

SHIMA - DHARAMSALA - ARMISTER 7 DAY EXTENSION TO THE NORTHERN INDIA AND RAJASTHAN TOUR



DAY 1 DEHLI - SHIMLA After early breakfast take Toy train to Kalka 5-6 hours ride. Change to Shatabdi Express train to Shimla. Arrive Shimla and transfer to hotel for overnight **(B)**

SHIMLA - the capital of Himachal Pradesh, is one of the top tourist destinations in India. The picturesque city is situated in the northwestern part of the Himalayan Mountain Range and the mean elevation of the city is 7,234 feet (2,205 metres). A Shimla location map shows the different highways, rail lines, railway stations, hospitals, hotels, educational institutions, religious places, water bodies, and other important places of interest in the city.

THE RIDGE OF SHIMLA - is a large open spacious platform from where you can have a panoramic view of the mountain peaks of Shimla. The snow capped mountain ranges engulfed in the beauty of the nature is a phenomenal view that the Ridge of Shimla offers to the crowd.

The Ridge at Shimla also provides the tourists a view of the age old Christ Church built in the Neo-Gothic style of architecture as well as the new Tudor library. These two are the milestones of the town of Shimla.

The movement of vehicles is strictly prohibited here. As such the Ridge in Shimla always remains crowded with hundreds of people. Tourists from all over the country visit this awesome hill resort and paying a visit to the Ridge is a must for them for the view of the sunset at the dusk is something that one will never forget in his lifetime.

The Shimla Ridge is also flocked by the pedestrians for just pleasant walking in the cool breezy weather of Shimla. The Ridge of Shimla exhibits an awesome view of the Mall that is located below it. The water supply of Shimla comes from the water reservoir that is present at the Ridge of Shimla. The well known Summer Festival is organized near the Ridge. The Ridge is the connecting point of Mall Road, Lakkar Bazaar, Scandal Point, US Club and Jakhu. The locals of Shimla provides a warm welcome to the tourists by their performances of dances and mimicry.

The statue of YS Parmar who is the founder of Himachal Pradesh and of Mrs Indira Gandhi has been erected at this place.

THE SHIMLA STATE MUSEUM - houses a huge collection of magnificent paintings, sculptures, coins, handicrafts, photos, etc of not only the state of Himachal Pradesh but outside too. The state museum is a major attraction of the Mall area of Shimla built in the style of colonial edifice with sprawling lawns all around. This museum was inaugurated in 1974.

The museum is open from ten in the morning to five in the evening. It is open on all days except Monday and the national holidays. The state museum of Shimla also comprises a library that is loaded with historical books and manuscripts.

The Shimla State Museum was erected solely with the purpose of preserving the rich cultural heritage of the state and to spread the message of cultural legacy over generations.

The paintings depicts the life and culture of the hilly people. Besides there is a huge collection of Mughal and Rajasthani paintings. The museum holds the sculptural merit of the 8th century stone works of Masrur and Bajaura. Also a wide lay out of Himachali dolls are displayed here.

DAY 2 SHIMLA Full day sightseeing of Shimla visiting The Mall ridge road – Christ Church Shimla State Museum – Gaiety Theater – Viceregal Lodge etc. Return to hotel in the evening. **Overnight in The hotel. (B)**

DAY 3 SHIMLA - DHARAMASALA After breakfast drive to Dharamasala – 250 kms 6-7 hours drive. Arrive and transfer to hotel..**Overnight in the hotel. (B)**

DAY 4 DHARAMASALA - Full day visit to Mcleodganj - visit Museum - Palace - Schools - Handicraft Institutes - Nurbolinka etc. **Night in the hotel. (B) 14TH October**



Tsuglag Khang (Dalai Lama's Temple Complex)

Tsuglag Khang, The Dalai Lama's temple complex, is the life-blood of the village. Located a short walk away from the bus station at the center of town, the complex houses the Namgyal Monastery (which trains monks for rituals associated with the temple), the main temple and a smaller shrine that houses a huge gilded statue of the Buddha, along with two smaller, but no less impressive statues of Chenresig and Guru Rinpoche. In addition, the Dalai Lama's residence and administrative offices are in the complex. The temple complex is always busy. Services are held daily and are attended by lamas, monks, nuns and lay people. Visitors are welcome to observe, but remember to remove your shoes and walk clockwise around the

temple and past the chorten (prayer wheels) before sitting down. In the shrine, you might come across a group of monks building an intricate sand mandala, and outside on Thursdays, groups of monks are scattered around the grounds practicing their debating techniques—an entertaining and thought-provoking ritual worth catching. Around the temple complex there is a long meditation trail with small shrines, stupas and a massive chorten. The shrines near the chorten are always covered in thousands of prayer flags placed by pilgrims to the Dalai Lama's home, which stands above and behind it.

Norbulingka Institute

The Norbulingka Institute is located about 15 km from McLeod Ganj and is well worth the effort to get there by taxi or local bus. Developed by the Dalai Lama as a center for the continuation and training of traditional Tibetan arts and crafts, the ground alone are testament to the Tibetan's architectural and artistic skill. A number of buildings, all ornately decorated cover several acres complete with a koi pond, bridges and gardens.

Plan to spend a whole day here, watching the craftsmen at work in the thangka studios, woodworking and sewing workshops. The temple complex is stunning, with portraits of all the Dalai Lama's lining the upper story. One building also has a photographic exhibition on the creation of the Institute and talks about how it was built using traditional techniques.

But the real highlight is the Losel Doll Museum, an exhibition of intricately detailed, beautiful dolls depicting the costumes and activities of the people in each of the regions of Tibet. There are also dioramas of religious events, festivals and daily life. Replicas of the dolls are for sale, along with crafts produced at the Institute. Norbulingka also has a restaurant and a guesthouse on the grounds, and, if you happen to find someone who will show you, an apartment that is one of the Dalai Lama's residences

St. John's Church

The church is small in size and was built in 1852 in the Gothic style. Its tapering high windows, the front and back sides of its building all seem to be in perfect harmony with the deodar grove which is a home to lots of monkeys, baboons and birds. In 1905 earthquake, the bellfry of the church was completely destroyed. However, the rest of the building escaped damage. A new bell (built in 1915) was brought from England and installed outside in the compound of the church. The church witnessed a special event in 1992 when visitors from 39 countries participated in its service.

The Tibetan Institute for the Performing Arts (TIPA)

TIPA is located a short walk from the center of town. Another impressive complex built around an open courtyard, the Institute trains Tibetans (and occasionally foreigners) in the traditional Tibetan forms of opera, theatre and dance. Performances are held in the courtyard and an opera festival takes place each spring. Check the bulletin boards for announcements. But even when there is a hiatus in performances, you can watch the students rehearsing.

DAY 5 DHARAMASALA –ARMISTER 4 ½ hours drive –

Drive from Dharamsala after easy breakfast for Amritsar. 4/5 hours drive plus stops . Arrive and transfer to hotel (Raddisson Blue or similar)

AMRITSAR - Amritsar is a city with a splendid blend of tradition and culture. With important religious centers and historical sites, the city reveals a magnificent past and a promising future.

The Golden temple is located in the holy city of the Sikhs, Amritsar. The Golden temple is famous for its full golden dome, it is one of the most sacred pilgrim spots for Sikhs. The Mandir is built on a 67-ft square of marble and is a two storied structure. Maharaja Ranjit Singh had the upper half of the building built with approximately 400 kg of gold leaf. The Golden Temple is surrounded by a number of other famous temples like the Durgiana Temple. The fourth Guru of Sikhs, Guru Ram Das, who had initially constructed a pool here, founded Amritsar, which houses the Golden Temple or Harmandir Sahib. It is here that Sage Valmiki wrote the epic, Ramayana. Rama and Sita are believed to have spent their fourteen-year exile in Amritsar, the epicenter of Sikhism. To the south of the temple is a garden, and the tower of Baba Atal. The Central Sikh Museum is atop the Clock Tower.

The 'Guru Ka Langar' offers free food to around 20,000 people everyday. The number shoots up to 100,000 on special occasions. A visitor must cover his / her head before entering the temple premises. The Granth Sahib is kept in the Temple during the day and is kept in the Akal Takht or Eternal Throne in the night. The Akal Takht also houses the ancient weapons used by the Sikh warriors. Guru Hargobind established it. The rugged old Jubi Tree in the north west corner of the compound is believed to possess special powers. It was planted 450 years ago, by the Golden Temple's first high priest, Baba Buddha. Guru-ka-Langar or the communal canteen is towards the eastern entrance of the temple complex, and it provides free food to all visitors, regardless of colour, creed, caste or gender. Visitors to the Golden Temple must remove their shoes and cover their heads before entering the temple. The temple is less crowded in the early mornings on weekends.

Jallian Wala Bagh - The memorial at this site commemorates the 2000 Indians who were killed or wounded, shot indiscriminately by the British under the command of Gen Michael O'Dyer on April 13, 1919 while participating in a peaceful public meeting. This was one of the major incidents of India's freedom struggle. The story of this appalling massacre is told in the Martyr's Gallery at the site. A section of wall with bullet marks still visible is preserved along with the memorial well, in which some people jumped to escape. "The impossible men of India shall rise and liberate their mother land", declared Mahatma Gandhi, after the Jallian Wala massacre. "This disproportionate severity of punishment inflicted upon the unfortunate people and method of carrying it out is without parallel in the history of civilized govt." wrote Rabindra Nath Tagore the noble laureate while returning knighthood.

DAY 6 ARMISTER visit Golden temple in the morning followed by Rickshaw ride through the old markets Amritsar. Lunch in town. Afternoon one hour drive to Indo-Pak border to witness flags down ceremony. Overnight in the hotel

DAY 7 ARMISTER - SRINIGAR BY FLIGHT 45 minute flight

Upon arrival you will be met and assisted for check in at the houseboat. Later at evening enjoy your relaxing Shikara ride in famous Dal Lake to enjoy the beauty that God has graced this city with which is often compared to Venice. You will get a view of some very interesting Places around the Lake. **Overnight stay is at the houseboat (BLD)**

COST: Aust \$3080 Twin share single supplement Aust\$1500

Cost Includes: Twin sharing hotel rooms Daily breakfast, All transfers and sightseeing by mini Air-conditioning coach, Train journey, Drinking water on board, English speaking

Cost excludes: Single rooms All lunch and dinners Table drinks Camera charges Excess baggage Air tickets.