

TRAVEL LINKS

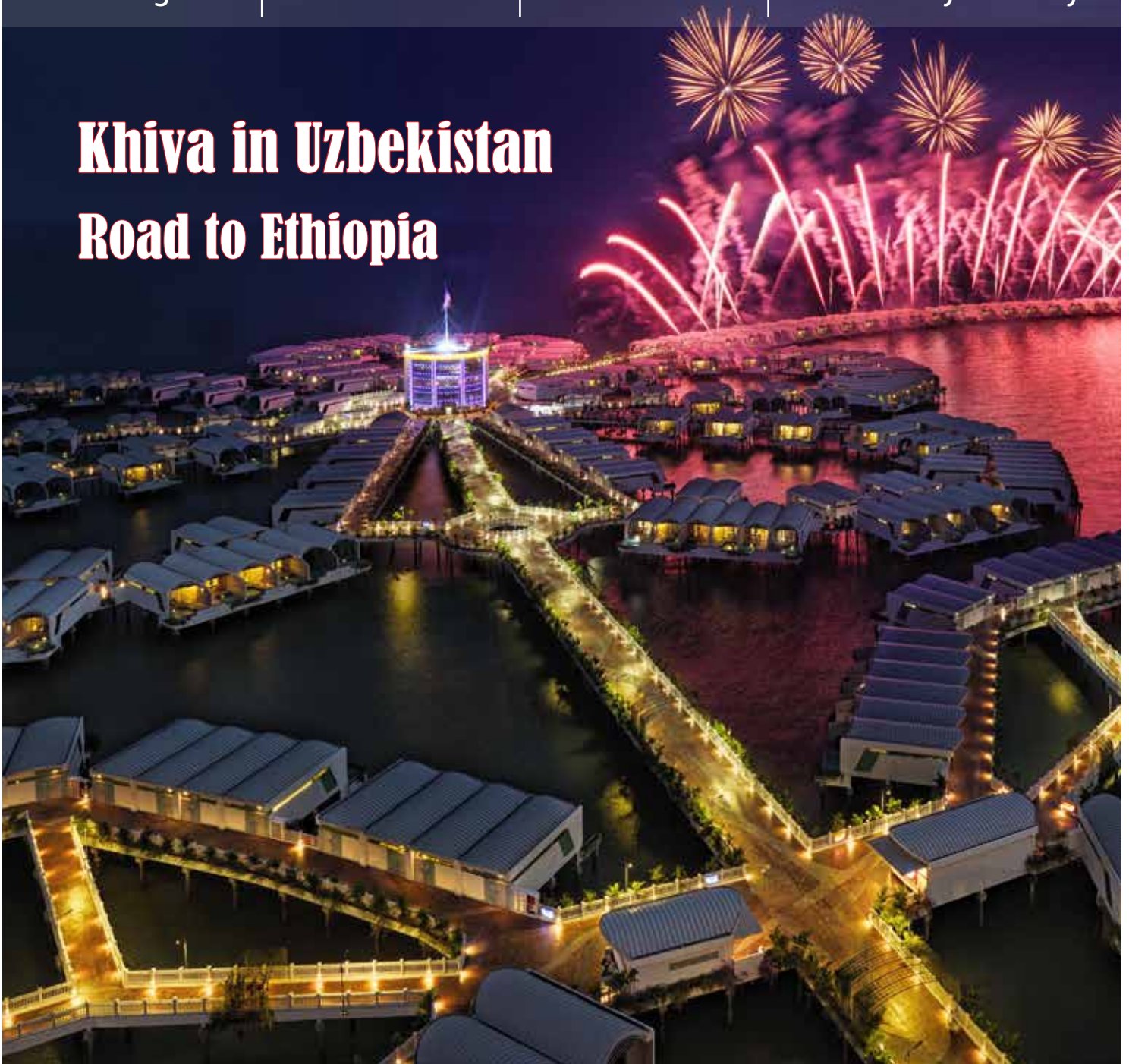
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Inaugural Issue

Lens Vignette | The Wine World | Lesser Known | Eco Friendly Holiday

Khiva in Uzbekistan Road to Ethiopia



The Land of Powder – Skiing in Niseko

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TRAVEL LINKS

EDITOR & PUBLISHER
Payal

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER & DIRECTOR
Pankaj Sahni

CONSULTING EDITOR
Rahul Gupta

ASSISTANT EDITORS
Radhika Narang
Trivadesh Singh

COPY EDITOR
Sameksha

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Shruthi Singh.S
Debjani
Nicola
Pragya
Sumit Kumar
Srishti Verma

MARKETING CONSULTANTS
Akshat Bisht
Ashish

CIRCULATION
J P Nagar
Sudher Mahajan

DESIGN
Samay Singh

ACCOUNTS MANAGER
Amit Agarwal

HEAD OFFICE
39, Shahpur Jat, 1st Floor
New Delhi | 110049
Phone 011- 40105499
Mob: 9818114451

email & subscriptions-
travellinkstugo@gmail.com

COVER DESIGN
Samay Singh

it brings me immense pleasure to introduce you to my journey for being the editor of Travel links magazine. The thought, the idea not only emerged simply out of passion to explore the road less travelled but also from being conscious explorer and the fact that we all get only one life to experience the serene beauty of this abundant world of diversity, in and around us.

The cover story is the proving point that all said and done, good content is the key and of primary importance for the magazine and its readers. Henceforth, the article on the timeless 14th century city of Khiva in uzbekistan and why is it called the land of the lesser known. The blue of the mosaics, the astounding mosques inspires one to travel to the other end of the silk route.

Ethiopia in Africa as a tourist destination gives readers a different perspective to look at the place and how everything spread on the internet is not entirely true. The warmth of people, rich history and such diverse wild life cannot be missed. The country deserves to be on the bucket list for people who love exploring, at least once in a lifetime.

For skiing vacations in niseko, we bring to you as to why it is called The Land of powder; how the snow here is different from Obergurgl in Austrian Otztal in Tyrol, Adelboden in switzerland and Tahoe in the us.

Hobbiton movie set Tour, in mamata new Zealand as one of the most sought-after tourist destinations is quite an interesting read. The section of hotel and wedding destination covers some of the best properties of langkawi, Dickson and Kuala lumpur for exotic stay and enjoying your vacations.

introducing you to the World of Wines. This section of the magazine will in series beginning with the basics of the Wines and the correct pronunciations for the different types of grapes, hence the varieties of Wines

The lens vignette shall open an imaginative take on The Photograph of the month. What is the image trying to say is what we would like to know?

For india travels we have a travelogue on Kasauli and Tungrali village in lonavala. We also have "A Road less travelled" on Haaranagi backwaters in Coorg.

it will be our endeavor to bring to you the newer travel experiences, to explore more, to give our readers a captivating reading content. looking forward for your suggestions. Together we explore and share the happy journeys. Wishing all our precious readers a very happy Deepawali and a festive season. stay tuned for the next issue. Do get in touch with us at travellinkstugo@gmail.com

 @payal_dashin

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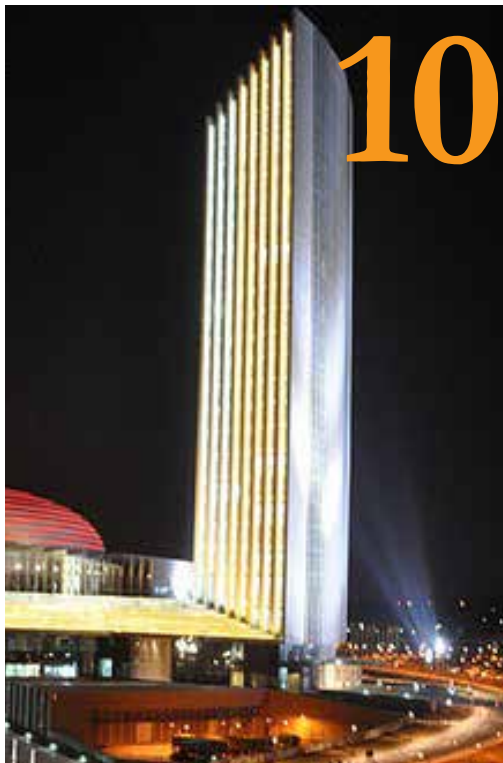
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Lens vignette

Most of the times a photographer is so engaged at looking through the lens, that you forget what the image is trying to say on its own. If you could switch sides and see the lens looking at you, then time and place become one.

It is a great way to understand yourself..



Cover Story - Lesser known

UZBEKISTAN, KHIVA-JEWEL OF THE DESERT



Rahul Gupta

I stretch my body on my toes still unable to reach the dark and delicate burgundy fruits hidden by the dense green heart shaped leaves. From nowhere, a few children materialize, shouting “toot” all seemingly too well orchestrated by nature. I try and remain where I am, unobtrusively on the crimson stained road and watch a rectangular cloth turn pink and purple as ripened mulberry fruits fall in abundance.

The summer afternoon turns delightful as we savor the sweet and sour of “shehtoot” fruit slowly amidst laughter and languages that neither of us understood of each other.

One tree, a few silk worms and a yard of fabric led to such gigantic upheavals in annals of history, is truly hard to imagine.

Uzbekistan for me had been a land of the unknown, like an invented season. To be honest the

blue of the mosaics, the astounding mosques and land of forefathers of Mughal Dynasty King, Babur were enough reasons for me to pack my bags and hit straight on the other end of the silk route.

Most people complete their travel circuit and turn back from Bukhara; little realizing that the real gem is located in the Khorezm oasis inside the great karakum desert - the timeless 14th century city of Khiva.

26 hectares of land, 51 monumental sites and 250 dwellings, enclosed by brick and mud fortification walls – Khiva has seen its fair share of history. Whilst it is famous for its intact and sanitized monuments courtesy the Russians, Khiva was notorious for being a trading post for slaves.

With the sun, behind my back now, the minarets of Khiva rise from the ground like giant fisted hands wearing bangles of blue and teal, shimmering in the hot afternoon sun in the otherwise

-muted pallet of mud brow. The city lives in her quotidian routine, though the visitors do manage to find their surprises and adventures.

The archaic city dominated by earth colours seems to stand very still, observing the changing seasons and a life beyond the utilitarian offering its aesthetic beauty to those who wanted to discover her.

Evening does not come quickly in Khiva, as I realize that I am sweating and in need of taking frequent breaks in the shadows. My mulberry tree is too far away to offer any respite. Taking umbrage in Kuhna Ark, the hot breeze blowing along the brick road enters the old fortress of 12th century more humbly and with lesser warmth. The stunning tiles in combinations of white and shades of blue with intricate carving cool me in the otherwise hot and arid weather.

Walking past a door at the back of throne room, I climb up the

deep and narrow stairs that open up at the watchtower, set back against the Ichon Qala's formidable wall. Watching the sunset from the watchtower through the Kuh-na Ark seemed to be the perfect vantage point and we are glad that other tourists thought otherwise. The wall divides the modernity with the medieval, both relying on each other to keep their existence meaningful.

I stand separated between two worlds.

It seems a perfect way to end the day as we make our way back to the hotel. It was still hot and I was very hungry and eager to be a part of the national obsessions of Uzbeks – the plov.

A British couple sitting close to our table sits huddled taking in every word their guide had to offer. "Alexander the Great after capturing Bukhara was served Plov at a royal banquet and do not forget that he walked in the lanes of Khiva as well..."

The waitress soon arrives carrying the lagan(platter) of Plov. I watch her dainty hands holding the huge plate as the steam rises and fills my senses with the meaty aroma and I forget everything else. It is said that most skilled

chefs- called oshpaz can cook for 1000 people at one go.

In my over enthusiasm, I realize I have overeaten the Plov and with my aching feet, the air-conditioned room in the hotel was my oasis for the night. The city has fallen very quiet by now, waiting for the next busload of tourists to conquer it.

Outside my hotel room window, the mulberry tree leaves scrape the glass as if knocking and inviting me to listen to his story. I sleep with the ghosts of many travelers and conquer before me in the city of mosques, mausoleums, minarets and mosaics.

Sun rises quickly over the edge of an unforgiving desert as I step out in the cobbled street; the magic of mud and the scent of the earth engulf me. Spread across hectares, it seems like a daunting task to pick the start point. Since our hotel in the precincts of Icahn Kilan (inner city), everything seems close enough to touch.

There are many ways one can explore Icahn Kilan. You could pour yourself over the map and make your detailed and precise itinerary or you could like me with no plans at all, want to get lost in the labyrinth of the desert city.

Some find it too sanitized and then a few feel it's a living marvel. The odd would find it boring and then some find it mesmerizing. The restored, rebuilt and revitalized city is like a story with many stories within its confines.

My first encounter of the day is the great Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi, founder of algebra, algorithms and the number "0". In deep thought, playing with his beard, Khwarizmi is unmindful of the tourists who stop and take a photograph with him.

A woman smiles at me as she brooms the street where the mighty Alexander the Great once walked. Somewhere a couple gets ready with their traditional dresses as they pose against the exterior wall of Juma Minar, the most magnificent and towering monument of Khiva. I lose my hesitation and amble across the rickety wooden bridge before plunging in darkness. Resting left hand on the inside wall, my steps are careful in negotiating the narrow and deep steps. At points the roof is too low for comfort as I stop frequently to catch my breath and take respite from the cool breeze that blew through the small windows, which lit the otherwise dark and



dingy staircase.

The top is disappointing as there is hardly any space. A Romanian couple smiles at us seeing the sweat drops on our foreheads. The sun casts a haze and the jade blue dome of Makhmud Pahlavan mausoleum stands out in the otherwise subdued mud palette of Khiva. The blues are sudden and they erupt in large inverted cups wearing multiple ring bands of turquoise and Persian blue. Behind the mausoleum, stands Kala Minaret; a beautiful chimney draped in shades of blue.

I dread the thought of heading back and making a dash, my return journey is quite fast, as I make no pit stops.

Khiva is timeless – with its bounty of architectural delights, it is a great place to get lost. My legs, though feel otherwise.

Peek through the unassuming doors and they take you centuries ago with their stories and architecture, all intact. To take refuge from the scorching sun, we duck in the cool confines of Juma Mosque, tentatively, with its structure supported by 213 unique columns of karagacha (black elm). Sitting in the company of trees that were cut in the 10th century, I drink the deep calm. The tree trunks huddle together, each one has a story engraved on its bark. Two puddles of light find their way in the otherwise dim and unusual mosque.

Sitting on wooden bench in the company of the dark scent of worn out wood, I wondered what layers of history was I brushing with my wanderings.

I wish I could have stayed longer in the solitude of Juma Mosque for a longer time but with only one day left at hand; there was much ground to cover. Once outside, the heat strikes with vengeance. A few steps ahead, both sides of the alley have been taken over by the hawkers selling scarves, bracelets and souvenirs.

“Sharukh Khan” – shouts a lean, mustached man wearing a faded brown baggy trouser – you from India”? In the bustling amidst the chromatic confusion of people, this gentleman stands out with is high-pitched voice as his hand reaches out to shake mine. . “Yes, I am from India”, I reply holding his sweaty hand in mine.

The only way get away was to

A woman smiles at me as she brooms the street where the mighty Alexander the Great once walked. Somewhere a couple gets ready with their traditional dresses as they pose against the exterior wall of Juma Minar, the most magnificent and towering monument of Khiva. I lose my hesitation and amble

buy a cap, which was a useful purchase to keep my head from boiling over. I find Turks and Russians in equal numbers. We two were probably the only Indian with a handful of Europeans. In shaded stalls, Uzbeki women with their gold-capped teeth bargain politely with the tourists, most of whom are locals themselves. Nearby a few kids kick the football as I join them for a quick match. Their energy and stamina is no match for my aching muscles of wanderings in the city and soon I stand exhausted and we decide food comes first.

We enter a re created building, which seemed more like a touristy café that was mercifully quiet for the moment. Khorezm Art Café is a welcome break from the history. “What would you like to eat”? – A

waiter asks me. “What can you get fastest”? Within five minutes I have been served Mastava with Uzbek Nan bread. A thick soup of meat, rice and potatoes sat in front me. My friend settles for Manti as our table falls silent for a while as we take a break from history and heat to relish the Uzbeki food. We wait for the sun to mellow down as we take sips of hot kuk – choy and kora- choy - the green and black tea versions of tea.

Outside a crazy lady in blistering heat wears a Turcoman fur hat for “been there, done that” photo op.

Replenished and rehydrated, trudging along the dusty, sunlit alleys, my tired feet move quickly to discover the mystery of Khan’s harem – Tash – Hauli.

Through the seductive blue columns and intricately carved wooden ceilings, the rooms of the four wives, overlooks the balcony of the 40 concubines. Singular wooden pillar holds the Kings chamber as I quickly push myself inside through a low ceiling door. It is a small room overpowering with its shade of gold and blue. The throne room, as it is called was built sometime in 18th century for the Khan King to enjoy the pleasures as the wives and concubines lived a life of seclusion and isolation. I smile as I imagine the 40 concubines lounging in the balcony looking and flirting with me with me as I stood in the courtyard.

Smell of freshly baked bread breaks my reverie as I walk out into the shade of a wooden portico. The arched entrance of the largest dome, Pahlavan Mahmud Mausoleum is almost blocked with the entourage of a newly wed couple who come to seek blessings and the groom draws sacred water from a tiny well offering to his bride for continued fertility and many children. Dressed in a white puffed up meringue gown



with a tiara on her covered head, her husband wearing navy blue suit with a dotted red tie. Holding hands, they seek a loving kiss as the cameras whir to catch the moment and I wonder what the Pahlavan must be thinking of all this fuss.

I have never seen shades of blue so beautiful and I must confess, indescribable.

The silken suzani- needlework sheets flap unceremoniously in the hot wind making a whipping sound. My imagination runs wild as I see mirage of slaves in chains

walking in a single file ahead of me. The cold can of coke in my hand is the only reminder of present times.

Take your pick of a character in Khiva – Warrior saint of Pahlavan Mahmud Mausoleum, Blood thirsty and lecherous Khan sultanate, Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan or Amir Temur; the real joy of the Khiva lies in getting lost in the cobbled streets between lined monuments and the sky that peeps from above.


Lovely Khiva will steal your heart with its carpets, concubines,

camels and coffee.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Khiva can be blistering hot or shivering cold, depending which time of the year you go requiring adaptive clothing. The best times, quiet and comfortable is before 10 am and after 5 pm.

The only way to see the Ichan Kala is by walking so make sure you are wearing good footwear.

You will need a bottle of water as a must have companion. Tracing history can make you very thirsty. 



Rahul Gupta

Always ready to plant trees and the grinning wild-child of the mountain and its rivers.

Adventurous spirit with camera in hand and poetic with his words, capturing moments of wonder and serenity.

Based in Jaipur, Rahul Gupta is passionate about what he does.



Road to Ethiopia

Dr. Debjani Sahu

Very often over a cup of coffee or at some party we come across this question! So which country you would like to explore?

And it won't be wrong to say that other than Mauritius, Cape town, or Seychelles only a few names will be in our list from Africa. Ethiopia will surely not even

be on our list. So, was that the case for me? It was never in my wish list, never thought of visiting Ethiopia, as I was hardly aware of the country.

But, my life-changing experience happened, when I visited this beautiful landscape of Ethiopia, along with my few other batch mates for an international conference organized by the Wolkite University, and Addis Ababa Uni-

versity.

To my utter surprise, I was mesmerized by the beauty of the land, the culture and overwhelmed by the warmth of the people. We were seven girls, traveling pretty much alone as a foreigner, and nowhere we were bothered or felt unsafe.

[Mysterious Ethiopia](#)

Africa is much more than what we can even think of. It is a continent full of surprises. Ethiopia



Dr. Debjani Naskar is a Doctoral Fellow in the Centre for African Studies, JNU, Member ASA India and Organization for Diaspora Initiatives.



is also one of the most beautiful countries which will surprise you and will leave you with a life cherishing experience.

Thankfully, I got the opportunity to explore the beauty and diversity of Ethiopia through my academic journey, which took me there for an international conference. When I hit the land, soon I realized it is one of the most underrated tourist destinations in Africa and people should come out of their closet and experience its beauty.

Before visiting this beautiful country, I was given instructions by numerous seniors and schooled people, to be safe, to

take care of myself, as it's a land of poverty-stricken people, land of poor infrastructure. On the contrary, to my astonishment, it was way pretty opposite to that. Very soon I realized, it was way safer, beautiful, and rich in culture and history than I had ever imagined.

The Warmth of People

The first thing which I observed was the warmth of the people of the country. Our host was Wolkite University. Young bright scholars came to pick us from the airport at midnight and welcomed us with a huge smile and a warm hug. Initially, we felt a little awkward, as in India, many times we don't take "a hug" very posi-

tively, and especially if it is not a white-skinned person. However, we soon understood, that is how they greet each other. Throughout our stay, these scholars assured our comfort and took care of our needs.

Yes, I am talking about Ethiopia and its people, and their vital stats are not at all 11-11-11, as many of you may have imagined when we think of poverty-stricken Ethiopia.

What we see through the eyes of western media, is not always true, or rather we can say it's an incomplete picture. Only after my visit to Ethiopia, my perception of this country and about its people changed.

The Beauty of Addis Ababa

The capital of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa is also the country's political center. It's the hub of social, political and economic activity of the country. It is also the home of the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

I was also fortunate enough to visit Addis Ababa University. The entrance of the University was mesmerizing for me. The flora-fauna inside the campus, the infrastructure, the university itself was worth visiting.

Historically Rich Ethiopia

The strongest memory I have, however, is of my visit to the National Museum of Ethiopia, which is ranked among the most important in Sub-Saharan Africa. The highlight is the paleontological exhibition in the basement, which is the home of world-famous Lucy. "Lucy" is a collection of fossilized bones that once made up the skeleton of a hominid from the *Australopithecus Afarensis* species. The discovery of "Lucy" changed our understanding of human origins forever. Thus, Ethiopia can be a very interesting place to visit, if you have a keen interest in human history.

Other than Lucy, you can also find the fossilized evidence of some amazing extinct creatures, like the massive saber-toothed feline *Homotherium* and the Gargantuan Savannah pig *Notochoerus*. Further, there are a wide array of artifacts and a vivid display of Ethiopian art.

Few places, which unfortunately I could not make it, but would surely look forward to when I will visit the country next time is Lalibela. It is famous for its rock-cut monolithic churches, large antiquity of the medieval and post-medieval civilization of Ethiopia. 11 medieval monolithic cave churches of 13th-century are situated in a mountainous region of Lalibela. It is one of a kind experience.

Ethiopia is the land of thousands of churches, mosques, and monasteries, some of them are enshrined as UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Simien Mountains and Gheralta Mountains of Tigray

None of us will consider Ethiopia for trekking and adventure, but our perception changed with our experiences in the Simien Mountains and Gheralta Mountains of Tigray

The area surprised with its Utah-reminiscent red rock backdrop, but treks to 1500-year old cave churches like Maryam Korkor and Daniel Korkor is an experience which leaves you spellbound while climbing up sheer sandstone walls and dangerous walks along the narrow cliffs. To be specific, this is not for the faint-hearted people or people with the phobia of heights.

My partial attempt to explore my adventurous side led me to take medicine. As, it was not meant for a person like me, but my friends who could manage to complete the trekking, they still remember the experience as one of the most memorable parts of

the trip.

Wildlife Safari

Though, whenever we talk of African countries, the first thing that comes to our mind is the wildlife safari, which might not come to your mind when you think about Ethiopia. This country's wildlife safari is very different from what you'd find in Tanzania, Kenya, or South Africa.

However, Ethiopia has some truly unique wildlife that you'll only find here. So, for wildlife enthusiasts, there's plenty of good reasons to include an Ethiopian safari as an absolute must. Some animals that you can only find in Ethiopia are; Gelada Baboons, Walia Ibex, Ethiopian Wolf, Mountain Nyala, Menelik's Bushbuck, Swayne's Hartebeest, Somali Wild Ass, Bale Mountain Vervet, Yellow-Fronted Parrot and Black-Maned Lion.

Cuisine of Ethiopia

Among various interesting things, one of the best thing that I came across was the Ethiopian Coffee. **Coffee is the backbone of Ethiopia.** If you love coffee and want to experience one of the finest coffees, Ethiopia is surely the destination you must visit.

This home to some of the most unique and fascinating coffees of the world. This country is considered to be the birthplace of the coffee plant and the coffee culture. Coffee is an integral part of the socio-economical culture of Ethiopia. One famous phrase of Ethiopia is "Buna dabo naw", which means "Coffee is our bread".

Like a street shop in every corner of India, you can find numerous coffee shops at every nook and corner of Ethiopia. One of the most interesting facts is that the owner of these coffee shops are mostly ladies. Also, the Ethiopian coffee ceremony is very popular and one must try that.

You'll find coffee ceremonies taking place throughout the coun-


try at home, in various cafes, on street corners, and in markets. Ferns are scattered on the ground, incense alight and in a pot, green coffee beans are roasted in a small pan over a charcoal stove, a delicate passing of water through the grounds until the ideal strength is achieved.

Local Coffee Shop and the Aroma of Coffee

In regards to a typical Ethiopian dish, it consists of 'injera' accompanied by a spicy stew, which frequently includes beef, lamb, vegetables and various types of legumes, such as lentils. Being a food lover, I loved the spicy Ethiopian cuisine. Some of the essential dishes and drinks of Ethiopia includes injera' (sourdough flatbread) much like our "Dosa", a little softer version though. Tibs (sautéed meat chunks), Shiro be Kibbe (legume stew) which is like our "Daal" but spicy and hot, Berbere (typical spice blend), Kitfo (Ethiopian beef tartare) and Tej (an alcoholic honey beverage). So, if you want to give a treat to your taste buds, you must explore the authentic scrumptious Ethiopian cuisine.

Having Tej at the local club, with local friends with the local ethnic music was one of the finest evenings to remember.

Tej Getting Prepared at a Local Club

For me, Ethiopia is like a story untold. A country that's rich in history, culture, flora and fauna and tourist attractions, yet it trails far behind as a desired tourist destination. The international image of Ethiopia has much to be worked upon. For many decades this country remained a mystery, we have heard a lot, but known very less about this beautiful country. So, it's time to pack your bags and head to explore the beautiful, mysterious and culturally enchanting Ethiopia. 



Deepak Suri is a 'Professional Nomad' currently living in Tokyo and can be reached on deepak.suri@hotmail.com for travel advice about Japan.



The Land of Powder – Skiing in Niseko

Skiing vacations make perfect family holidays as it is not only an individual sport, but a social activity enjoyed with family and friends. During the day you are out and about, and after sunset, lots of quality time together socialising.

Over the decades, I have had the opportunity to ski and holiday in many countries. Each ski area I visited had something unique to offer and a few memories that jump out are as follows:

Obergurgl in Austrian Ötztal

Alps in Tyrol, is a good high-altitude ski village with assured snow as it is located at a height of 1930 metres (6330 feet). I remember the Austrian ski school was rigorous but great in helping me improve my technique. A great place for dancing on the tables, with your ski boots on, after a hard day of skiing!

Although Adelboden is not a very popular ski destination in Switzerland, the Bellevue Park Hotel and Spa in Adelboden is an outstanding place. The snow-clad mountain views are breath-taking

while lying in the hot outdoor pool. A memory I will cherish all my life. The food and personalised service is unmatched! It is truly a hidden gem and a place to visit in one's lifetime.

Tahoe in the US offers some great skiing and long runs through trees. The views of the lake in the background just adds to the feast for the eyes. However, it is the entertainment in Heavenly with major casinos nearby that stands out. A real party atmosphere after skiing.

Niseko at the southwestern



side on the island of Hokkaido, northernmost of Japan's major islands is the outright winner for the quality of snow.

The snow here is dry and light. Unlike other part of the world where the snow can be a bit heavy due to the moisture content, the snow in Niseko does not seem to have any moisture; dry as powder! As a skier this makes for easier and more enjoyable runs down the slopes and one feels less tired.

Niseko is also the most foreign-friendly ski area in Japan as almost all hotels, ski schools and restaurants can communicate in English; something of a rarity in other ski locations, (e.g. Shiga Kogen the largest ski area in Japan, and another one of my favourites). Most establishments in Niseko have international staff from Australia,

Malaysia or the Philippines working alongside Japanese counterparts.

There are four ski areas in Niseko i.e. Grand Hirafu, Hanazono, Niseko Village and Niseko Annupuri. They are interconnected, as they are all around the 1898-meter (6227 feet) Mount Yotei. Mount Yotei is an active stratovolcano and is also called Yezo Fuji or Ezo Fuji, because it resembles Mount Fuji. "Ezo" being an old name for the island of Hokkaido.

Individually, the ski areas are not very big but have a variety of runs for all levels of skiers including beginners or first-time skiers. Hirafu & Niseko also offer night skiing, something not found in most ski resorts.

The Niseko Village is more for families whereas teenagers and

young adults may prefer Grand Hirafu area with all the shops, bars, cafés and restaurants. Between Niseko village and Hirafu there is a shuttle bus at regular intervals, and it takes about 15-20 mins. Breaking your journey at Kobo Milk for an ice-cream cone or a freshly baked tart is highly recommended.

The Green Leaf and The Hilton are the two main hotels in Niseko Village and offer quality western accommodation. The Hilton is bigger and busier, whereas Green Leaf is quieter and has a large ski hiring equipment store within the hotel. It is suggested that you hire and try your equipment on arrival, the evening or night before, as it can get busy in the mornings. You can also book your ski lessons at the hotel.

Both the hotels are at the base of the ski lifts and allow for skiing in and out of the hotel. The Hilton is better located for the beginner ski lift.

An important criterion for me when selecting a place to stay on a ski trip is the availability of a Hot Tub or a heated swimming pool. In Japan, it is the 'Onsen'.

An Onsen is a natural hot water from geothermally heated springs. Japan being a volcanically active country has thousands of Onsens scattered throughout all its major islands. Sitting and relaxing in an outdoor Onsen, surrounded by snow, after a day of skiing is bliss!

Onsen's are basically public baths and have a very strict code of conduct. Bathers with tattoos must cover their tattoos with a patch or sticking plaster or may not be allowed to use the facilities. In addition, bathers are not nor-

mally allowed to wear swimsuits in the baths, no jewellery or body ornaments are allowed.

Guests are expected to wash and rinse themselves thoroughly before entering the hot water. Bathing stations are equipped with stools, faucets, wooden buckets, and toiletries such as soap and shampoo; nearly all Onsen also provide removable shower heads for bathing convenience. Entering the Onsen while still dirty or with traces of soap on the body is socially unacceptable.

A visit to Japan would be incomplete without having bathed in a Onsen. Many a reluctant friend has fallen in love with the Onsen experience after the initial hesitation about his or her modesty. Most Onsen's have separate bathing areas for men and women.

Niseko United Skiing Area is

about three hours by bus from Sapporo's New Chitose Airport with multiple daily flights from Tokyo and Osaka. Being an international airport, you can fly direct from Singapore, Bangkok, Hong-kong or Shanghai if you prefer to avoid a transit in Tokyo or Osaka.

In Japan, most ski resorts are places of natural beauty and weather permitting, offer breath taking views. Japan, being an expensive country, is not a popular destination among foreigners for skiing, although it has some of the best snow conditions to offer.

Having skied in Austria, Italy, Switzerland, France, Principality of Andorra, America, Canada and India; I can vouch that Niseko's claim to the finest powder snow in the world is not a boastful marketing ploy, but a fact. The snow is unmatched, it is light and dry as powder!¹



Nicola Dominica Mahapatra

Let me take you on a magical journey to the Middle-earth. This land is home to hairy Hobbits, Dwarves, Ents and a multitude of other creatures that inhabit this intriguing world. Would you like to know of such a place on the map? Well, tucked away about 10 kilometers southwest of Matamata, in Waikato, New Zealand lies the magical world recreated by the “Hobbiton Movie Set” as seen in The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit trilogies.

The “Hobbiton Movie Set” is situated on the Alexander sheep farm that was discovered by Sir Peter Jackson (New Zealand’s famous Writer, Director and Producer) when he began to look for suitable locations for shooting the The Lord of the Rings film series. He first saw this beautiful piece of land spread over 1200 acres during an aerial search in 1998 and concluded that the area was “like a slice of ancient England”. Thus, The Lord of the Rings movie set started being built after suitable negotiations with the owners of the farm.

The original set was not built to last; the facades of the hobbit hole were built of untreated wood, ply and polystyrene and partly demolished after filming. The set was reconstructed in a more permanent fashion for The Hobbit in 2010: An unexpected journey, for which filming started in 2011.

This spot is one of the most sought after tourist attractions in New Zealand. A holiday in New Zealand is incomplete if you haven’t journeyed to the see and experience this fairytale.

As such I had to visit Hobbiton and personally experience its beauty and magic. The trip kicks off at the Visitor Centre that hosts guided tours with escorts that show the complex detailing of the



Hobbiton Movie Set Tour, Matamata, New Zealand

different Hobbit holes, highlighting the most famous places within the movie set and explaining how the magic of the film was created. (Golden Tip: Please pre book your trip to avoid disappointment as the tickets could sell out really fast).

You’ll be fully guided around the set; past the 44 Hobbit Holes, the Mill, and into the world-famous Green Dragon Inn, where you’ll get a complimentary, exclusive Hobbit South farthing beverage to complete your own Middle-earth adventure


There is now also a store selling merchandise and souvenirs adjacent to the cafe allowing every dreamy eyed visitor to carry home a piece of Hobbiton with them.

After I had bought my ticket and ogled at the Middle-earth merchandise, it was time for me to board the bus that takes you through beautiful lush pastures, filled with grazing sheep to the hidden village where the hobbits live. During this bus ride, there are a lot of fun facts that one gets to know about the movie shootings and funny incidents that happened on set. However I won’t tell

you any of these fun facts, so the “Hobbiton Movie Set” tour will keep surprising you!

This is a heaven for photo lovers and the escorts / guides might offer assistance with the same as well as allow enough time for each visitor to make and take away as many memories from this place.

The “Hobbiton Movie Set” tour finishes in the Green Dragon where you can enjoy a beer besides a crackling fire place on a cold winter morning overlooking the beautiful lake at the center of the movie set. You can even adorn some cool Hobbit dresses and feel like you’re a true Hobbit while you might be lucky to bump into and rub shoulders with a group of happy, hardworking hobbits.

At the end of the tour, you would be in awe of this place and as you board the bus to ride out of the village you would have taken away with you a slice of the magic that this place is filled with. I will give this tourist attraction 4 out of 5 and would ask you readers to definitely visit and have your very own adventure to the Middle-earth while in New Zealand. 



Pragya Arora

Pragya Arora is a young home baker turned entrepreneur who explored her passion for baking and made it her profession while still being a teenager. She completed her education from a top ranked baking Institute, The Culinary Institute of America, New York. She also got lucky to work in Bon Appetite Google, Mountain View, California and Hyatt Delhi. She is now working to form her dream team with women's from all walks of life and promote women empowerment.



Yield: one 10x10 pan

Flour	1/2
Ingredient:	Cups
Butter	3/4 th
Dark Chocolate	3/4 th
Milk Chocolate	1/2
Castor Sugar	1 1/4
Vanilla Bean Paste/ Vanilla essence	1/4 tsp
Eggs	3 each
Chopped Hazelnuts	1/2
Baking Powder	1/4 tsp
Nutella	As needed
Orange Zest	1 ea
Candied Orange Peel	As needed


The quick go-to recipe for the vacations

Pragya Arora

This is my go-to recipe to pack for a vacation. While travelling one doesn't feel like eating a lot but needs energy to enjoy each and every part of the journey. Not only these Brownies are an energy bank but also it satisfies all your sweet cravings while travelling. This recipe is quick and super simple. You can spend more time on packing your clothes and cosmetics rather spending a major time on thinking and making your takeaway snack.

For making this recipe healthy you could add your favorite nuts and seeds that would add texture and nutrition in it. This is a fail-proof and a versatile brownie recipe. The reason I chose Orange in this recipe to balance out the overall sweetness.

Mixing Method:

- » Sift Together Flour and Baking Powder
- » Over a warm water bath melt Butter, Dark Chocolate and White Chocolate, let it cool.
- » Whisk together vanilla bean paste, sugar and eggs until fluffy
- » Gently pour the melted chocolate mix on the eggs and mix until combined. DO NOT OVERMIX!
- » Fold in flour and chopped hazelnuts.
- » Spread it in 10x10 pan. Bake for 25-30 mins
- » Once Brownies have cooled down, mix orange zest with Nutella and spread on the top.
- » Sprinkle some chopped hazelnuts.
- » Cut in squares and decorate with candied orange Peel. You can also use Orange-peel Sugar-coated candy. 



Who would not want to relax and unwind in a property with a backdrop of the mighty Himalayas and gurgling waters of the Beas river amidst lovely orchards in the Kullu Valley.

The big open spaces and beautifully designed, spacious cottages of Neeralaya provide the privacy and peace one would look for on a vacation. The cottages at the Neeralaya property on the banks of river Beas offer a serene and peaceful vacation surrounded by the orchards and picturesque landscape of the mighty Himalayas.

The lovely spaces around the cottages have hammocks to laze around with your favourite book or music. The harmony of numerous himalayan birds singing and the gushing Beas provide an exquisite setting.

The rooms provide the luxury and comfort, tucked in with fire places and heaters which create a cozy atmosphere for a well deserved vacation. No matter which room you choose, they are clean and comfortable.

It is a refreshing change from the hustle and bustle of a busy urban life to plunge into a different world with the pristine natural setting.

Neeralaya is built using the technique of timber bonded architecture of the Western Himalayas. Some of the rooms have balconies and access to private gardens. Neeralaya is surrounded by wide rolling spaces, fruit trees, the forest and the scenic Beas river.

From the time you arrive till you check out, the entire team makes sure that you are comfortable and well taken care of and you have the best time on your vacation.

The staff are courteous and in Neeralaya, hospitality is a reflection of people genuinely happy to welcome guests. The willingness to go an extra mile is inherently visible.

Food and drinks at Neeralaya are catered according to the guest's individual needs, fresh from the farm! It is overwhelming to have such a variety of cuisines that are cooked to perfection.



Food at Neeralaya is freshly cooked using organic vegetables and poultry raised on the property. The finger licking recipes are mostly cooked home-style using natural spices and are easy on the palate.

Neeralaya is pet friendly and also has Sheru and Jasmine, the two friendly dogs at the property for company. They are happy to have you with your beloved pet on your next vacation.

Neeralaya's ideal location, is a lovely place for those looking to enjoy the beauty of the Kullu valley. Your stay at Neeralaya will not only be special, but also memorable. It lives up to its motto, "Life as it should be"

It's a property that mesmerizes you and truly a recommended stay in the lovely Kullu Valley.

Neeralaya
Suri Orchards
VPO Raison, Kullu H.P. 175128
E: muneersuri@gmail.com
P: +91 1902 245725, +91 98160 45725,
+91 9816640005



The World of Wines



Sumeet Kumar

Over 25 years of multi-faceted experience, in the hospitality industry. A Bachelors of Science with Honors Graduate from Swiss Hotel Association Global Hospitality Management Institution in Switzerland. He continued his career in America for 10 years, at a 5 start hotel resort, Where he was trained under a Master Sommelier to further enhance his knowledge. For 10 years he worked in the United Arab Emirates. Today, he has set up his own business in Jaipur, Tif Kitchen Cafe * Restaurant.



Sumeet Kumar

Let's Swirl some wine and fast forward, from ancient times of wine, closer to our century!

Did you know there are over 8,000 wine grape varieties in the world? Wow! Over the years, people have used a method of grafting to produce new hybrids of the grapes.

The big Red and Whites grape varieties of the world, that we are familiar or might have heard the name. Let us also, attempt to pronounce the grapes' name in the correct manner.



The Big REDS

1) Cabernet Sauvignon - CA-burr-nay SO-vin-yawn

Rightly given the title of red wines as the King; makes great red Bordeaux wines of France, and among the finest reds in California, Chile and Australia; full-bodied with rich currant flavors.

2) Merlot - Mare-LOW

Similar to Cabernet, but softer and fruitier, with cherry like flavors and hints of tobacco and mint; very popular with wine consumers, because it's easy to drink and pronunciation

3) Pinot Noir - PEE-know Na-WAHR

Makes the great reds of Burgundy in France, and good wines from California and more delicate than Cabernet or Merlot, with strawberry, other berries and tea-leaf aromas and flavors.

4) Tempranillo - tem-pruh-ni-low

These wines are ruby red in color, while aromas and flavors can include berries, plum, tobacco, vanilla, leather and herb

5) Syrah - Sah-RAH

A spicy red that is very popular in France's Rhone Valley, California and Australia (where Syrah is known as Shiraz); wild black-fruit aromas and flavors, with hints of black pepper spice



The Big REDS

1) Chardonnay - SHAR-doe-nay

Most popular dry white in the world, Chardonnay is a medium-to full-bodied wine, with rich flavors of apple and citrus, with hints at times of buttery tone from fermentation and aging in oak barrels.

2) Sauvignon Blanc - SO-vin-yawn BLONK

Generally lighter than Chardonnay, with flavors of melon and citrus aromas, herbal character of bell pepper or freshly mown grass, interesting right!

3) Chenin Blanc - SHEN-in Blonk

A relatively light, fruity variety with melon, apple, and peach/apricot aromas and flavors, a nice wine by itself.

Gewürztraminer (Guh-VERTZ-tra-meener):

German origin with aromas of rose petals, peaches, grapefruit, lychees, and allspice, and full, spicy flavors. Surely, a fruity wine.



Now that we are familiar with the most popular red and white grapes, let us try some of these wines while you are out or in your home. Give it a try to smell, and taste the characteristics while enjoying the afternoon or evening.

In our next segment, we will discuss the types of food each of these wines go best with, and why are certain types of foods, meant with the correct pairing of the wines.

For now, let's Swirl some Wine... and enjoy! 🍷

Lens vignette

Most of the times a photographer is so engaged at looking through the lens, that you forget what the image is trying to say on its own. If you could switch sides and see the lens looking at you, then time and place become one.

It is a great way to understand yourself..



Have you ever tried to become the subject
of your own photography?

Picture clicked by Rahul Gupta
in Thailand

Send in your take on
travelsamay1@gmail.com

**SRISHTI VERMA:**

Srishti Verma is a Delhi-based freelance travel writer. She loves reading and travelling, with a special place for lofty mountains in her heart. When not studying, She can be found planning the next travel and working on its itinerary. And, trying to click her dog's pictures.



KASAULI- AUTHORS, STARS, AND BUN SAMOSA

Srishti Verma

As the Sun sets behind the lofty mountains, a feeling of serenity and gratitude fuse together and a

thoughtless state is entered into. How much do we city dwellers vie for that calm and peaceful state! The realisation struck as

my family, and I stood in silence, letting the beautiful sunset take control of our conscious. Surrendering to nature is meditative, and the tranquillity fills the mind like no other.

We were at Kasauli. A quaint little town in Himachal Pradesh, Kasauli has a Victorian charm to it, quite apparent in the architecture. I was excited to visit

because the rest of the brood had been

there already and had interesting stories to share. That is the thing about stories; they create pictures in our minds and transport us to a different world altogether! Hills and mountains with

the warm, lush green blanket of pines and oaks have been a



source of inspiration for writers, poets, and artists. One of Kasauli's most famous residents, Khushwant Singh did most of his writing here. A favourite and often quoted children's book author, Ruskin Bond was born here.

Kasauli was a British retreat, and it has retained its allure for being a modest place for relaxation.

If you are looking for some quiet away from the city, Kasauli is the place to be. It is for those

who want to walk down little roads dotted with cosy cottages and houses on the hill slopes, as

well as the many British relics that were developed in the century gone by. It is to reconnect you

with your inner self with explorative nature walks, unpretentious people, and picture-perfect views at every turn.

You can reach Kasauli by road; it is a 6-hour drive from Delhi via National Highway-44. If going

by bus, you need to take a bus from Delhi to Chandigarh; many buses are available from

Chandigarh to Kasauli. In case you go by train, the nearest train station is Kalka, 25 km away.

After that, you would have to hire a cab or a bus to reach Kasauli. You may get bookings for the

Toy Train, and it is a ride to cherish, with numerous tunnels and austere, picturesque views.

Kasauli is 50 km from the Shimla airport, and 70 km from Chandigarh airport.

This serene cantonment town can be visited throughout the year. The weather is generally

pleasant, the temperature being about 25°C in summer; the winters are colder with -10°C at night.

It is still away from the massive construction and degradation, thanks to the efforts of

environmentalists. We had a long weekend, which called for a vacation, and it was worth being at

Kasauli. Nestled in the lap of Himalayas, the British developed the hill station in the 18th century.

Gurkha expansion in the 19th century led to it becoming a military cantonment.

It is believed that that the name Kasauli is derived from Kasul, when some Rajput families from

Rewari took shelter here, fleeing the torture in the 17th century. Another story says that the name

comes from the stream Kausal, flowing between Kasauli and Jabli. Sweet fragrant Kusmali

flowers bloom here, and it is believed that the town derives its name from them. Folklore has it,

that when Lord Hanuman was asked to get Sanjeevani from the Himalayas for the injured

Lakshman, he stepped here.

We started early in the morning from Delhi to avoid traffic snarls and reach by noon. And leaving

before dawn was a good idea;

it gave us an ample number of hours to explore the place. On

the way lies the Timber Trail Resort on the right, known for the resort built between two hills,

and the cable car to take one there. Once we entered Kasauli, a left turn from the Kalka-Shimla road, the drive was marked with splendid views of hills and verdant greenery. The nip in the air

could be felt, and the vistas forced us to stop, get down from the car and take in the beauty

around. The enchanting smell of pine and the chilly air soothed the city souls as nature works its magic on us.

Kasauli is marked with homes and cottages of army officers. There are hotels and tourist

accommodations present as well in plenty. A must visit is the

Baptist Church, one of the most famous ones in Himachal Pradesh. Built in 1923 by British, the church has a blend of Indian and

Gothic style architecture. It is situated between pine trees and meadows and is a prime attraction

in the town. Another resplendent attraction, both in beauty and architecture, is the Christ Church.

Built in Gothic architectural style, the church is dedicated to St. Francis and St. Barnabas. It has tall spires, stained glasses and an old sundial in the clock tower.



John Abraham starrer Madras

Café has been shot in parts and bits here. The place exuded an antique charm, something that the pre-wedding photographers were tapping for photoshoots!

There are a good number of food outlets, present to cater to domestic and international visitors.

There are cafes, restaurants, and bars, and traditional Himachali cuisine is available in many

outlets. We had gone to the Upper and Lower Mall roads and were surprised to see a thin crowd there (Mall roads at hill stations are usually crowded). The Heritage Market had cafes,

restaurants, and small shops selling essentials. We loved the bun samosa at Narinder Sweet

House, or as it better known as, Tannu Halwai- a simple meal, but a taste to savour! Khushwant

Singh had written about it in an article that neatly hung there, framed, amidst the tempting aroma

of samosas, gulab jamuns, and jalebis. Do not forget to try the momos at the Tibetan Market; they

are a delight. The Lower Mall was slightly busier than its Upper counterpart. The latter had a

variety of shops selling silver and bronze antiques and souvenirs. There is a premier national institution engaged in developing vaccines in Kasauli- the Central Research Institute. The anti-

rabies vaccine was developed here.

With our bellies full and evening close, we went to the Gilbert Trail, a few hundred metres

beyond the Sunset Point. The track was pleasant, slippery at a

few points, and narrow. Changing colours of the Sun, from the adamantly bright yellow to a mellowed down orange, and then a

deep red, could not be captured on camera, but maybe that it is the best part about it- you have to

experience it in person to truly appreciate the miracle that is. From a full spherical ball, it changed

and thinned itself along the bottom edges as it merged with the horizon.

I like looking at the stars and getting lost in that experience. It is bewitching to gaze, admire, and fall in love with the tiny little dots, hundreds of lights years away from us, flickering in beautiful

colours peacefully. We were treated to clear skies during our stay, and the stars could be seen twinkling in various tones and



hues. Won't the sky be incomplete without those glimmering

delights? The hotel owner told us that the lights visible below were from Chandigarh, Panchkula,

Pinjore, and Kalka.

The next morning, a sunny day, we visited the Hanuman temple, renowned as Monkey Point. The

main track to this point passes through Air Force Guard Station, and the entry closes at 1700

hours. Bags and cameras are not permitted inside. The hike leading up to the temple was

strenuous, but was worth the breath-taking panoramas (after the first hundred steps, though, everyone was short of breath!).

We went to the Mall for lunch and shopped for traditional jewelry there. There wasn't much to do in Kasauli, and the pleasant

weather was just the right calling for reading a novel. Amidst the

rustling leaves and chirping birds, I sat with the book, only to doze off a few minutes later! The

warmth of the Sun and soothing smell of fallen pine needle leaves created an aura most suitable

to sleep peacefully in nature's hospitality.

Being close to Shimla, many tourists often visit Kasauli and then visit the Himachali capital, 3

hours away. Shimla can be reached via Barog from Kasauli. The Mall Road in Shimla is free of

traffic, and no vehicles are permitted entry on it. You would have to park either at your hotel or at

designated parking spaces to visit the Mall. Up for a little test of your body? Visit the Jakhoo

temple, dedicated to Lord Hanuman, about 2 km from the Mall Road. At 108 feet, the statue of

Hanuman is visible from the Mall and most places in Shimla.

You can also visit Chail and Kufri when in Shimla, which are situated at a relatively higher altitude. One of the oldest British

cantonments in India is located at Dagshai, 19 km from Kasauli.


A friend had told me about ghost sightings there, but I leave it up to her and the readers to explore the supernatural!

When visiting Kasauli, pack light. A light sweater at night works fine till October, and as the

winters approach, it is suggested you carry your woollens. If you go in the off-season, you might

be the only ones walking the Mall road, a local told us. Kasauli is for soothing your nerves and

has scenic beauty to mesmerise you. Renunciate your stress to nature when you are here, it knows what's best for you.

Happy travelling to you! 



THE TAARAS BEACH & SPA RESORT, TERENGGANU

The enchanted resort bestows a contemporary barefoot luxury experience with warm Asian hospitality that creates a magical experience for those who seek it. We welcome you to one of the most beautiful islands in Malaysia and having nature at its best, it is surrounded by one of the most spectacular seas in Asia. Indulge yourself in mother nature's most natural creations; the powdery white sandy beaches, its crystal-clear waters and tropical rainforest.



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Tungi Village Monsoon Travel

Monsoon Travel- Tungi Village Near Pavna Lake

Location: Approx. 81 kms From Mumbai and approx. 85 kms from Pune nestled in between the foothills of Tungi Fort and overlooking lake Pavna.

Why fear the hills; the monsoon travel when the grass is greener than the green, the sky constantly changing its moods/ colours, from being bluer than the blue, suddenly turning multicolor to being grey once again and getting starry at times, with unannounced sound of thunder.

The earth actually smells like the earth and the fragrance of wet patched lands can beat any fragrances.

Tugi village is located approximately 20 kms ahead of Lonavala.

It is the untouched, rustic, noncommercial location where we don't see a soul for very long stretches, no hustle bustle or any kind of so called modern life.

If you love drenching yourself

and becoming one with nature, then this is the place to be. There is wildness and variety of blooming flowers, trees which is a treasure to your eyes and memories for a long time to come.

In our stay there in the month of August, it rained continuously for 6 consecutive days, which gave us ample opportunity to sit and gaze at the beauty of our surroundings from our cafeteria. Then one could just hire a bicycle which the Rorts provide and cycle around in the lush green valley. The resorts also have ample play zones, activity areas where one could engage themselves if they would like to stay indoors.

The organic food fresh from the farms is something not to be missed.

We can all imagine when we

see good culmination of hills, lakes, vast green lands, paddy fields at the same time all in one place.

This a perfect weekend getaway for some quiet time to be with yourself or with friends and family who look forward to spending quality time together. However, if one too used to the Urban life, then one has to go down at least 20 kms to be in Lonavala and for some local shopping.

But if you want to drench yourself, then this beauty of western Ghats is not to be missed out.

Recommendations: travel light, Umbrella, Raincoat, some basic medicines

Shoes: non slippery, clothes- easy dryable.

Such kind of holidays I would always say- Bring it On.👍

Cruise Luxury Weddings



The Modern Indian Wedding gets a Royal Makeover

When it comes to celebrating the ultimate expression of love, there's simply no better way to do it than on board a cruise ship. From an intimate mehendi to an extravagant sangeet to a traditional ceremony, a cruise wedding gives you the joy of creating unforgettable moments with your loved ones as you sail from one spectacular destination to the next.

Indians love marriages. Period. The frenzy that surrounds an impending grand Indian wedding ceremony distinguishes it from other marriage ceremonies the world over. Defined in one word, every Indian wedding is spectacu-

lar and every Indian family wants their weddings to be extraordinary in every way imaginable. They want to offer the guests an experience unlike any other, and in this search for unique experiences, cruise ships are becoming the preferred wedding destination.

Imagine having all your friends and loved ones close together on a trip, and letting them be witness to the most important day of your life as a beautiful dusk sun and shimmering waters acts as the perfect backdrop. With a truly unique setting, path breaking experiences, an unmatched array of features and customisation options, a cruise wedding not only opens the doors to a world of end-

less possibilities but is also a one-of-a-kind experience for everyone to enjoy.

[Cruise Weddings - A Wedding Planner's Dream](#)

The growing accessibility to International cruise liners at affordable prices has made it a viable option for Indian travel enthusiasts. However, when it comes to weddings, cruises have an appeal of their own. Besides the fact that it is an unconventional idea, it also solves a few logistical challenges. A cruise ship is like a floating resort, and it helps to access every resource easily. A cruise ship can not only accommodate a large number of guests but also has a dedicated staff to attend to their

every need ensuring that they are well taken care of. And with a wide range of activities and entertainment options available on board, guests of all ages are thoroughly entertained throughout the journey. The convenience that a cruise wedding offers is truly unparalleled, making the entire experience seamless and hassle-free.

Making Weddings a Royal Affair

One of the world's leading cruise lines, Royal Caribbean International, offers you an amazing choice of wedding packages and customisation options to add your own extra-special touches to the celebrations with Wedding Beyond Extraordinary. These include-salon and spa services, photography, art décor, gift delivery services, onboard entertainment as well as the option to bring your own star talent on board for spellbinding performances. To elevate the experience to a whole new level, Royal Caribbean offers live music shows for various ceremonies, whether it be the sooth-

ing notes of a pianist, a DJ belting out the choicest romantic tracks or a live band for the gathering to 'let their hair down'. Moreover, these facilities are offered through all-inclusive packages for wedding events, which reduces the costs involved as well.

Extra-Special Touches For An Incredible Event

Salon & Spa Services

Whether it's pampering yourself with a relaxing massage or getting ready for the special day with a private hair and makeup session, Royal Caribbean offers you countless ways to relax and unwind on board.

Photography

These days, pre and post wedding photo shoots have become the rage, and cruise weddings are ideal destinations to significantly add to the elegance and splendour of wedding videos. The beautiful backdrop of the sea, amazing destinations that the ships sail through, beaches and the ever changing colourscape of the vast sky add something new to

the visual language of each frame. With a cruise wedding, you have the option to capture your special moments with a team of professionally trained photographers or bring your own on board.

Decor

From the mehendi and haldi-chooda to the reception, make the celebration come alive with an exquisite choice of decor featuring the freshest flowers, custom bouquets and a wide variety of accents and arrangements.

Hospitality Desk

Bring your own hospitality desk on board to cater exclusively to your guests, ensuring that they're treated like Royalty with dedicated service whenever they need it.

Gift Delivery Service

Royal Caribbean International also offers a gift delivery service, allowing you to choose from a wide variety of gifts for your guests and conveniently have them delivered to their rooms.

Onboard Activities

From sipping on lattes at the



first Starbucks Coffee at sea and watching robot mixologists serve you drinks, to bringing out your competitive sides with a friendly bride vs groom teams basketball or golf game, a host of onboard activities ensures that anything is possible with a wedding on board a Royal Caribbean cruise. When you've had your share of thrills, sit back and relax in the Solarium or unwind in the whirlpools on board. Kids aren't left out of the action with for tons of fun in store for them at Splashaway Bay – a waterpark exclusively for kids.

Celebrate like never before

A significant area where Weddings Beyond Extraordinary differ from conventional weddings is that they offer an integrated experience rather than disjointed wedding services stuck together. With the most breath-taking venues, customised menus featuring Indian and International cuisine, a host of entertainment options and luxurious accommodations, Royal Caribbean International understands what goes into making weddings extraordinary and ensures that you do not have to plan and provide separately to make your wedding dreams a reality.

Spectacular Venues

It takes a spectacular venue to host a spectacular wedding. Across Royal Caribbean International's fleet, you'll find a plethora of breathtaking spaces for your wedding and pre-wedding events with exclusive access to only your family and friends. Whether you choose to celebrate your sangeet in style in an extravagant hall or add a touch of tradition to your wedding ceremony at a luxury lounges, you'll discover beautiful settings for every occasion. Royal Caribbean cruise ships have venues accommodating up to as many as 1400 guests. Explore a host of innovative venues like Two70 degree, a transformational venue with panoramic views of

the sea and digital screens which create the perfect ambience to match the theme of the wedding.

A World Of Cuisine

Indulge in a delectable assortment of the finest international cuisine or take your pick from an extensive offering of Indian cuisine. From buffets to sit-down dinners to customisable menus to buying out an entire specialty restaurant exclusively for your guests, the choices when it comes to dining are truly endless.

Spellbinding Entertainment

Explore entertainment options that elevate every wedding event

very own star talent on board for amazing performances.

Luxury Accommodation

Immerse yourself in luxury with a range of suites and state-rooms across more than 30 categories while Royal Caribbean's customisation options makes choosing the perfect accommodation for your guests a seamless experience. Sink into warm and cosy spaces that are perfect for every family, no matter which category you choose. And what's more, even Royal Caribbean's Interior Staterooms come with a view.

The Ultimate Expression of Love

The very thought of a wedding at sea invokes a sense of wonder and an anticipation of attending a ceremony rich in experiences. The prospect of arranging a sangeet in Singapore, a mehndi in Malaysia and then the grand wedding at another beautiful destination is undoubtedly every couple's dream. Add to that the fact of Indian cuisine being available easily on Royal Caribbean along with global delicacies, with celebrity chefs such as Ranveer Brar adding their weight to cruise kitchens, and you have the ideal recipe for a perfect 'happily ever after'! What's more, cruise weddings catering to a gathering of about 200-300 people requires similar expenditure as a land wedding done on a grand scale, with a plethora of completely new experiences.

Singapore, Penang, Phuket, Japan, Hong Kong, are just a few of the exotic oriental wedding destinations you can choose from while popular places such as Europe, the Bahamas, the Caribbean islands, and Alaska have a charm of their own. The influx of so many cultures, landscapes, cuisines and most importantly, the couple's near and dear ones from different walks of life makes the days spent on a Royal Caribbean cruise extremely rewarding. ¹⁰

One of the world's leading cruise lines, Royal Caribbean International, offers you an amazing choice of wedding packages and customisation options to add your own extra-special touches to the celebrations with Wedding Beyond Extraordinary. These include-salon and spa services, photography, art décor,

into a celebration that's truly out of this world. From live music for the Band Baaja Baaraat to fantastic lights to spectacular live performances, make, enjoy some of the most incredible onboard entertainment options or bring your

Sams^{on}ite®

Aluminium
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Integrated
Handles
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360°
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Designed for Lightness

Courtesy Malaysia Tourism. Promoting travel and wedding Destinations in Langkawi, Dickson and Kuala Lumpur

Experience Asian Grace, Warmth & Care at Meritus Pelangi Beach Resort & Spa, Langkawi

Pelangi is a Malay word that means 'Rainbow'. Like its many wondrous colours, it illustrates a 'colourfully carefree' and exciting experience in the corner of paradise that is Meritus Pelangi Beach Resort & Spa, Langkawi. Situated on the West Coast of the Legendary Island of Langkawi, Kedah Darul Aman, Meritus Pelangi Beach Resort & Spa opened its doors on March 16, 1989.

Nestled between the bustling markets of Cenang, and a kilometre of white sandy beach amidst lush tropical greenery, Meritus Pelangi is built in the traditional Malaysian Village concept. This rustic charm embodies the traditions of Malay architecture with modern amenities a balance of East meets West creating the perfect island getaway.

Stretched across 35 acres, there are 355 rooms housed in 51 chalets. Elegantly furnished in soft pastel colours, each guestroom is thoughtfully equipped with modern comforts, while the lighting creates a soft, cosy ambience. Natural textured material such as sisal carpet panels and nyatoh flower motifs have been added to the wall as decorative pieces.

All rooms and suites are non-smoking. Whether it is the Garden Terrace, Lake Front, Pool Terrace or Beachfront room, each is an oasis in itself. Amidst the manicured grounds are two open air,

free form swimming pools. The kids themed Horizon Pool area gives families the perfect escape, leaving the sunken bar and Cascade Pool for those who prefer a more serene atmosphere.

This resort captivates with its rustic charm yet modern luxe feel, creating the perfect holiday experience for all. The vast area makes it perfect for holidays as well as events and team building activities. The magical beachfront location as well as the pillar less Grand Ballroom and Bougainvillea Hall create the perfect venue for those weddings, dinners and parties alike.

For those who seek some quality time, tucked away in a quiet corner the Pelangi Spa exudes calm bliss amidst tropical greens that brings balance to the mind, body and soul. The extensive spa treatments include exfoliating body scrubs, moisturising body wraps, therapeutic body massage, radiant facials, relaxing baths and many more. A visit to the spa is guaranteed to leave you feeling light on your feet, free in your mind and calm in your soul.

This truly is an island getaway for those who want to experience a traditional Malaysian beach holiday. With its lush tropical greenery, cool caressing breezes and friendly staff, Meritus Pelangi Beach Resort & Spa, Langkawi will make your desire for a colourfully carefree stay a reality.







LAKE FRONT CHALET





Unique Concept- Tradional Malay wooden Chalet





Tropical Charters Langkawi

Tropical Charters Langkawi is a one-stop Destination Management Centre and fully licensed travel agent with its expertise in all on ground logistics, tours and services in Langkawi, Malaysia. It started out as just cruises but rapidly expanded as a DMC for MICE and Luxury wedding clients.

Specialising in day and sunset cruises in and around Langkawi which is one of the more popular activities amongst tourists. Tourists seeking an experience to re-

member Langkawi is now able to experience the Unesco-endorsed Geopark from the unlikeliest of places – while sitting in a net, trawled through the pristine waters of the Andaman Sea while sipping on a cocktail and later indulging in Seafood BBQ freshly made onboard. Team building on their yachts and secluded islands around Langkawi is one of the most sought after products that they sell.

Tropical Charters Langkawi set up a One Stop Centre wherein

guests and MICE groups are allowed to use the one-stop centre as a lounge to relax and plan their holiday activities. They can also handle check-in and conduct ice-breaking activities if needed.

They take pride in conceptualising top-notch events for Incentive groups and weddings with their sister company Jiggee Events. From wedding decors and live performance to world-class Master of ceremonies, they do it all. ¹¹

The Ritz-Carlton, Langkawi

Resort Overview

The Ritz-Carlton, Langkawi is fringed by lush tropical rainforests, and enjoys its own private cove and beach overlooking the crystal clear waters of the Andaman Sea on the Island's southwest corner.

Tranquil waters and sandy beaches make it perfect for relaxing. Venture round the island for activities and be inspired by the breathtaking wildlife or simply discover Langkawi's many secrets. Malay origins blend with Siamese influence.

Tradition coexists with evolution. Fact and folklore intertwine. All to give guests an experience like no other.

Ritz-Carlton, Langkawi is one of the high end properties of Langkawi surrounded by the beaches. One of the main excitement of this resort is the Rooms with the private beach.



Resort Highlights

An oceanfront resort fringed by lush rainforests and lapped by the clear-blue Andaman Sea on the South-West coast of the island

Designed to reflect a traditional kampong village with 90 guest rooms and suites and 29 private pool villas

A spa with five cocoon-shaped spa pavilions, a Hammam, vitality

pools and locally inspired treatments

Curated resort experiences will bring the beauty of the island and the richness of the local folklore to life, creating lifelong memories

The first Ritz-Carlton resort for Malaysia and the second for South-East Asia following The Ritz-Carlton, Bali

Luxury of Your Own Private Pool & Steam Room - Lexis Hibiscus Port Dickson, Malaysia

Guests arriving at Lexis Hibiscus Port Dickson, Malaysia will find themselves at a luxury oceanfront resort cradled in the lap of nature. The proud holder of two Guinness World Records: the resort with the most swimming pools in the world at 643 and the most overwater villas at 522, the resort is designed to resemble a hibiscus blooming into the shimmering waters of Port Dickson, offering you spacious rooms with attached private pools and steam rooms.

Whether you're on a family holiday, romantic getaway or corporate retreat, you will enjoy warm, gracious hospitality. Complete your vacation with an array of facilities and amenities, includ-

ing sunset cruise, helicopter rides, karaoke, a signature spa, waterpark and various water sports activities, as well as superb dining options, ranging from fine dining to stylish lounges and an al fresco pool bar overlooking the sea to the vibrant "street food" scene at Hibiscus Walk. For guests hosting meetings or weddings, Lexis Hibiscus offers multiple ballrooms, function rooms and outdoor beach area, which can host up to 1,200 guests.

From the moment day breaks on the beach until long after another glorious Malaysian sunset, Lexis Hibiscus Port Dickson invites you to enjoy the best this seaside tropical playground has to offer.







INTRODUCTION

Thoughtfully conceptualized, Lexis Port Dickson is created with its guests in mind - being cradled in the lap of nature, replete with water bodies, amenities and relaxation zones



The Night view



Activity

Lexis





**An exotic perfect setting
for a luxury destination
wedding**



Palace Of The Golden Horses “Beyond Hospitality”

Palace of the Golden Horses is a 5-star palatial property and rich in history that is in a class of its own - an ultimate destination for travellers, golf enthusiasts and health conscious guests, with numerous world-class luxury hotel awards under its name.

Adjacent to the world-class golf course, MINES Resort and Golf Club and MINES Shopping Mall, the hotel is located 15 minutes away from Kuala Lumpur City Centre and 30 minutes from the Kuala Lumpur International Airport.

A luxury hotel full of vibrancy from hosting royalties, to head

of states, to world-class sporting heroes and pop culture figures, it houses 472 guestrooms with a wide range of 80 suites and one luxurious Golden Suite. Our recent transformation incorporates in-house GHHS Healthcare which offers Health Screening and Chinese Medicine Treatment to make your event not only historical but also a healthy event; and helicopter and water taxi rides that make your event more memorable.

Our rooms at Palace of the Golden Horses are more than just rooms, they are an ‘experience’. Every room was carefully designed to offer comfort with a resplendent view of lush land-

scaped grounds and picturesque of 150-acre Mines Resort City’s Lake. It is no wonder that many distinguished guests have graced this hotel including Her Majesty Queen Azizah, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, HE Nelson Mandela, HE Kofi Annan, HE Fidel Castro and Former PRC’s President Jiang Zemin during international high profile MICE events like the APEC, G15, NAM, OIC Summits, ASEAN Informal Summit and the Commonwealth Tourism Ministers’ meeting and the list is endless.

The hotel is known for its dedicated conference centre, the Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah Conference Centre, located in its



very own private wing. Palace of the Golden Horses has the conference space of 15 meeting rooms equipped with state-of-the-art facilities, individual lighting control, audio-visual equipment, teleconferencing and internet broadband access. There are two ballrooms, namely the Royal Ballroom and Unity Room. The Royal Ballroom boasts a maximum seating capacity of up to 2,000 equipped with the led at each of the ballroom. Another unique feature is The Theatre with 300 seats which can accommodate theatrical acts or corporate presentations.

The high standard of attentive service at Palace of the Golden

Horses has been recognized with the international accolades for establishing the gold standard of hospitality service. Awards received include Best Mice Award 2018 from Malaysia Tourism Council Award and World Excellence 5 Star Wellness Hotel at World Travel Market London 2018, last year.

Step into our comprehensive Wellness Hospitality spectrum - located at the east wing, and be on your way to improving your immune system. We have invested in top-class facilities in order to take care of your health - a combination of both western preventive healthcare (GHHS Healthcare);

traditional treatment (Chinese Medical Centre) and Wellness Spa. At GHHS Healthcare we provide health screening to the genetic level that screens your genes, cells and organs to determine your current health status and risk factors. These results are interpreted by professional medical consultants and officers to provide you with the best diagnosis and medical plans.

At Wellness Spa, nurture your body and soul through our exotic array of Asian therapeutic remedies experience by our accredited specialist and therapists. It is a de-stressing holiday that includes consultations to kick-start a healthy lifestyle and indulgent treatments to have you return home refreshed, restored and ready to tackle whatever life may throw at you.

Complete with all standard in-house amenities and facilities for a luxury hotel; such as personalised transportation and shuttle services from/to KLIA and Kuala Lumpur City Centre, a swimming-pool, fully-equipped gym, a lounge with karaoke facility, children playroom, jogging track, cruise boat for a scenic ride at the lake. We recently launched Truefitt and Hill, men's grooming facilities and the Fidel Cigar Lounge for cigar lovers. The hotel appeases to guests and food-lovers with our restaurants, including its award-winning Kim Ma Chinese Restaurant and Kin No Uma Japanese Restaurant.

Dedicated for the photo enthusiasts, you could delight and indulge in photo opportunity experience as we provide you with historical landmark of the royalties, head of states, celebrities and sportsmen who have stayed here - where everywhere is a photo opportunity at Palace of the Golden Horses.



MANDARIN ORIENTAL
THE HOTEL GROUP

*There is only one happiness in
this life, to love and be loved*
George Sand
A Perfect Wedding Destination





Kitchen



A culinary experience through flavors
of Italy, spices from the middle East &
Mexican delights all under one roof
Tif Kitchen Cafe * Restaurant

Featuring four dining rooms, each with a different color theme,
along with a terrace and balcony to enjoy the outdoors.

A less known part of Coorg – Haarangi Backwaters.



Shruthi Singh.S

Stuck in a rut with the mundane lifestyle – same four walls, same directions, same vibes and same faces pushed me out on a weekend getaway from Bangalore.

My cousin called me as a blessing in disguise to give shape to my longing from breaking free from busy life. She invited me to her home in Coorg but hardly did we know that we would make a spontaneous visit to a less known part of Coorg. There was no typical coffee estate or a forest in the hilly roads as I preconceived it to be. To my surprise that evening in Coorg turned out to be a Switzerland as we witnessed vast grassland with backwaters.

The time of my unplanned visit proved perfect to feel a blend of mild rain, chilly breezy atmos-

phere as the post monsoon rains was in nascence on our arrival. There was a blend of dark clouds in the sky, mild rain and sudden change of weather with cheerful sunshine.

As we arrive in the afternoon to my aunt's home in a sub-urban town or rather I can say a total commercialised tourist place now with numerous home stays, resorts, we cross Nisargadhama- a delta which is called as island by local people, formed by kaveri river near kushalnagar in the district of Coorg in Karnataka. On either sides of the road we are surrounded by Anekadu Reserve Forest (home of wild elephants).

As I stepped into my aunt's farm house, I felt as if I have come to another world of flora and fauna from the busy buzzing city of Bangalore.

Hot and peppery mutton leg

soup and steam rice was waiting to complement the weather. What more could I have asked from this getaway than to have this scrumptious lunch that afternoon.

As time goes by chit-chatting, my cousin and I decide to step out as she wanted to be fair in bringing me on a getaway and not to make me feel as mere family visit. A local auto rickshaw comes to escort us to Harangi Backwaters approximately 10 Kms interior through dense forest of aanekaadu from basavanahalli where we were residing.

The dam is built against a small tributary of river Cauvery known as Harangue in the Hadgur village of Coorg and is mostly a combined visit with Cauvery Nishargadhama which is hardly 8 to 10 KM from the Dam. Harangi river originates from the Pushpagiri hills and runs through 50 kilometres

of a distance before meeting the main river Kaveri or Cauvery. The dam is located at distance of 9 KM Kushalnagar town in Coorg

As the rickshaw gears through the local estates on the either side of a narrow road and dense forest, the driver tells us stories about his brave childhood, encountering wild elephants mid of the muddy pathway then, at a particular spot many times when it's dark.

The drizzle and chillness picks up hard with breeze and we wonder whether it was a good idea to venture out.

The rickshaw abruptly jerks and stops as the driver offers us with fancy coloured umbrellas. We look at him with the question mark on our face and ask him, "is this the place!! There is nothing to be seen here?" I and my cousin were dumbstruck as we could not see anything. Something looked as a white smoked yonder but as we walked a little further ahead through the fog, we were in awe! Slowly our vision cleared to see a vast spread back waters with huge black rocks at the shore surrounded by mountain trees on the opposite side of the water, green carpet of grassland surrounding us. Far

across through the fog on one side we could get a glimpse of the dam too. It was indeed a breathtaking moment of my life as I have visited Coorg as early as a child but never knew it to be the way I was seeing it now. It is true that Coorg is called the Scotland of India.

The rain subsides steadily as the sun peeps through the clouds brightening our face and slowly the sky clears. Far across the distance it was scenic to see a bright blue tent in this grass land with bonfire. A maroon robes moving across the fire. When we neared by we could see that it was a group of Tibetan monks camping here for that evening living life free and full with nature and that very moment I just got reminded of the Tibetan proverb "The secret to living well and longer is: Eat half, walk double, laugh triple and love without measure". Well the population of Tibetans in these surroundings is large as Bylakuppe near Coorg is the second largest Tibetan settlement in the world outside Tibet after Dharmashala.

There were more of locals driving in really rash and wanting to be crazy in their SUVs on this vast grass land probably wanting a


change of atmosphere than their routine life. So I discovered that this place is less known to usual traffic of tourist coming to Coorg

I had one more surprise moment to witness before we left. A huge colourful rainbow emerges far across the grass land. I had never seen it so full a bow in an open space like this ever before. I sensed a breeze of synchronicity rush through me of making the trip at the right time at the right place as if the fairies in that land wanted to bring joy to my heart at that very moment soothing me from the chaos of life. We walked back near the rickshaw feeling fulfilled and content with what nature allowed herself to show us. A gift of Mother Nature.

Details for Visitors

Harangi Backwater Road, Herur, Kushalnagar, Sunti Koppa Hobli, Somvarpet Taluk, Coorg, Karnataka

Homestays on the back waters road – coorg lagoon back waters resort.

Budget - Rs.3000 to 6000 for double sharing per night. Distance and hour from Bangalore – approximately 340 km of 5 hours of on road travel time. 





An eco-friendly vacation in Israel

Eco Tourism is progressively making a mark in Israel as tourists are flocking to the ancient civilisation to relish its bountiful natural retreats. Whether it is about staying in a converted eco-bus, being an eco-volunteer or enjoying a technology free, organic B&B offering alternative therapies, one can find a plethora of green tourism options in Israel

Collective and cooperative

communities like kibbutz and moshav practice organic farming, recycling and host programs in eco-tourism. Enjoy eco-study, eco-hikes, meditation, relaxation, natural therapies and healthy cuisine in tandem with the chance to live with these communities

Facing the 'Golan Heights' and snowy slopes of Mount Hermon and located in a Nature Reserve filled with springs, rivulets and the Rivers Dan, Hatzbani and Banias,

the Kibbutz Hotel has embraced eco-tourism in greening through nature preservation, alongside recycling, energy-saving measures and environment-friendly systems. Its 204 rooms include the "Koren Stream House" rooms with soothing sounds and views of the flowing Koren stream nearby

Israel is known for its 'desert tourism' experience in a Bedouin desert camp in the heart of the Negev desert. Immerse yourself in



native Bedouin hospitality where guests are treated like local royalty with delicious Bedouin meals, fun camel rides and overnight stay in traditional Bedouin tents

The first leg of an 80-mile Sea of Galilee Mountain Bike Trail was recently unveiled providing free access to the nature reserves and beaches surrounding the area wherein travellers can rent mountain bicycles with helmets and receive guidance from the trail's professional bikers

Swim with the dolphins in their natural habitat at the Dolphin Reef in Eilat where swimmers are escorted in small groups without boats or propeller vehicles creating a genuine immersive experience whilst protecting the mammal's freedom without being intrusive

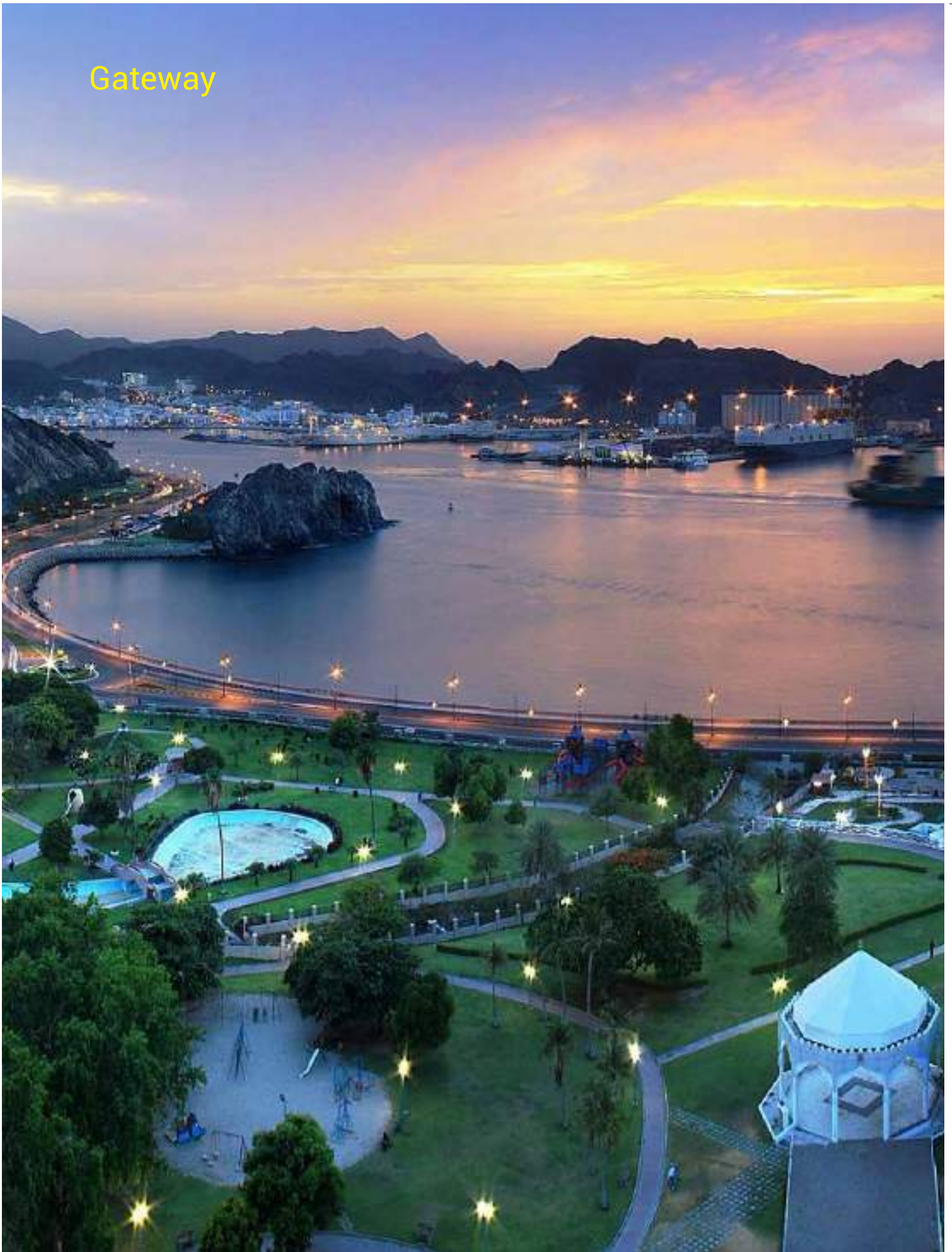
Enjoy a scenic hike to Ein Avdat valley surrounded by canyons, springs and white limestone mountains and descend into the Arava Valley via the Scorpion Trail,

one of Israel's most spectacular scenic roads

3 million years old and the lowest point on earth, the Dead Sea in Israel is one of the saltiest water bodies on the planet creating the bucket list experience of floating. Considered as the world's largest natural spa, double dip in the mineral-packed waters, slather therapeutic mud, soak in the healing sun and enjoy one of the best wellness experiences in the world



Gateway





48 hours in Muscat - Gateway

Step into Muscat, the capital of Oman and surround yourself with an Arabian Nights setting in a modern context with traditional houses, well-kept winding roads and low-lying buildings. Beauty seems to have found a new address in Muscat where modernity walks hand in hand with tradition, lending a unique idiom and flavor to the city. Popular among evolved travellers, the city mesmerises visitors with its authenticity, natural beauty and rustic adventure terrain. Visit some of the exquisite mosques, forts, well-stacked museums, and bustling souqs or simply take a stroll at the silken beaches. Muscat is not only a history lover's destination; it is also a gourmand's favorite haunt and is well-known for its authentic hospitality. Located just 2 ½ to 3 hours away from India, Muscat is well connected via direct flights from various Indian cities and an ideal getaway for a long weekend.

We give you a list of must visit attractions in Muscat if you have just 48 hours to explore the city:



Royal Opera House in Muscat for musical performances

A state-of-the-art opera house exists in Muscat where world class operas and musicians perform round the year. The opera house complex consists of a concert theatre, auditorium, formal landscaped gardens, luxury restaurants and an art centre for musical, theatrical and operatic productions. Watching a performance at the opera house is a privilege one should not miss out on.

Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque for its architectural grandeur

The Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque in Muscat is a real feast for the visual senses. The lavishly decorated mosque with its archways, courtyards, chandeliers, ornate doors, white marble floors and manicured lawns is an architectural marvel. The elegant carved arches lead to the courtyard and from there you can enter the huge main prayer hall, entirely decorated in white, blue and gold. An opulent Swarovski crystal chandelier hangs from the dome and the floor is covered with a handmade Persian carpet spanning 4,263 sq metres.

Amouage Perfume factory for its luxury scents

For a sniff of something exotic, head to Amouage factory where the most valued perfumes in the world are found. Amouage is a home-grown perfume brand that uses exotic ingredients like frankincense, roses, saffron and spices to make their trademark scent. Take a tour of the factory during which the guide explains the perfume production process. A whiff of this perfume is enough to feel like royalty.

Golf for sport lovers

Muscat has become the new golf destination in Oman and hosts three 18-hole grass golf courses located at Muscat Hills Golf & Country Club, Al Mouj Golf and Ghala Valley Golf Club. For those wanting to learn the game, each course also has an academy staffed by qualified golf instructors who will be happy to guide you through the early stages. The climate makes golfing most popular in Oman between the months of September and May.

Sailing and Dolphin watching

Oman is a sailor's delight as it houses several world class yachts, cruises and a stunning marina. Take a coastal tour of Muscat and sail deep into the sea to watch hundreds of dolphins jump in the

air acrobatically. There are also dive centers for professional divers to experience the beautiful marine life.

Explore Omani art and culture

The historical forts and castles of Oman are the country's most striking cultural landmarks and a major draw for visitors today. Walk up to the gates of the Sultan's ceremonial Al Alam Palace and get an insight into Omani life by visiting the Bait Al Zubair Museum or National Museum.

Middle East's largest Aquarium

Built inside the Mall of Muscat, the aquarium is first of its kind in Oman and the largest in the Middle East covering 8,000 square meters of the mall and spanning three floors. The Oman aquarium showcases around 1000 types of Omani fishes and 30,000 marine animals including sharks, lobsters, turtles, rays, local corals, penguins and crocodiles. The main tank has a walk-through tunnel for visitors to get an up-close and personal look at the variety of fishes inside. In addition to the aquarium, the Mall of Muscat also has recreational city (Fabi Land), cinema complex with 14 lounges, more than 200 retail outlets and soon to open Snow Park. ¹¹

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Multiple destinations to celebrate it.

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COME SEEK
THE ROYAL CARIBBEAN

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Exclusive Venues

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