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Kashmir, often referred to as 'Paradise on Earth', is renowned for its breathtaking natural beauty, and its pristine lakes are an integral part of this enchanting landscape. Let's explore this beautiful valley, nestled amidst the majestic Himalayan range, boasting a mesmerizing collection of lakes, each possessing its own unique charm and allure.

If embarking on a journey to connect with your inner self is on the cards, we suggest you visit Siddhpur. The serene and tranquil ambiance of Siddhpur, coupled with its spiritual heritage, creates an atmosphere conducive to meditation and introspection.

Read on!



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Plitvice Lakes National Park, Croatia



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Kashmir Tranquil Lakes Invite You to Create Ripples

By JAYESH PUROHIT, Staff Reporter

Famous for its lakes, meadows, springs and pleasant climate, Kashmir is known to tourists as paradise. The land is home to so many beautiful lakes that if all the lakes come together, they can beautifully form a spotless mirror to the sky. Summer is a perfect season to visit Kashmir; if you are planning to go there to avoid the harsh Indian summer, check out these lakes in the valley of Kashmir.

Nandkol & Gangabal Lakes

Gangabal, a sacred high-altitude lake, holds deep significance in Hinduism. Located at the foothills of the impressive Haramukh mountain, this pristine lake is nourished by a combination of rainfall, glaciers, and natural springs. Interestingly, Gangabal lake naturally pours its waters into the nearby Nandkol lake, which is situated at a lower elevation and serves as an ideal camping site. Although reaching Gangabal lake requires a trekking expedition, access is possible from both Naranag and Sonamarg, offering adventurous enthusiasts a chance to explore its breathtaking beauty.

Gadsar Lake

Nestled amidst the lofty mountains of the Sindh valley, Gadsar is a small, high-altitude lake enveloped by vibrant alpine meadows. Accessible via Sonamarg, reaching this scenic destination entails an invigorating trek. During the winter, the lake transforms into a frozen wonder, adding to its allure. Renowned as the 'valley of flowers,' Gadsar captivates nature enthusiasts and adventurers alike with its enchanting charm, making it a delightful must-visit location.

Krishnasar & Vishnugar Lakes



Surrounded by snow-capped mountains, attractive meadows, and awe-inspiring gorges, these alpine lakes near Sonamarg epitomise natural beauty at high altitudes. Krishnasar lake gracefully flows into Vishnugar through a meandering stream, which serves as a source for the Neelum River. During winters, these lakes are adorned with a frozen veil, rendering them inaccessible. Nonetheless, their frozen grandeur adds to their mystique, making them even more alluring when they are out of reach.

Wular Lake



Located approximately 50 kilometres away from Srinagar, Wular Lake stands as the largest freshwater lake in Kashmir. Covering an expansive area of up to 130 square kilometres, it serves as a significant catchment basin for floodwaters. The presence of a vast marsh surrounding the lake provides a conducive environment for a variety of bird species and wildlife, making it a paradise for avid bird watchers. Despite encountering various environmental challenges, Wular Lake remains an irresistible destination for travellers and nature enthusiasts, offering a breathtaking vista that deserves a mandatory visit.

Dal Lake

First choice of tourists, Dal lake is the second largest in the valley of Kashmir. This popular lake is in Srinagar, which is the summer capital of J&K. Spanning an area of around 18 square kilometres, the lake encompasses charming islands, vibrant floating gardens, and a multitude of colourful boats, all embraced by magnificent mountains, thus presenting a captivating panorama. From a scientific standpoint, Nagin Lake is considered as an extension of Dal Lake, although many individuals perceive it as a distinct water body. Undoubtedly, it provides an enchanting and delightful encounter that is beyond question.

Marsar & Tarsar Lakes



The two alpine lakes nestled between the Sindh valley and Kashmir are known as "twin sisters" because of their close proximity, with a majestic mountain acting as a natural divider between them. During summers, these lakes transform into thrilling landscapes, adorned by blooming flowers that grace the surrounding mountains. This floral abundance serves as a source of nourishment for the diverse Himalayan wildlife. This awe-inspiring location, situated in the Kashmir valley, is a true paradise for trekkers and outdoor enthusiasts. Accessible from Pahalgam, it beckons adventurers to explore its breathtaking vistas and experience the wonders of nature firsthand.

Tulian Lake

Surrounded by the grand snow-capped peaks of the great Himalayan range, Tulian Lake stands as a breathtaking spectacle. Accessible from both Pahalgam and Baisaran, this stunning lake captivates visitors with its serene beauty. The waters of Tulian Lake remain frozen for the most of the year, with chunks of ice floating on the surface, creating a mesmerising sight. Its frozen expanse adds to the enchantment of the surroundings, offering a truly magical experience for those who venture to witness its icy splendour.

Mamashbal Lake

Situated approximately 30 kilometres from Srinagar and 60 kilometres from Jammu, the lake finds itself embraced by small villages. The picturesque landscape is adorned by the abundant presence of lotus plants that are meticulously cultivated across its expanse.

Sheshnag Lake

Sheshnag is a picturesque lake embraced by stunning meadows and towering snow-capped mountains. It is located along the route to the renowned Amarnath cave and can be accessed from Pahalgam. The scenic beauty that surrounds Sheshnag is truly charming, making it a cherished destination for nature enthusiasts and pilgrims alike.

For adventure lovers, Kashmir valley boasts many alpine lakes at a high altitude. Tourists can explore such lakes at Nandar Sar and Kausar Nag in the Pir Panjal mountain range. Since the routes are challenging, normal tourists should avoid trekking there. ■

Adventure in Gujarat

By PRIYANKA DESAI, Staff Reporter

Gujarat offers a diverse range of adventure activities for thrill-seekers. From exploring the majestic landscapes to indulging in adrenaline-pumping experiences, Gujarat has something for everyone. In this article, we will explore some of the exciting adventure activities you can enjoy in Gujarat.

Rock Climbing

Gujarat is blessed with stunning rocky terrains, making it an ideal destination for rappelling and rock climbing enthusiasts. Adventure enthusiasts can head to places like Saputara, Polo Forest region, and Pavagadh for thrilling rock climbing experiences. The rugged cliffs and picturesque surroundings add to the excitement of these activities.



Water Rafting

The mighty Narmada River flowing through Gujarat offers excellent opportunities for water rafting. Adventure seekers can enjoy navigating through the exhilarating rapids, turns and whirlpools surrounded by breathtaking landscapes. Ekta Nagar is the hotspot for the adrenaline junkies with a length of 4.5 km.

Paragliding & Paramotoring

For those looking to soar high in the sky, Gujarat offers paragliding and paramotoring adventures. The hill stations of Saputara, Junagarh and Pavagadh are popular for paragliding, where you can enjoy the thrill of flying like a bird and witnessing panoramic views of the surroundings. Paramotoring is also gaining popularity in Gujarat with Rann of Kutch as the hotspot for the same.



Camel Safari

Experience the rustic charm of Gujarat's desert regions with a camel safari. Kutch, known for its vast salt marshes and the Rann of Kutch, provides a unique opportunity to explore the desert on a camel's back. As you ride through the golden sands, you can witness stunning sunsets and a great opportunity to immerse yourself in the local culture.



Source: Shutterstock.com

Wildlife Safaris

Gujarat boasts several national parks and wildlife sanctuaries, offering thrilling wildlife safari experiences. Gir National Park, home to the majestic Asiatic lions, is a popular destination for wildlife enthusiasts. Other wildlife sanctuaries like Blackbuck National Park, Velavadar, Indian Wild Ass Sanctuary, Little Rann of Kutch, Purna Wildlife Sanctuary and Vansda National Park offer encounters with diverse flora and fauna.





Trekking

Gujarat's diverse topography provides excellent opportunities for trekking enthusiasts. The picturesque hills of Saputara, the rugged terrain of Girnar, and the scenic beauty of Pavagadh offer various trekking trails. As you hike through these trails, you can enjoy mesmerizing views, encounter unique flora and fauna, and experience the thrill of conquering challenging terrains.



Skydiving

Fly in the air with enriching landscapes and surreal views. Deesa in Gujarat is a top destination for skydiving lovers. Dive from a height of over 13,000 feet to experience free fall for a minute before the gradual landing comes into play. 📍

Most Beautiful Hikes in the World

By JAYESH PUROHIT, Staff Reporter

Hiking is an invigorating outdoor activity that combines exercise with exploration. It involves traversing scenic trails, immersing the self in nature's beauty, and challenging personal limits. With each step, hikers embrace the tranquillity of forests, the majesty of mountains, or the serenity of coastal paths. This physical and mental exercise gives you a chance to disconnect from the hectic pace of daily life and reconnect with nature. Get ready to rejuvenate your mind, strengthen your body, and foster a deep appreciation for the wonders of our planet. Check out the ten most beautiful hikes explored by seasoned hikers.





Rakiura Track

New Zealand

Distance: 20 miles

Time to Finish: Three days

Last Point: Near Oban

Take a look at the map of Te Araroa, a 1,900-mile trail that divides both the North and South Islands horizontally. Notice the small piece of land located just below the southern endpoint of the trail? That's Stewart Island, also known as Rakiura, which offers New Zealanders and other globetrotters one of the most romantic hiking experiences: the Rakiura Track. The Kiwis take their hiking seriously and invest significant resources into developing, protecting, and maintaining their trails. It's something that can make Americans envious or, at the very least, eager to visit.

Immerse yourself in leisurely walking and contemplation on secluded beaches, with the option to choose from various well-built and clean huts or campsites. The accommodation rates range from \$5 to \$60 per night.

The authorities put in great efforts to minimise the trail's boggy areas by compacting the ground. Due to the unfriendly seasons in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, it's best to embark on the Rakiura Track between October and March. This period aligns with a decline in hiking opportunities back in the United States, making it a perfect time to explore this sensational trail.

Greater Patagonian Trail

Chile and Argentina

Distance: 1,900 miles

Time to Finish: A lifetime

Last Points: Santiago, Chile (north),
and Navarino Island, Chile (south)



Are you looking for a hiking experience that transcends the well-trodden paths? The kind that cannot be followed with the help of maps and apps? Would you like to set off on a true exploration, like to plunge yourself in the frontier of modern adventure? Over the next few years, the Greater Patagonian Trail will offer some answers.

Conceived by the visionary German engineer Jan Dudeck and his fearless Chilean wife Meylin Ubilla over nearly two decades, the GPT, despite its name, is not merely a trail. Instead, it represents a network of cattle paths, small roads, and unmarked expanses where you must forge your own way.

Certainly, the Pan-American Highway and Chile's Route of Parks can guide you deep into some of the most remote and

untamed regions on our planet. However, no other journey challenges and expands the philosophical foundations of hiking quite like the Greater Patagonian Trail. Will you be able to navigate your way through private lands with your command of the Spanish language? Can you slow down and fully embrace the local culture and awe-inspiring beauty without succumbing to the American urge to complete the journey, let alone complete it swiftly? Are you prepared to recognize failure, which is often the most common outcome on the GPT, as a form of triumph in its own right? With its extraordinary diversity of terrain and its reliance on diplomacy, the Greater Patagonian Trail may well be the ultimate trail for you.

Backbone Trail

California

Distance: 67 miles

Time to Finish: Three to five days

Last Points: Point Mugu (west) and Will Rogers State Historic Park (east)

When you share your Pacific Crest Trail hiking experience with your friends and family, they would wonder how many times you caught sight of the ocean. Surprisingly, the answer is zero. However, now you have the opportunity to marvel at the vast swathe of the big blue from several thousand feet above Los Angeles. Introducing the Backbone Trail, a meandering path that crisscrosses the Santa Monica Mountains, located just north of the luxurious homes of Malibu, before descending to idyllic coastal coves.

What makes the Backbone Trail truly rare is its existence as a rare oasis of publicly accessible land with stunning ocean vistas, a region where private companies acquire every available inch. During the pandemic, the Backbone Trail gained popularity as a sought-after destination for setting fastest-

known-time records, with runners racing across its length in an astonishing ten hours. However, if you're not pursuing such a record-breaking endeavor, it's essential to note that campsites along the trail are scarce. To ensure a smooth end to your day's hike, you may want to arrange for a friend to pick you up or enlist the assistance of a guide through the Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council, although this could come at a cost of around \$500 for lodging arrangements.

Alternatively, if nightfall catches you unprepared and with limited options, you may find yourself seeking shelter among the chaparral. Take this chance to experience this exceptional trail, admire the mesmerising ocean views, and savour the uniqueness of the Backbone Trail within the protected Mediterranean ecosystem of the Santa Monica Mountains.

Chilkoot Trail

Alaska

Distance: 33 miles

Time to Finish: Two to five days

Last Points: Dyea, Alaska (south),
and Bennett Lake, British Columbia (north)

If you are passionate about historic trails, here is an exciting stuff which is called Chilkoot Trail. This route offers a unique opportunity to forge a tangible connection with the past, something that books alone cannot replicate. During the Klondike gold rush, this trail buzzed with activity as prospectors raced from Alaska into Canada's Yukon in search of fortune. An intriguing aspect of this trail's history is the officials stationed just below Chilkoot Pass, who would weigh the gear of gold seekers to ensure they carried enough food and supplies for the arduous expedition ahead.

As you traverse the Chilkoot Trail from south to north, you'll set about on a journey that begins in a gold-rush ghost town and leads you to the Canadian border, eventually descending towards the majestic Bennett Lake, often referred to as "the world's longest museum" by the National Park Service. Along the way, you'll encounter remnants of American avarice scattered along the trail, serving as poignant reminders of the past.

To stay overnight at the numerous campgrounds along the Chilkoot Trail, you'll need a permit from Parks Canada, which costs \$60. Note that the international border of the trail was closed in 2022, and the trail itself sustained damage from floods in October. However, it is anticipated that the entire trail will reopen in August of this year. If you're aiming to undertake the full trek, it is advisable to double-check the status before setting out on your journey.

Trans-Bhutan Trail

Bhutan

Distance: 250 miles
Time to Finish: 35 days
Last Points: Haa (west) and Trashigang (east)

One of the fascinating aspects of historic trails is their ability to inspire renaissance stories, even long after they have been replaced by train tracks or highways. A prime example of this is the Trans-Bhutan Trail, which served as a vital route for royal couriers, soldiers, and pilgrims for over five centuries until the construction of parallel roads rendered it obsolete and neglected in the 1950s. However, last September, the eastern Himalayan nation of Bhutan revived the trail after proper repairs carried out by a dedicated team of trail builders.

The Trans-Bhutan Trail offers a truly distinctive cultural experience that is hard to find elsewhere, particularly on foot. When Bhutan, a Buddhist and matrilineal society, opened its borders to tourists in 1974, it unveiled a world steeped in rich folklore, adorned with vast expanses of untouched forests, and dotted with ornate temples and fortresses nestled within

cliffside crevices. As you traverse the sweeping valleys, navigate through narrow passes, and lose yourself in rustics, you can look forward to sharing hearty meals, such as ema datshi—a delightful stew of cheese and chilies—with the very people who created them.

The Trans-Bhutan Trail weaves together these amazing experiences, while also offering the possibility of encountering enthralling wildlife like red pandas, Bengal tigers, and Asiatic black bears. However, it's important to note that going on this trail requires much preparation and a local guide. A five-day trek through a phenomenal section near Paro can be enjoyed for just \$375, but venturing on a full through-hike will cost around \$20,000. So, if you're ready to start a remarkable journey through Bhutan's enchanting landscapes and involve yourself in its vibrant culture, the Trans-Bhutan Trail awaits your footsteps.

Olomana Trail

Oahu

Distance: 4.4 miles
Time to Finish: Four hours
Last Points: Olamana Ridge Trailhead (north) and Ahiki (south)

The Olomana Trail, situated a mere ten miles from the bustling capital of Honolulu, is a trail of contrasting opinions. It is named after its first of three steep and narrow summits, connected by a short but perilous path lined with guide ropes. This trail has become one of the most divisive and debated hiking routes in the entire United States. Adrenaline junkies extol its virtues, praising the adrenaline rush it offers and the astounding coastal vistas that accompany the extreme exposure.

The trail stands as a testament to the inherent risks involved in outdoor activities, especially those that require a measure of courage and skill. While it remains a legal option for hikers, it is vital to approach it with caution and a realistic assessment of one's abilities. Each individual must make an informed decision about whether they are ready to take on the challenges presented by this trail. It is a place where the lures of adventure and the potential for danger coexist, demanding a level of respect and careful consideration from those who seek to conquer it.

Ocean to Lake Trail

Florida

Distance: 61 miles

Time to Finish: Four days

Last Points: Lake Okeechobee (west) and Hobe Sound Beach (east)

The 1,200-mile Florida Trail stretches from west to east. This serves as a bewitching playground of swamps and sand, adorned with cypresses and pines. The trail embodies the essence of American through-hiking, delivering both excitement and a touch of the uncanny. However, it also entails a month-long dance with alligators and the inevitable toll on one's feet in the form of grotesque blisters. In contrast, this Ocean to Lake Trail provides an enticing sampler, featuring abundant campsites, conveniently located restaurants (in South Florida, a visit to the local Mexican spot is always a must), and even cell service for sharing trail pictures with your adoring masses to enjoy.

While Florida may be infamous for its endless strip malls and ostentatious development, its forests and wetlands continue to harbor some of the wildest places in the United States. This lush and vibrant corridor of the Ocean to Lake Trail serves as an evidence of that untamed beauty.



Route K, Plitvice Lakes National Park

Croatia

Distance: 11 miles

Time to Finish: Five hours

Last Point: Entrance Station 1

To catch a sight of the enchanting Plitvice Lakes is to question whether you have stumbled upon a meticulously crafted simulation of natural beauty. Situated at the heart of Croatia's oldest national park, these lakes can be explored through day hikes along a network of winding trails.

One of the most extensive trails, Route K, forms a circuit that takes you through the lower and upper lakes. Along this path, you'll encounter the mesmerizing Jezero Kozjak, resembling a picturesque Lake of the Ozarks that has been enhanced with Photoshop. The route guides you across a series of well-maintained boardwalks, providing ideal vantage points to absorb the breathtaking panorama of lush forests, majestic waterfalls, trickling cascades, and expansive tufa embankments.

Despite its popularity as an affordable and easily accessible destination from the Adriatic Sea, which separates this coastline from Italy, Plitvice Lakes remains home to elusive creatures seldom found in Europe—wolves, black bears, and wildcats. After paying a nominal entrance fee, you are free to explore and roam at your leisure, get engrossed in the untouched splendour of this incredible natural wonder.

Sinai Trail

Egypt

Distance: 340 miles
Time to Finish: 50 days
Last Points: Serabit el-Khadim (west) and Ras Shaitan (east)

“How many trails do you have left?” is a question friends often pose. Yet, how can one ever reach the fabled end of trails when new ones emerge each year? A perfect example of this is the Sinai Trail, which came into existence in 2015 when three Bedouin tribes in Egypt’s legendary Sinai region—situated between Africa and

Asia—joined forces to create a marvellous 140-mile route spanning from the Red Sea to the summit of Gabal Katrine, standing at an impressive 8,600 feet. The successful implementation of this trail led to increased revenue and encouraged more tribes to participate, resulting in a subsequent expansion of an additional 200 miles.

The Sinai Trail takes you through a stark desert landscape beneath expansive skies, offering a diverse range of sights along the way. From tiny chapels and abandoned mines to otherworldly rock formations reminiscent of Mars and lush oases that almost transport you to a tropical paradise, the trail unveils a captivating tapestry of serrated mountains and intricate slot canyons.

Following local customs and an effort to stimulate economic growth in a region that sees relatively few tourists, hikers on the Sinai Trail are accompanied by Bedouin guides. Your travel gears and water will be transported by camels, which you have the opportunity to ride. Each of the four sections of the trail takes approximately twelve days to complete and costs a little over a thousand dollars, which is a handsome deal compared to other international guided treks.

While the first official through-hike of the Sinai Trail is scheduled for autumn 2023, it’s essential to consider the current security situation in the region. As of now, the U.S. government advises against travel to the Sinai due to terrorism. Before making any plans, you are recommended to check with the State Department’s Bureau of Consular Affairs for the latest travel advisories.

Although the Sinai Trail is a compelling adventure that many would like to take up, it’s wise to prioritise safety and stay informed about on-ground situations. Once security is ensured, you can set your sights on this wonderful journey that promises to engage you in the beguiling beauty of the Sinai region while supporting the local communities that have brought this trail to life. 📍





HIKING ACCESSORIES

For Your Comfort, Safety and Convenience

By JAYESH PUROHIT, Staff Reporter

Hiking accessories enhance your outdoor adventures, ensuring comfort, safety, and convenience. Essential items include sturdy hiking boots, moisture-wicking socks, and a reliable backpack for carrying supplies. A lightweight, waterproof tent and a warm sleeping bag provide shelter and rest. Don't forget a durable water bottle, a portable stool, and a versatile multi-tool. Additionally, personal care products like sunscreen, insect repellent, and a first aid kit are crucial. With these hiking accessories, you'll be prepared for any trail, ready to embrace nature's wonders.



Hiking Shoes

Columbia Bi5371 (Price: ₹ 9999/-)

Waterproof and sturdy, this pair of hiking boots is the must before you start your adventure. These shoes can brave any weather or activity you undertake on your hiking. With its Omni Grip technology, the shoes remain firm and stable on any terrain.

- Rubber soles
- Lace-up closure
- Wet wipe wash

Moisture Wicking Socks

Tiivra (Price: ₹ 950/-)

Long walks in the woods may prove a nightmare if you fail to provide strong support to your ankles. Tiivra moisture-wicking socks help you eliminate muscle sores, and give your ankles and achilles tendon much support. Feel no cramps and fatigue even after walking long distances.

- Machine wash
- Cotton fabric
- Medical-grade compression



Backpack

TriPole Colonel (Price: ₹ 3299/-)

A backpack can accommodate your hiking essentials like a portable stool, LED flashlight, portable mat, multitool hammer, a waist bag, polarised sunglasses, and more. TriPole Colonel backpack is waterproof, and comes with 3 years of manufacturer warranty for any damage due to regular usage.

- Torso adjustment
- sternum chest strap
- load adjustment straps
- bottom opening



Foldable/Portable, Changing/Toilet Tent

Mecute (Price: ₹ 1424/-)

This collapsible and lightweight tent ensures your privacy while you are attending nature's call. You can set up this tent very quickly on any ground; apart from changing clothes, you can use this tent to take a shower bath.

- Waterproof taffeta 191-D nylon polyester material
- Flexible steel for durability
- Weight: 2 kg



Instant Pop Up Camouflage Tents

IRIS (Price: ₹ 3999/-)

A camouflage tent is one of the essential accessories for hikers. This waterproof tent boasts 210D Oxford fabric floor to ensure sound sleep on wetlands. A compact and lightweight tent gives easy handling while you are walking.

- Durable 210T PU fabric
- Total weight: 1.85 kg
- Zippered Door
- Air-hydraulic technology



Sleeping Bags

Slovic (Price: ₹ 3199/-)

Toughest weather conditions and rough terrains become soft with this premium sleeping bag. Made specially for winters and snow, this bag has blanket-like fur lining to keep your body warm inside. You can use its anti-snap zippers from inside or outside.

- Occupancy: 1 person
- Weight: 2.4 kgs
- Anti-snap double zippers





Polarised Sports Sunglasses

Karsaer Tr90 (Price: ₹ 1439/-)

High-quality, fashionable polarised sunglasses from Karsaer not only protect your eyes from harsh sun but also add aesthetic elements to your personality. These glasses are extremely useful while you are travelling through exposed places like mountaintops, especially snowy conditions.

- Glossy frame with TR90 lightweight temple
- Strong Hinge
- Multiple colour options

Leak Pro of Water Reservoir

PROBEROS (Price: ₹ 664/-)

Never stay dehydrated on your hike for too long. This water reservoir should be your constant companion as it can store two litres of water. Its anti-bacterial bladder doesn't leave any bad taste in your mouth. Moreover, an ON/OFF valve prevents leakage.

- Food-grade EVA Material
- Dustproof cover
- premium antibacterial material



LED Flashlight

GlowPro Fx500 (Price: ₹ 569/-)

GlowPro LED flashlight can be your guide in the dark. Those who love to walk after sundown, must carry this high-quality battery-operated torch for smooth progress during hiking. Since it is made of aircraft-grade aluminium alloy, you can handle this flashlight without care. There will be little impact of accidental drops on the flashlight.

- Five light modes (High/Med/Low/Strobe/SOS)
- Compact design
- Aluminium material



Portable Telescoping Stool

Ascension (Price: ₹ 1298/-)

A portable stool is a perfect friend for any hiker as it offers a few minutes of rest on your hiking expedition. A durable stool can also be used while you are cooking food or having your meal during the day; adjust its height according to your need.

- Holds up to 287 lbs
- Weight: 2.7 lbs
- Polyamide material



14-in-1 Multi Tool Hammer

Generic (Price: ₹ 1295/-)

A multi-tool hammer is one of the must-haves in your hiking backpack. Compact in size, this 14-in-1 hammer can help you in multiple ways. Apart from hammering nails, this tool can be used as screwdriver, nail remover, bottle opener, wire cutter, knife etc.

- Alloy steel
- 350 grams
- Compact design



Resistant Portable Mat

Cozen Water (Price: ₹ 499/-)

A large portable mat is an ideal product for hikers across the world. Cozen's water-resistant mat allows at least 3-5 adults (seated) or 2-3 adults (lying) to rest on. Apart from its outdoor usage, this mat also serves as an emergency blanket, outdoor blanket, floor mat, kids playing mat, and pet seat cover.

- 600D Oxford cloth
- Waterproof/sandproof bottom
- Foldable and Lightweight



Disclaimer: All accessories listed here were available on Amazon India website at the time of writing this article. Price of products listed may vary from time to time

PM Inaugurates International Museum Expo 2023



The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the International Museum Expo 2023 at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi on 18th May, 2023. He also inaugurated a virtual walkthrough of the upcoming National Museum at the North and South Blocks. The Prime Minister also took a walkthrough of Techno Mela, Conservation

Lab and the Exhibitions showcased on the occasion. The International Museum Expo is being organized as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav to celebrate the 47th International Museum Day with the theme of the year 'Museums, Sustainability and Well Being'. On this occasion, Prime Minister Shri

Narendra Modi unveiled the stylised and contemporarised life-size version of a 5-feet tall toy in Channapatna style inspired by the Bronze Dancing Girl of the Sindhu Saraswati Sabhyata, which is the official mascot of the International Museum Expo 2023. The Mascot is interpreted as a modern-day “dwarpaal” or the “door-guardian” that ushers the audience into the experience of the International Museum Expo 2023.

The expo will pave the way for a very vibrant Museum movement and ecosystem in the country and the Ministry of Culture through the adoption of new immersive and experiential technologies will make it a memorable experience for all the visitors, the Minister said.

Source: PIB Delhi

Daman’s Got a New Attraction for Tourists



15th May, 2023 - Besides its pristine beaches, Daman has got one more attraction to its name. To offer tourists a luxurious sea-facing stay, the Daman Tourism Department in association with Praveg Limited launched Praveg Beach Resort on the Lighthouse Beach on 15th May, 2023. The beachfront resort has 33

independent cottages overlooking the sea with top-notch amenities like Rooftop Bar-cum-Café, Multi-cuisine Restaurant, a Swimming Pool, a Pool-side Bar, among many others. “The ambience of the resort is very appealing. The cottages have a rich interior and each of them have a beautiful sea-view. The resort is the

perfect choice to make your beach vacation memorable,” shared a guest. It is a great opportunity for the tourists to experience the seaside life amidst luxury with a wide range of pocket-friendly packages. Visit www.PravegBeachResortDaman.com for more information.

A 3-day '10th Chintan Shivir' Concluded at Tent City Narmada



21st May, 2023, Ekta Nagar – A 3-day Chintan Shivir of ministers and senior officials of the Gujarat Government was organized at Tent City Narmada, Statue of Unity, Ekta Nagar during May 19-21, 2023. The Event was inaugurated by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat Shri Bhupendra

Patel. '10th Chintan Shivir' was attended by Cabinet Ministers, Principal Secretaries, Senior Additional Chief Secretaries, District Collectors, and heads of departments, among many other VVIP guests. Tent City Narmada received a wide scale appreciation for its

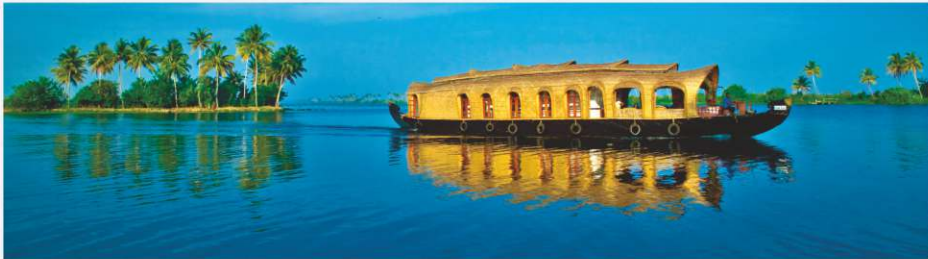
impeccable event organization. The Resort, with its 9 well-equipped conference halls and 200 all-weather AC Tents and modern amenities, has become a preferred conference venue for large-scale government conferences.

NYT Features Kerala in 'Read Your Way Around the World' Series

Famed for its panoramic nature, spices and eclectic culture and history, Kerala has figured in The New York Times' Read Your Way Around the World' series with American writer Abraham Verghese giving a list of good reads for anybody interested in exploring God's Own Country.

'Read Your Way Around the World' is a series carried by The NYT that helps readers and travellers explore the globe through books.

Abraham Verghese, the American author and physician born to Keralite parents, begins “Read Your Way Through Kerala” by lavishing praises on the beauty of the south Indian state before moving on to recommend an exhaustive list of books for those who are interested in Kerala or planning to travel to explore the unique experience awaiting them.



“If you arrive in Kerala from elsewhere in India, you'll feel as though you've landed in a different country — 'God's own country as Keralites like to say, “notes Abraham Verghese, a bestselling author whose widely-read books include “Cutting for Stone.” He is also a medical doctor and Vice Chair of the Department of Medicine, Stanford University. “There is no better place to read than on the deck of your own houseboat travelling down shady waterways, while the fish you caught is being prepared in the open-air kitchen at the back of the

boat....,” the author says, referring to the unique backwater experience awaiting travellers in Kerala. “It is fascinating to know that Kerala has figured in New York Times' Read Your Way Around the World series. This will especially serve as a guide for travellers interested in history and culture. This will bring to spotlight the literary and heritage tourism that Kerala has been promoting actively, “Kerala Tourism Minister Shri P A Mohamed Riyas said.

Source: Kerala Tourism

Siddhpur

Gujarat's Sacred City of
Spirituality & Heritage

By PRIYANKA DESAI, Staff Reporter

A sleepy little town in North Gujarat, Siddhpur is revered as a sacred destination. The town is renowned for its rich spiritual heritage, ancient temples and historical significance. Siddhpur's religious fervor, coupled with its architectural wonders, attracts visitors from far and wide. Let's delve into the mystical and cultural charm of this sacred city.



Tapestry of Spirituality

The Vedas mention Siddhpur as 'Shrithal', which means a pious place. As per Hindu religion, just as Gaya in Bihar holds significance for obsequies offerings to the paternal ancestors, Siddhpur has the importance of 'Matru Gaya' or 'Matru Shraddh' as this is the place where people come to perform the rituals for their mothers who are in heavenly abode. Bindu Sarovar in Siddhpur is one of the five

most ancient lakes in India. As per mythological story, Lord Parshuram performed matru shraddh at Bindu Sarovar in Siddhpur.

Siddhpur is a home to the famous Rudra Mahalaya temple, dedicated to Lord Shiva. This sacred site exudes an aura of divinity and tranquility, drawing pilgrims who seek spiritual solace and blessings.



Heritage & Architecture

Siddhpur's allure extends beyond its spiritual significance, with its architectural brilliance captivating visitors. The magnificent Rudra Mahalaya Temple was built in the 12th century AD by Raja Siddhraj. Considered as an architectural wonder, the multi-storeyed temple had 1600 pillars, 12 entrance doors and central mandapa. The detailed carvings of the pillars and the beautiful Toran, the only remains of the temple today, are the evidence of the temple's exuberance.

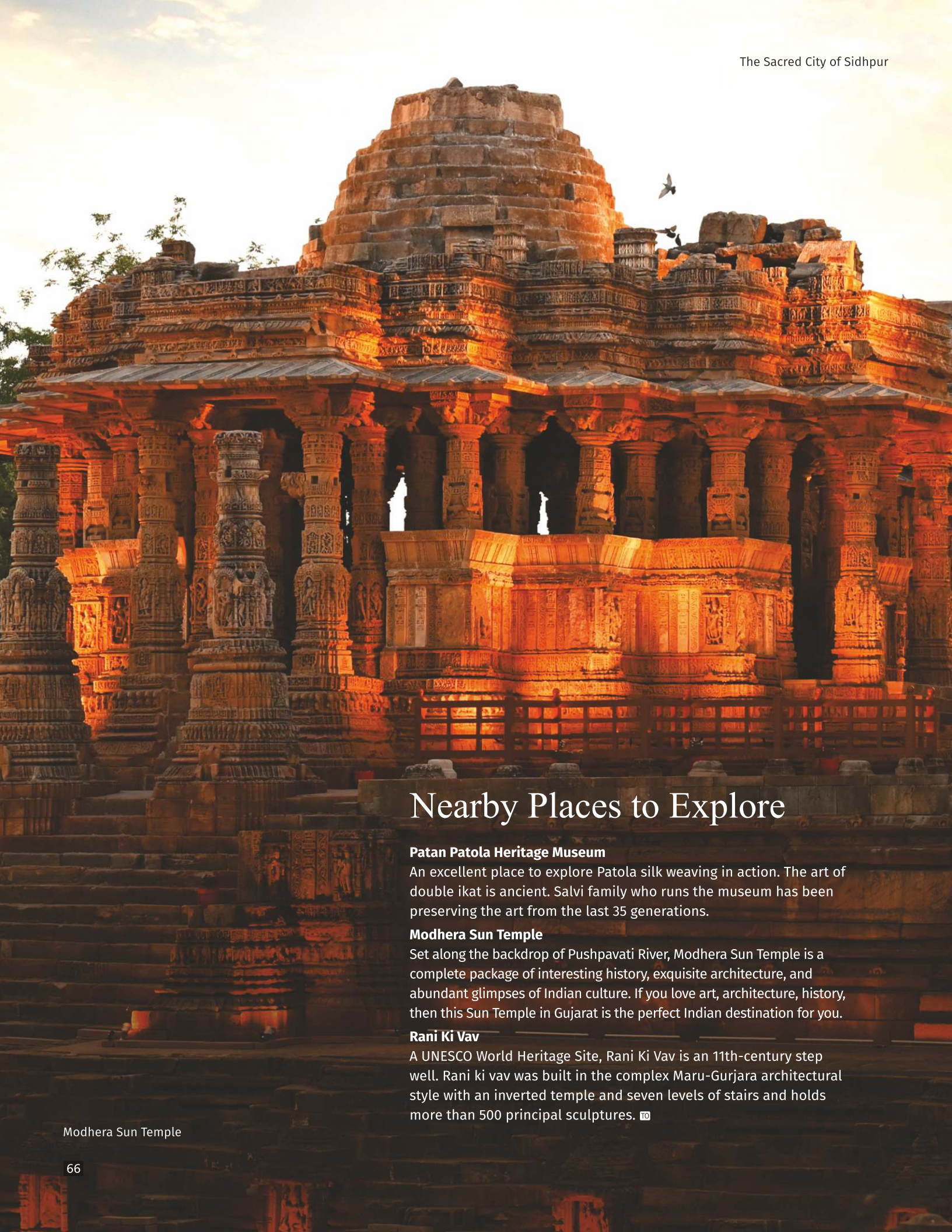
Culture & Festivals

Siddhpur is a melting pot of diverse cultures, reflecting the harmonious coexistence of different communities. The city is known for its vibrant festivals, including the Siddhpur Camel Fair, where locals and tourists come together to witness a spectacle of colorful traditions, folk dances, and lively music in the Kartik month. The camels and horses are decorated beautifully for display by their owners. All in all, the fair also offers a glimpse into the rural life and traditional arts and crafts of Gujarat.



The Bohra Connection

Siddhpur has a significant association with the Bohra community who has contributed to the city's heritage and cultural fabric. The Bohra houses showcase unique architectural styles reflecting European flavors. Adorned with ornate facades and intricately carved balconies, these houses offer a glimpse into the community's rich history and architectural prowess.



Nearby Places to Explore


Patan Patola Heritage Museum

An excellent place to explore Patola silk weaving in action. The art of double ikat is ancient. Salvi family who runs the museum has been preserving the art from the last 35 generations.

Modhera Sun Temple

Set along the backdrop of Pushpavati River, Modhera Sun Temple is a complete package of interesting history, exquisite architecture, and abundant glimpses of Indian culture. If you love art, architecture, history, then this Sun Temple in Gujarat is the perfect Indian destination for you.

Rani Ki Vav

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, Rani Ki Vav is an 11th-century step well. Rani ki vav was built in the complex Maru-Gurjara architectural style with an inverted temple and seven levels of stairs and holds more than 500 principal sculptures. 

Modhera Sun Temple

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