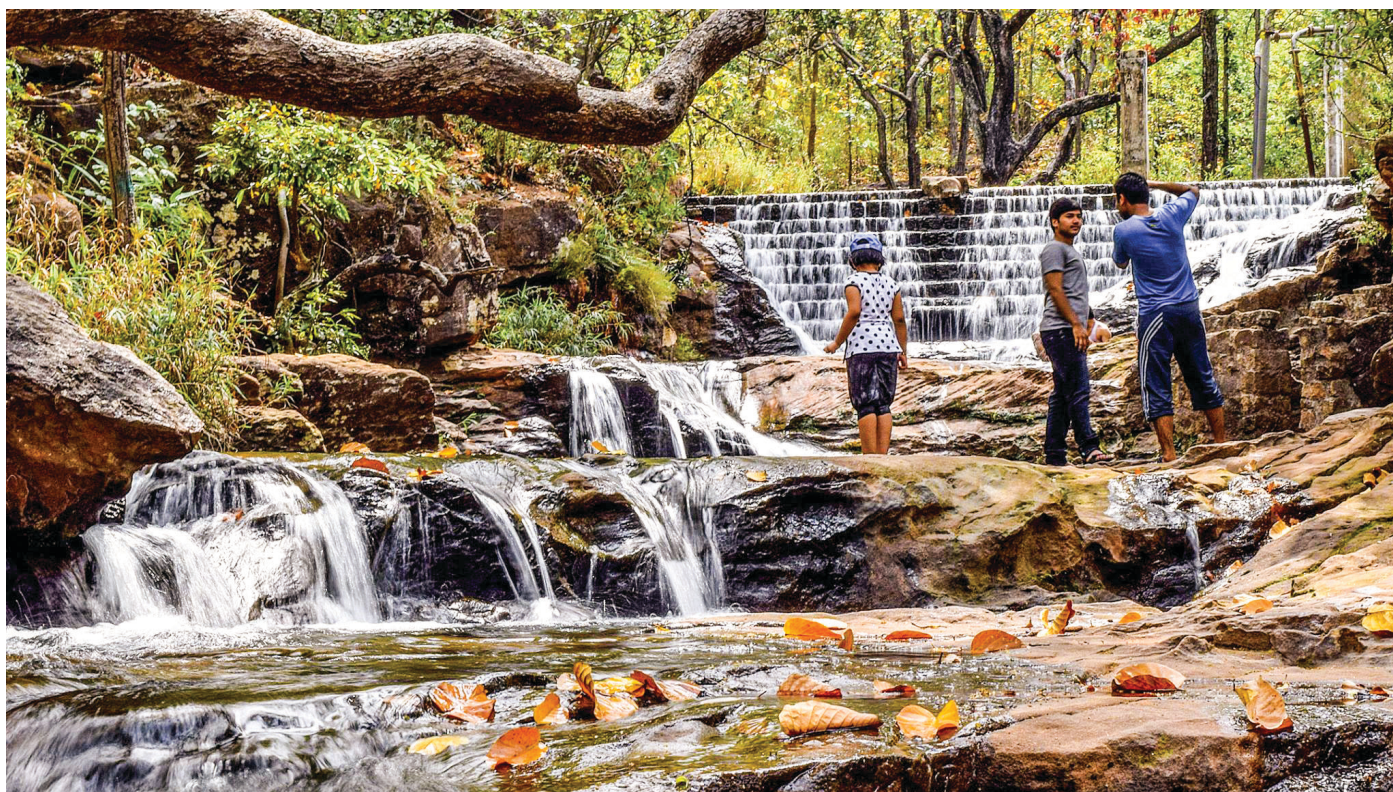
LAUREATO 42 MM

The Laureato 42mm showcases the iconic combination of polished and satin finished surfaces in its stainless steel case. With a slim profile of 10.68 mm, it easily fits under a shirt cuff, while the well-designed steel bracelet ensures a comfortable fit for the wearer.

HILLY PARADISE: PACHMARHI

Explore the enchanting Pachmarhi, Madhya Pradesh's serene hill station

TT BUREAU



Bee Falls

Pachmarhi, a renowned bio reserve, seamlessly blends the allure of natural beauty with a rich historical tapestry, making it a favoured destination for travellers.

Situated in the heart of India, this unique spot is distinguished by its lush greenery and diverse ecosystems, safeguarding an array of plant and animal species, some of which are unique to the area.

Beyond its environmental significance, Pachmarhi is a treasure trove of cultural heritage, home to ancient temples and caves that narrate stories of civilizations long past. These historical sites, surrounded by the breathtaking scenery of the bio reserve, offer a glimpse into the spiritual and historical depth of the region.

The serene beauty of the Satpura Range provides a backdrop to this historical and natural wonderland, inviting tourists not just to visit but to connect with the essence of India's rich past and vibrant biodiversity.

The preservation of both the natural environment and the archaeological marvels makes Pachmarhi a unique intersection of conservation and history, appealing to a wide range of interests from eco-tourism to historical exploration. This balance of natural and historical attractions makes Pachmarhi a captivating destination, promising an enriching experience with a never-ending things to do in Pachmarhi list for all who visit. As a reserve, Pachmarhi also captivates travellers with its stunning locales. Let's explore some of the places to visit in Pachmarhi.

BEE FALLS

Bee Falls, situated in the Satpura Hills of Madhya Pradesh, is a famous tourist attraction that captivates visitors with its natural beauty. This picturesque waterfall is about 200 km from Bhopal and can be reached by a jeep ride, offering an adventure to those who seek it.

The journey to Bee Falls itself is an experience, winding through the lush landscapes of Pachmarhi. During the summer, Bee Falls becomes an oasis for travellers seeking relief from the heat. The waterfall's cool, refreshing water makes it an ideal spot for relaxation and rejuvenation. Its accessibility and stunning surroundings attract people looking for a peaceful retreat in nature.

Bee Falls is not just a natural wonder but also a perfect example of the serene beauty Pachmarhi has to offer. Whether you're a nature lover, an adventure seeker, or just someone looking to cool off during the hot months, Bee Falls promises a memorable experience for all.

DHOOPGARH

Dhoopgarh, about 10 kilometres from Pachmarhi, stands as the tallest peak in the Satpura Range, reaching up to 4429 feet. This peak is famous for its Sunset Point, attracting many tourists and locals who want to experience its breathtaking views.

Not only is it the highest point in Pachmarhi, but it also claims the title for the whole of Madhya Pradesh and Central India. Watching the sunset here is truly a remarkable experience.

PANDAV CAVES

Located in the heart of Pachmarhi, The Pandav Caves in Madhya Pradesh, are a cluster of five ancient rock-cut caves that are steeped in legend and history. Believed to date back over 1,000 years, these caves are named after the Pandavas, the heroes of the Hindu epic Mahabharata, who are said to have spent part of their exile here.

Although archaeological studies suggest that the caves were actually Buddhist sanctuaries from the 1st century AD, the blend of myth and history adds to their allure. Each cave is simple yet captivating, with its own distinct architectural features.

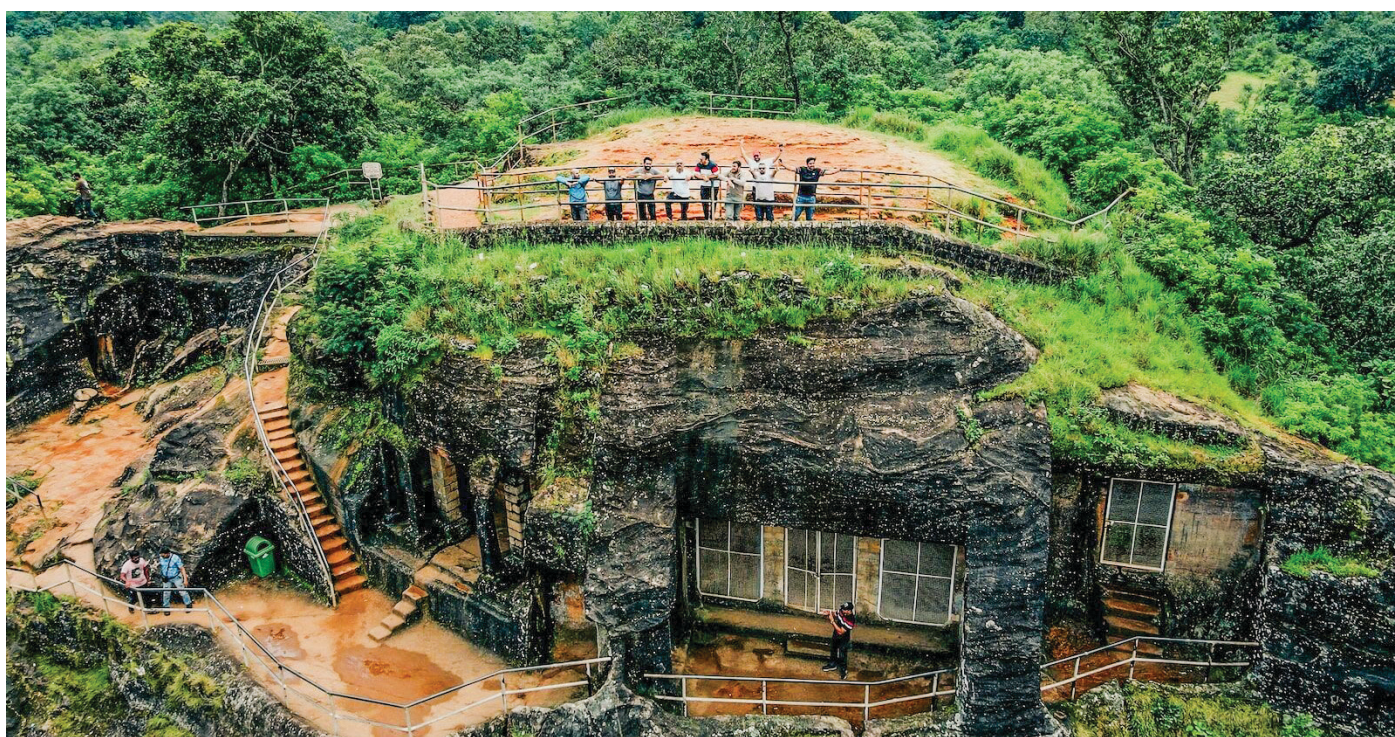


Dhoopgarh

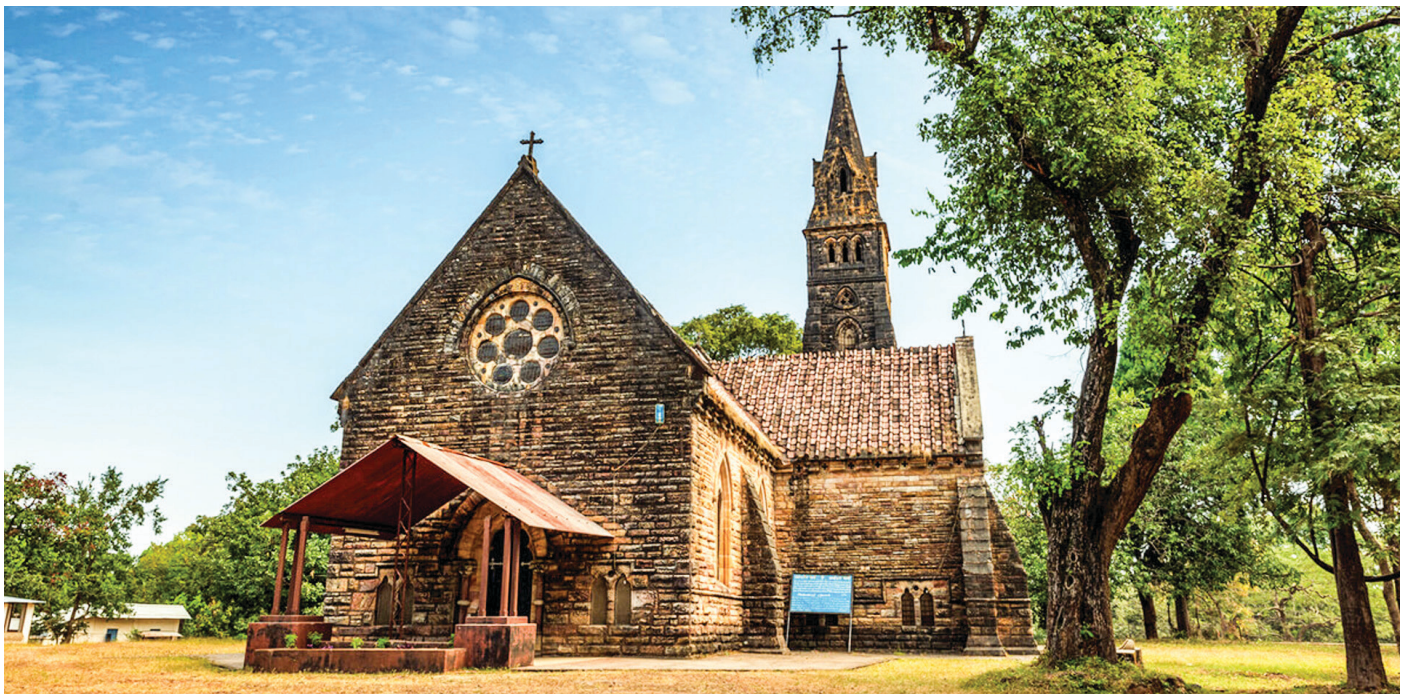
Today, the Pandav Caves are a significant tourist attraction, drawing visitors not only for their historical and religious significance but also for their peaceful and green surroundings. The site provides a serene escape, offering a glimpse into India's rich past and an opportunity for quiet reflection amidst natural beauty. Whether you're a nature lover, or someone seeking tranquillity, the Pandav Caves of Pachmarhi offer something for everyone.

CHAURAGARH TEMPLE

The Chauragarh Temple perched atop one of Pachmarhi's highest peaks in Madhya Pradesh, stands as a beacon of spiritual significance and natural beauty. This revered site, dedicated to Lord Shiva, is accessible via a challenging trek that includes climbing approximately 1,300 steps.



Pandav Caves



Christ Church

Despite the physical effort required, the journey to the temple is a fulfilling experience for both devout pilgrims and adventure enthusiasts. The summit offers breathtaking panoramic views of the surrounding Satpura Range, making the ascent worthwhile. Devotees often undertake this climb to offer prayers and present tridents (trishuls) at the temple, a unique ritual symbolizing devotion and faith.

The area around the temple, with its tranquil ambience and lush greenery, provides a perfect setting for meditation and reflection. The Chauragarh Temple is not just a religious site; it's a destination that blends spirituality with the awe-inspiring beauty of nature, attracting visitors from all walks of life to this enchanting part of Pachmarhi.

BISON LODGE MUSEUM

The Bison Lodge Museum, nestled in the picturesque town of Pachmarhi, Madhya Pradesh, holds the distinction of being one of the oldest buildings in the area, dating back to 1862. Originally the home of Captain Forsyth, the founder of Pachmarhi, it has since been transformed into a museum that showcases the rich flora and fauna of the region. The museum offers a fascinating glimpse into the natural heritage of the Satpura Range, featuring a wide array of exhibits, including photographs, models, and specimens of the local wildlife and vegetation.

Visitors can explore the various displays to learn about the ecological significance of the area and the conservation efforts in place to preserve its biodiversity. The Bison Lodge Museum serves not only as an educational centre but also as a reminder of Pachmarhi's history and its role in the study of natural science in India. It's a must-visit for nature lovers, history explorers, and anyone interested in the conservation of India's natural wonders.

CHRIST CHURCH

Built-in 1875, Christ Church stands out for its remarkable Gothic architecture, which is characterized by its beautiful stained-

glass windows and the intricate woodwork that adorns its interiors. These windows, especially, narrate biblical stories with their vibrant colours and designs, creating a peaceful and contemplative ambience for worshippers and visitors alike.

The church's tranquil setting amidst the natural beauty of Pachmarhi adds to its charm, making it not just a place of worship but also a site of spiritual retreat for those seeking solace and inspiration.

APSARA VIHAR

Just 3 km away from the Pachmarhi Bus Stand, you'll find the captivating Apsara Vihar Waterfalls in Pachmarhi, Madhya Pradesh. Located near the Silver Falls, Apsara Vihar is one of Pachmarhi's many beautiful waterfalls and a top spot for those looking for adventure.

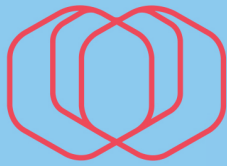
Hidden within Pachmarhi's dense forests, Apsara Vihar features a charming small waterfall that drops from a height of about 30 feet into a welcoming natural pool below. During the British era, English women often bathed in this pool, appearing like fairies to the local people, which is how the waterfall got its name, Apsara Vihar or Fairy Pool. It's a perfect spot for anyone looking to enjoy safe swimming, diving, or just a natural bath in the open.

A favourite among travellers and those looking to enjoy a picnic, Apsara Vihar offers a refreshing escape. To get the best view of the Apsara waterfall, visitors embark on a 1.5 km downhill trek from Rajat Prapat. This journey is especially rewarding during the monsoon when the waterfall flows fully, offering a spectacular sight.

This unique blend of attractions, coupled with the tranquil beauty of the Satpura Range, makes Pachmarhi a must-visit destination, promising an enriching and memorable experience for all who venture into this natural and cultural haven. From the majestic heights of Dhoopgarh to the serene depths of Apsara Vihar, each site within this reserve tells a story of ecological diversity and historical depth.

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MAY MAGIC: INDIA'S FESTIVALS

India's May festivals, highlights traditions, food, and colourful cultural experiences

TT BUREAU

As the sun gets brighter and the days warmer, India prepares to celebrate some of its most colourful festivals in May, from Buddha Purnima to Ganga Dussehra. These festivals are celebrated on a large scale and are a big part of the month. Hindus also observe monthly fasts as part of their rituals, while Sikhs honour significant events tied to the history of their ten Gurus.

May is a special month that showcases the unity of India's diverse cultures and highlights our common values. It's a time for joy, getting together with loved ones, and engaging in community festivities. Whether you're a traveller keen on discovering India's cultural depth or a local excited to join in the local celebrations, there's something for everyone in May's festivals.

Come along as we guide you through India's May festivals, diving into the unique customs, traditions, and beliefs that make each one special.

INTERNATIONAL FLOWER FESTIVAL

Even though Sikkim makes up only 0.2% of India's total land area, it is considered important for its rich variety of plants and animals.

Every year, people look forward to Sikkim's International Flower Festival, which features hundreds of flower species. It's a true celebration of what nature has offered Gangtok. You can spend a whole day at the festival enjoying a stunning display of unique and rare flowers. The day is made even better with a delicious food festival that highlights Sikkim's local cuisine and culture.

At this festival, you can see more than 500 types of orchids, 30 kinds of rhododendrons, and 240 varieties of trees, along with a diverse collection of ferns, magnolias, roses, gladioli, cacti, alpine plants, climbers, and herbs. The Flower Festival in Sikkim is a burst of colours that delights the eyes and offers a peaceful escape for the mind and soul.



International Flower Festival, Sikkim



Chithirai Festival, Madurai

BUDDHA PURNIMA

Buddha Purnima is an important festival in the Buddhist tradition, celebrated across South, Southeast, and East Asia. This festival marks the birth of Prince Siddhartha Gautama, who later became known as Gautama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism.

This peaceful celebration is marked with great devotion and respect by Buddhists. During the festival, monks in monasteries read Buddhist scriptures and conducted prayers and sermons. Celebrations take place in notable Buddhist sites like Bodh Gaya and Sarnath. Homes and temples are adorned with colourful lanterns and lamps. Devotees also make offerings of fruits, flowers, candles, and incense to honour Lord Buddha.

In India, Buddha Purnima is particularly significant in Maharashtra, where 77% of the country's Buddhist population resides, but it is also observed in other parts of the country according to the Indian calendar.

CHITHIRAI FESTIVAL

The Chithirai Festival, also known as Chithirai Thiruvizha, Meenakshi Kalyanam, or Meenakshi Thirukalyanam, is a vibrant annual celebration held in Madurai, Tamil Nadu during the Tamil month of Chithirai. This festival honours the Meenakshi Temple and its deities: Parvati, who is worshipped here as Meenakshi, and Shiva, who is adored as Sundareswarar. It's a splendid event that reflects the divine beauty and majesty of these figures.

Legend has it that Lord Vishnu rode a golden horse to Madurai to attend the wedding of Goddess Meenakshi and Lord Sundareswarar. During the festival, a beautifully decorated chariot carrying the idols of the divine couple parades through the city, greeted enthusiastically by the crowds.



Lord Basva



Buddha Purnima, Sarnath Temple

The rhythm of drums, the spiritual atmosphere, and the offerings of coconuts, flowers, and camphor by the people all contribute to the festive spirit. Additionally, trade fairs and exhibitions are set up, adding to the allure for visitors.

The festival lasts for a full month, with the first 15 days dedicated to celebrating Meenakshi's coronation as a divine ruler and her marriage to Sundareswarar. The remaining 15 days focus on Kallalagar (or Alagar), an avatar of Vishnu, and his journey from Alagarkoyil to Madurai.

BASAVA JAYANTI

Basava Jayanti is a special day that celebrates the birth of Basavanna, a 12th-century Hindu Kannada poet and philosopher born in 1134 AD. He is also considered the founding saint of the Lingayat sect. This year, Basava Jayanti falls on May 14th and is primarily celebrated in the Indian

states of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra. In Karnataka, it's recognized as a government holiday.

On this day, people visit nearby Lord Basaveshwar temples to pray and celebrate. Members of the Lingayat community organize various events to mark the occasion, sharing greetings and sweets. Special lectures are held in prayer halls where Basavanna's life and teachings are discussed. Many followers make a pilgrimage to Kudalasangama, a site of great significance where celebrations last for about seven days. Here, numerous spiritual and cultural activities take place in the Basavanna temples.

GANGA DUSSEHRA

According to legend, the Ganges River descended to Earth during this time, coming down reluctantly. To temper her force, Lord Shiva caught her in his matted hair, allowing her to flow gently to Earth in seven streams. This event is considered very auspicious, and many devotees travel to holy cities like Varanasi, Haridwar, and Rishikesh to bathe in the sacred waters. In Haridwar, as evening falls, 'artis' (ceremonial worship) are performed, and many people meditate along the riverbanks. It's a perfect time to experience the purity of nature.

AKSHAYA TRITIYA

Also known as Akha Teej, is a highly auspicious Hindu festival dedicated to Lord Vishnu. It marks the beginning of the Treta Yuga according to Hindu mythology and is also celebrated as Parashurama Jayanti, commemorating the birthday of Lord Vishnu's sixth incarnation, Parashurama. Legend has it that Lord Vishnu took the form of Parashurama to rid the Earth of evil.

Akshaya Tritiya falls on the third day after the new moon, known as Amavasi. In 2022, it will be celebrated on April 3. The term "Akshaya" means 'that which never diminishes,' symbolizing eternal prosperity. It is considered an ideal day to start new projects, get married, or invest in valuable items like diamonds and gold.

MOATSU FESTIVAL

The Moatsu Festival, also known as Moatsu Mong, is a vibrant celebration held by the Ao Naga tribes of Nagaland in May. It marks the conclusion of the sowing season and is a time to celebrate fertility, renewal, and peace. During the festival, men and women dress in traditional attire, complete with elaborate headgear.

The festivities span three days, starting with traditional dances, folk songs, and the playing of musical instruments like horns, drums, and cymbals to usher in the summer. Another highlight is the Moatsu Mong Food Festival, where attendees can enjoy a variety of dishes made from freshly harvested grains.

Activities include brewing rice beer, preparing pigs and other animals for feasting, and singing praises of traditional heroes. An expert also predicts the days for the village, forecasting good or bad times.

The festival attracts visitors from across India, making it a perfect opportunity to experience the unique culture of Nagaland. It's an event full of joy, laughter, and memorable experiences. No matter your location or the festival you're celebrating, May is a month filled with joy, laughter, and unity! So set a reminder and get ready to enjoy the wonderful festivals of India this May.



Ganga Dussehra, Haridwar



Moatsu Festival, Nagaland

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COFFEE CULTURES: GLOBAL BREWS

Savour the rich diversity of global coffee cultures, where distinct brewing methods and unique traditions create a mosaic of flavourful experiences

NAVEEN KAKKAR



Espresso

Coffee culture, a global phenomenon, varies widely but shares a common thread, it brings people together. This beloved beverage transcends mere consumption, embodying rituals that are both a personal pleasure and a social experience. Whether it's sipping a morning brew to kick-start the day, enjoying a leisurely cup at a local cafe, or partaking in elaborate coffee ceremonies, coffee plays a significant role in daily routines across cultures.

Each method of preparation, serving, and enjoyment not only enhances the flavour profile of the coffee but also enriches the cultural fabric of communities worldwide.

As we delve into the diverse cultures, we discover not just the richness of the drink itself but also the unique ways in which it's woven into the lives of its aficionados. Let's explore some renowned global coffee traditions, each celebrated for its rich legacy in the world of coffee.

ITALY: ESPRESSO

Coffee has been an integral part of Italian culture since the 1500s, with each of Italy's 20 regions adding its own twist to the beverage. While espresso is common throughout the country, regional variations abound. For example, in Le Marche in the north, you can savour a caffè anisette, which is espresso flavoured with anise. In Sicily to the south, there's caffè d'un parrinu, a coffee that includes hints of cloves, cinnamon, and cocoa, reflecting Arabic influences.

Daily life in Italy is punctuated with specific coffee rituals: a cappuccino is typically enjoyed at breakfast, a caffè macchiato or two in the afternoon, and an espresso to cap off dinner.

Italian coffee drinking also comes with its unspoken rules. For instance, ordering a "latte" will get you just milk, the literal translation. Asking for a coffee to go or a cappuccino after 11 a.m. might mark you as a tourist.



Türk Kahvesi

TURKEY: TÜRK KAHVESİ

Turkish coffee dates back to 1555 when Syrian traders introduced it to Istanbul. By the mid-17th century, it had become a staple at the Ottoman Court, with the Sultan enjoying coffee made by his brewers. This drink is deeply ingrained in Turkish culture—so much so that the word for breakfast, ‘kahvalti,’ translates to ‘before coffee,’ and the colour brown is ‘kahverengi,’ or ‘coffee-coloured.’

Served in small demitasse cups, Turkish coffee should be sipped slowly, not gulped like an espresso, to avoid swallowing the grounds. Drinking Turkish coffee is a leisurely activity, often stretching over an hour as it encourages conversation and connection. Alongside the coffee, you might be served a glass of water and a sweet, like Turkish delight, to balance the strong flavour.

DENMARK: KAFFEE

Despite its small population of just under six million people, Denmark ranks among the top five coffee-consuming countries globally. On average, each Dane drinks about 19 pounds of coffee per year, which translates to roughly 430 cups. While today some of those cups might come from renowned speciality roasters like Coffee Collective or La Cabra, speciality coffee only became a part of Denmark’s renowned culinary scene quite recently.

Danish coffee tradition is about more than just drinking coffee, it’s a fundamental part of Danish life. Cafes are not just places to drink coffee, they offer cosy atmospheres where people can enjoy intimate conversations and warm vibes, akin to sitting by a fireplace. This setting encourages many Danes to enjoy their coffee in cafes rather than to go, nurturing relationships in the process.

For Danes, coffee is more than just a source of caffeine; it’s a way to slow down, build relationships, and create a sense of warmth and cosiness within the community.

FRANCE: CAFÉ AU LAIT

French coffee has a unique reputation and, while it may not be as famous as Italian coffee, it’s still a crucial part of daily life in France. Coffee drinking here is surrounded by its own culture, complete with specific etiquettes and traditions.

When you visit a traditional French café, don’t expect to see a coffee menu. It’s helpful to know the most common types



Café au Lait



Café Cubano

of French coffee drinks. “Café au Lait,” for example, means “coffee with milk.” It’s similar to a latte but contains more milk and is typically enjoyed in the morning with breakfast items like tartines or croissants, served in a large bowl-shaped cup. Conversely, espresso in France is generally consumed after a meal or on its own in the afternoon, not with food.

CUBA: CAFÉ CUBANO

Coffee was introduced to Cuba in the 1700s, quickly making the island a major producer and exporter. The significance of its coffee plantations is recognized with UNESCO World Heritage status. However, the rise of rum and sugar cane soon overshadowed coffee production, though it didn’t stop Cubans from drinking coffee.

Coffee remains central to daily life in Cuba, often serving as a reason for social gatherings. It’s commonly enjoyed among friends, whether in a street café, at home, or during neighbourly visits. Nearly every Cuban household has a stove-top espresso maker, and offering coffee to guests is a common courtesy.

In addition to homes, you can find Cuban coffee served through home window cafeterias, called Ventanillas. These are much more affordable than traditional bars and restaurants, with a cup of Café Cubano typically costing about 1 Cuban peso.

Shravanabelgola



Kahwa

SAUDI ARABIA: KAHWA

Coffee is more than just a drink in Saudi Arabian culture; it's a symbol of hospitality and social bonding. Known locally as qahwa or gahwa, traditional Saudi coffee is made from lightly roasted Arabica beans and is often flavoured with spices such as cardamom, saffron, or cloves. It's typically served with dates and sweets to complement its flavour during family gatherings and social events, reflecting the country's warm and generous spirit.

In Saudi Arabia, the beans can be roasted lightly or heavily, but the brewing method typically involves boiling the coffee and serving it unfiltered and without sugar. However, spices like saffron, cinnamon, cardamom, or cloves might be added for flavour. Coffee is served from a special pot called a Dallah into a small cup known as a Finjal, filled just enough to cover the bottom of the cup. The host or waiter will continue to serve small amounts until indicated otherwise by the guest. To offset the bitter taste, coffee is usually accompanied by something sweet.

INDIA: KAAPPI

While many countries are renowned for their coffee, India's coffee traditions might not be the first to come to mind, yet it hosts over 16 unique coffee varieties and is the only country that grows all its coffee in the shade.

India's coffee industry is emerging and starting to capture the attention of global experts. Coffee's history in India traces back to the 16th century when the legendary Brother Baba Budan smuggled seven coffee beans from Yemen into India and planted them in Chikkamagaluru, a district in Karnataka,



Kaapi

southwest India. This area, now known as the Baba Budan Hills, represents about 82% of India's coffee farmland.

In Chennai, formerly known as Madras, the traditional beverage of choice is filter coffee, known locally as Kaapi. This aromatic drink is a staple in many households, especially within the Brahmin community, where nearly every family has their own cherished recipe for this popular drink.

NETHERLANDS: KAFFE

As coffee became more accessible and affordable, it gained popularity across all segments of Dutch society. By the 18th century, it was a staple, with coffee houses springing up in towns and villages across the country. These spots became cosy havens for socializing, discussing politics, and sharing ideas.

In Dutch coffee preferences, one popular choice is the “koffie verkeerd,” a latte with more milk than espresso, usually enjoyed in the mid-morning or afternoon, often with a pastry. Another beloved tradition is “koffie en appelgebak,” coffee served with a slice of warm apple pie, a treat enjoyed by both locals and visitors.

Recently, the Netherlands has emerged as a centre for speciality coffee, with numerous roasters and cafes dedicated to sourcing sustainable, high-quality beans.

JAPAN: KOH-HEE

Japan is at the forefront of the coffee scene, elevating coffee to a fine dining experience. For coffee enthusiasts who enjoy exploring unique cafes, Japan offers a rich coffee history. While you'll find all the major coffee chains here, the essence of Japanese coffee lies in its independent coffee shops, or “Kissaten.” These places are where Japan's coffee masters perfect their craft, using hand-brewing techniques to produce some of the world's most exquisite and distinctive coffees.

Coffee is more than just a drink in Japan; it's a way of life, embraced by both locals and international visitors. The country's coffee traditions is on par with that of Italy, the USA, Britain, and South America. Coffee was likely introduced to Japan by Dutch

and Portuguese merchants in the 1800s. Initially overshadowed by tea, coffee gradually became a staple.

A unique aspect of Japan's coffee habits is the “morning service” tradition in some cafes, where ordering a coffee also gets you a complimentary breakfast of toast, eggs, and salad.

IRELAND: IRISH COFFEE

Coffee was first brought to Ireland in the 17th century by merchants who had visited the Middle East. However, it didn't gain popularity until the 19th century among the aristocracy, serving as a luxurious alternative to the traditionally favoured tea.

Coffee drinking in Ireland now not only caters to traditional tastes but also embraces sophisticated brewing techniques in modern cafés, where baristas use advanced equipment to craft the perfect cup. This contemporary approach contrasts with the simplicity of traditional Irish coffee but each provides a unique and enjoyable experience for coffee lovers.

These diverse brewing traditions not only highlight unique regional flavours but also foster moments of connection and conversation. As we explore these varied landscapes of taste and tradition, we come to understand that coffee is more than just a beverage—it's a global language of hospitality and creativity.



Kissaten



Irish Coffee



Koffie en appelgebak

PUNJABI FOOD BEYOND BUTTER CHICKEN

Discover the rich culinary heritage of Punjabi Food with these 12 must-try dishes that showcase the region's vibrant flavours beyond the famous butter chicken

TT BUREAU

Punjab in North India is renowned for its delicious cuisine, offering a variety of dishes that go beyond the well-known butter chicken. From the smoky richness of Amritsari kulcha to the tangy zest of aloo paratha, and the comforting warmth of dal makhani, these dishes provide a taste of Punjab's diverse and flavorful food landscape.

Whether you're a fan of hearty meals or light, spicy snacks, there's something in Punjabi cuisine to satisfy every palate. This list of must-try Punjabi dishes invites you to explore the rich culinary heritage of the region, each dish bursting with distinctive, vibrant flavours.

CHOLE BHATURE

Chole Bhature, also known as Chana Bhatura, is a traditional Punjabi dish that is enjoyed across India. Bhatura is a soft and fluffy fried leavened bread, while Chole is a spicy acidic chickpea dish. The tasty chickpea curry goes well with poori, naan, kulcha, aloo kulcha, and aloo paratha. They go well with either bread or pav. Serve sliced onions, green chillies, and lemon wedges as a side dish.

AMRITSARI KULCHA

It is a leavened crisp and soft bread packed with boiling and mashed potatoes and spices. This bread resembles Naan.



Chole Bhature



Amritsari Kulcha



Amritsari Fish

Amritsari Kulcha with Chole, also known as Dal Makhani, is a traditional Punjabi food dish from Amritsar. This filled Kulcha is frequently served with tamarind and date chutney by vendors. On the palate and the dish, it's a delightful joy.

SARSO KA SAAG AND MAKKI DI ROTI

Sarso ka Saag with Makki di roti is a tried-and-true Punjabi food combination that everyone enjoys. It is typically served during the winter months, but there are no such limitations; you may enjoy this nutritious yet delicious combo at any time of year. This meal is also prepared on important occasions and festivals such as Lohri, Baisakhi, Gurgurab, and Diwali. It is best consumed with butter, jaggery, or honey.

DAL TADKA

Dal Tadka is a famous Indian lentil dish cooked with either arhar dal which is husked and split pigeon pea lentils or masoor dal hat is husked & split red lentils. Restaurant Style Dal Tadka is Made on a Stovetop with an optional smoking method and Home Style Dal Tadka is Made in the Instant Pot. With steamed rice or jeera rice, the dal tadka goes perfectly. It also goes well with roti, naan, dinner rolls, and paratha.



Tandoori Chicken

TANDOORI CHICKEN

Originally a Punjabi food preparation, it is a soft, succulent dry dish made by slow-roasting spiced and marinated chicken in a clay oven called tandoor. Murgh tandoor, often known as tandoori murgh, is a delectable chicken dish. Murgh refers to chicken, while tandoor refers to a clay oven. With sliced onions, carrots, and lemon wedges, serve tandoori chicken.

AMRITSARI FISH

It is a lightly battered fish fry with Indian spices, ginger and garlic paste, and gram flour. It's so well-known in Punjab that it may be found in any of the city's premier hotels or street food stalls. It has a similar following to Tandoori Chicken.

By now, you've probably figured out that the meal is called Amritsari, which literally means Amritsar because it originated in that city. Add some chaat masala and fresh lime wedges and it is ready to serve.

ALOO PARATHA

Aloo paratha is a savoury and spiced potato-packed flatbread made with unleavened whole wheat from Punjab, India. It's packed with spicy, slightly sour mashed potatoes and served with a tart sour mango pickle on the side. One of the most popular breakfast options in Punjab is aloo paratha. Parathas are usually roasted in a lot of ghee and then served with dollops of white butter, or Makhan as it is known in Punjabi.

PUNJABI PAKODA KADHI

The Hindi word “Kadhi” refers to a yoghurt sauce that has been simmered for a long time. The word “pakora” refers to gram flour fritters (besan). A savoury, spiced batter mixed with onions, gram flour, and seasonings is used to make the fritters. Sprinkled on top, Kashmiri red chilli powder gives it a lovely hue.

RAJMA CHAWAL

Rajma Chawal is a North Indian dish made especially popular as a famous Punjabi food dish made of kidney beans, onions, tomatoes, spices, and herbs and served with rice. This delectable recipe is simple to prepare and serves as a nutritious and filling dinner.

It’s a traditional Punjabi food thali served on weekends, special occasions, and at weddings. It can also be served with roti. All you need is some onion and lemon wedges on the side to enjoy this delectable dinner, which finds a hallowed place in vegetarian punjabi food recipes.

PINNI

Aate ki pinni (whole wheat flour, semolina, and dry almonds needed in a small ball shape) is a traditional Punjabi treat. Aate or aata refers to whole wheat flour, and pinni is a Punjabi term for round-shaped sweets.

Peanut chikki - aate ki pinni, like Sarson ka saag and Makki ki roti, is regarded as the ideal winter meal in Northern India. Slivered cashews, melon seeds, and dried ginger powder can be added to the pinnis. The ginger powder (saunth) will give the pinnis a little extra warmth.

PANEER TIKKA

Paneer tikka is a delicious Punjabi food made by marinating chunks of paneer in spices and grilling them in a tandoor. It serves as a vegetarian substitute for chicken tikka and similar

meat-based dishes. When served with a sauce, it’s known as paneer tikka masala. Paneer tikka can also be enjoyed in a wrap, known as paneer tikka roll, where the grilled paneer (homemade cheese) is wrapped in an Indian flatbread.

LASSI

Lassi is a traditional yoghurt-based drink that originated in the Punjab region of the Indian subcontinent. In Punjabi, the word “lassi” refers to a mixture of yoghurt and water. This beverage is highly popular in India, often hailed as the region’s favourite summer drink and described as the “air conditioner of Punjab” due to its cooling effects.

Lassi is made by blending yoghurt with water and spices, typically served chilled in a glass or a traditional clay cup known as a ‘Kulhar’.

Punjabi dishes offer a delightful journey through the varied and rich flavours of one of India’s most famous culinary regions. Each dish represents a piece of Punjabi food culture, promising not only a taste buds but also an authentic experience of traditional Indian cooking. Whether you’re enjoying these meals in a local eater or cooking them at home, they are sure to bring a taste of Punjab right to your plate.



Lassi



Aate ki Pinni



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