

Here comes monsoon magic in India!

Incredible India <no-reply@email.incredibleindia.gov.in>

Fri 6/28/2024 5:06 PM

To:Sparsh Bhardwaj <sparsh.bhardwaj@epsilon.com>

External to the Groupe / en provenance de l'extérieur du Groupe

If you are unable to view this message correctly, [click here](#)

www.incredibleindia.org



Issue 16 • June 2024

City spotlight: Shillong



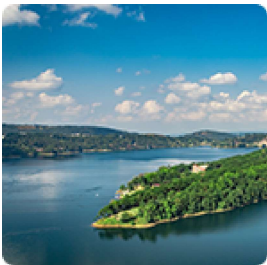
FOR SERENITY AND ADVENTURE ABOVE THE CLOUDS

Shillong lies in the highlands of Meghalaya, with a climate that is refreshingly pleasant year-round. It is a hill station in Northeast India with beautiful green surroundings to explore, gorgeous lakes for boatrides, and cascading cool waterfalls to splash in. It is known as the 'Scotland of the East', with its colonial-era architecture and scenic golf courses that reflect its historic charm. It is a trekker's paradise with iconic trails like the 16-km David Scott Trail that offers breathtaking views of the East Khasi Hills, while the surrounding forests and national parks teem with exotic flora and fauna. The rich heritage of the Khasi tribe adds a unique charm to the city. Walk through Police and Bara Bazaars for delectable local delicacies and the intricacies of traditional handicrafts.

The tea gardens of the Meghalaya region offer a peaceful environment amidst rolling hills and lush plantations. Tour these tea estates to learn about the intricate process of tea production and to sample some of the finest brews. Tea tasting cafes provide a cosy ambiance where you can delight in local teas and delicious pastries. Shillong offers many opportunities for trekking, rock climbing, and water sports at the nearby Uiam Lake. Visit the 7-storey Don Bosco Museum to see the rich cultural heritage through its extensive exhibits, while the Shillong Cathedral stands nearby as a place of worship and architectural beauty. The music-loving town is also famous for its lively festivals and thriving rock music scene, which resonate with the spirit of its people, who welcome you with open arms.



TOP 5 EXPERIENCES IN SHILLONG



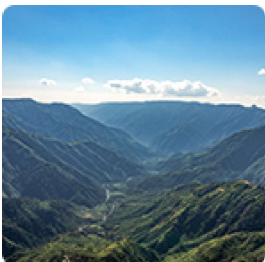
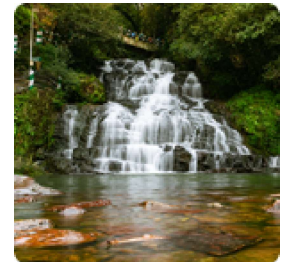
Uiam Lake, where dreams, waters, and fun come together

Often referred to as the 'Barapani' (Big water), Uiam Lake is a sprawling man-made reservoir that offers a pleasant respite in the beautiful surroundings of the city of Shillong. It is enfolded by rich green hills and dotted with unusual multihued blooms, making it the perfect spot for picnics, boating, nature walks, birdwatching and photography. You can also enjoy thrilling water sports here, like kayaking and water skiing.

Walk along Elephant Falls for up-close views and a splash in the pool below

This stunning cascade, is also called Kshaid-Lai-Pateng by the Khasi people, referring to its three distinct tiers on which a mountain stream scythes down a forested slope. It was named after an elephant-shaped rock, which was destroyed in an earthquake over a century ago.

The railed walkways along the falls allow you to experience the falls from multiple levels, feeling the cool spray and hearing the thunderous flow up close. On reaching the pool at the bottom, you can wade into the clear water and capture memorable moments. There are also stalls at the entrance selling snacks and souvenirs.

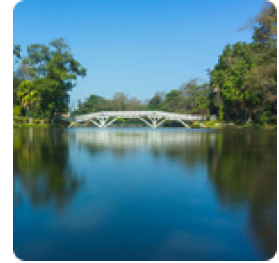


Trek up to Shillong Peak for the highest vantage point

Shillong Peak, at the highest point in the region, offers panoramic views of the surroundings, including the majestic Himalayas, the lush green valleys of Shillong, the plains of Bangladesh, and gushing streams and waterfalls. It also holds deep cultural significance for the local Khasi beliefs, serving as a site for various rituals and ceremonies dedicated to the local deity, Leishyllong. The peak is home to an Indian Air Force radar station, allowing an intriguing glimpse into its strategic military importance. Telescope services at the summit, offer a detailed view of the surroundings.

Take a boat ride, walk or relax amidst nature at the historical Ward's Lake

Ward's Lake, also known as Pollock's Lake, was built around a hundred years ago by Sir William Ward, the then Chief Commissioner of Assam, and Colonel Hopkins in 1894. It was named after Sir William Ward, but locals affectionately call it Pollock's Lake in honour of a popular engineer from the pre-independence era. Surrounded by well-maintained gardens lined with flower beds and cobblestone pathways, the lake offers a peaceful retreat in the city. Charming wooden bridges span its waters, providing an opportunity to stroll and feed the fish. After a leisurely walk or boat ride, you can relax at the onsite cafeteria.



A premier destination for successful MICE events

Shillong offers a fantastic setting for MICE events with its pleasant climate, natural beauty, rich heritage, modern amenities, and well-developed infrastructure, making it an ideal location for business gatherings. The city has several notable venues, such as the State Convention Centre, equipped with state-of-the-art facilities, and the sprawling Pinewood Hotel, offering elegant conference spaces and accommodation. The North Eastern Hill University (NEHU) provides an academic environment with ample space for large events.

[Read more on Shillong](#)

India Celebrates

India has many diverse religious festivals and the much-anticipated mango festivals in the months of June and July. Temples and homes are decorated with care and devotion, and the air is filled with the scent of incense and festive foods. At the same time, the mango season peaks, and special festivals dedicated to this beloved fruit are held, featuring a huge assortment of mango varieties.

TOP FESTIVALS TO EXPERIENCE IN JUNE-JULY



Eid al Adah (Bakrid)

Eid al-Adha, is one of the most significant Islamic festivals, celebrated with great passion across the Muslim world. It is filled with rich traditions and a communal spirit of generosity for family, friends, and the less fortunate. The celebrations typically begin with a special prayer at the mosque, followed by the ritual sacrifice of an animal, symbolising the willingness of Ibrahim (Abraham) to sacrifice his son in obedience to the Prophet. Markets and streets get a very festive look and a palpable sense of joy and community spirit permeates the streets.

When and where to celebrate:

17 June 2024

Visit Old Delhi, where the historic Jama Masjid and the markets around come alive with celebrations. In Lucknow, the grand Asafi Imambara holds rituals and feasts.

Hyderabad celebrates with delectable cuisine at landmarks like the Charminar. Mumbai's Mohammed Ali Road is another hotspot.

Vat Purnima

Vat Purnima is a Hindu festival celebrated by married women, particularly in the western states of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, and the northern state of Uttarakhand. It falls on the full moon day of the month of Jyeshtha, usually in June, honouring the devotion of Savitri, who saved her husband, Satyavan, from death through her unwavering faith. On this day women fast, and tie threads around a banyan tree (Vat Vriksha), offer prayers, and circle it while narrating the tale and praying for their husbands' health and long lives.

When and where to celebrate:

21 June 2024

Visit Mumbai, where the Banganga Tank and Hanging Gardens are celebration hubs. Pune offers a more traditional setting. Ahmedabad and Vadodara have rich community events. Bengaluru has a mix of traditional and modern festivities, and the sacred atmosphere of Har Ki Pauri in Haridwar is very spiritual.



International Mango Festival

The International Mango Festival is a lively event held every year in New Delhi, to celebrate the beloved fruit. People come from all over to enjoy and learn about over 500 different types of mangoes, each with its own special taste, texture, and smell. The festival includes fun activities like mango-eating contests, cooking demonstrations, and workshops on how to grow and care for mango trees. Besides enjoying delicious mangoes, you can also learn about the fruit's importance in art, literature, and traditions.

When and where to celebrate:

22 June 2024

With fun activities, culinary displays, and educational workshops, New Delhi becomes a paradise for mango lovers from around the world during the festival, where people gather to taste the rich flavours of over 500 types of mangoes.

Jagannath Rath Yatra

Jagannath Rath Yatra is a grand ancient Hindu festival celebrated annually in Puri. Dedicated to Lord Jagannath, an incarnation of Lord Krishna, along with his siblings Balabhadra and Subhadra, the festival involves a procession of massive, elaborately decorated chariots, carrying the deities from the Jagannath Temple to the Gundicha Temple, a journey symbolising the Gods' visit to their birthplace. The journey is a spectacular sight, filled with music, chanting, and the pulling of massive chariots by millions of devotees.

When and where to celebrate:

07 July 2024

The place to be in is Puri, in the state of Odisha. This coastal city becomes the centre of devotion and festivity as millions of pilgrims and tourists gather to witness the grand chariot procession.





Guru Purnima

Guru Purnima is a festival dedicated to honouring teachers and spiritual mentors who illuminate our paths with wisdom and guidance. This auspicious day offers a unique opportunity to express gratitude to the gurus who have significantly impacted our lives. Steeped in the rich 'Guru-Shishya' tradition of India, which emphasises the deep, respectful, and transformative relationship between teacher and disciple, this celebration underscores the vital role of gurus in imparting knowledge, values, and skills across generations.

When and where to celebrate:

21 July 2024

Visit revered spiritual centres and ashrams such as those in Varanasi, Rishikesh, and Tiruvannamalai. The festival is celebrated across India, with disciples often offering flowers, fruits, and sweets to their gurus to honour and seek blessings from their teachers.

Explore India in June-July

Travelling in the hills of India during the monsoons is a magical experience, as the landscape transforms into paradise. The rains rejuvenate the forests, cascading waterfalls, and mist-covered mountains. The air is cool and fresh, a refreshing change from the heat of the plains, and the pitter patter of rain adds to the soothing ambiance.

However, it's wise to check weather conditions and road accessibility before embarking on the journey. The monsoon season reveals a unique, enchanting side of India's hill stations.



Munnar - A paradise in June & July with tea plantations and misty hills

Munnar, 75 km from Kochi, situated in the Western Ghats of Kerala, becomes absolutely delightful during the monsoon. Known for its sprawling tea plantations, cloud-covered hills, and exotic wildlife, Munnar's beauty is magnified as the rains replenish its landscape. Waterfalls like Attukal and Lakkam flow more vigorously, and the Eravikulam National Park becomes even more enchanting. You can explore tea museums, take enjoyable boat rides on the Kundala Lake, and enjoy the fresh, cool breeze that carries the earthy scent of rain-soaked soil.

Mahabaleshwar - A marvel to visit for strawberry farms and gorgeous views

Mahabaleshwar, 120 km from Pune, in the Western Ghats of Maharashtra, is an enchanting hill station that comes alive during the monsoon season. Its name came from Lord Shiva (Mahabali), the temple situated in old Mahabaleshwar, popularly known as Kshetra Mahabaleshwar. Famous for the lush greenery of its surrounding forests and strawberry farms, the town offers a cool, refreshing climate with mist-laden valleys and gushing waterfalls like Lingmala. The scenic viewpoints, such as Arther's Seat provide a breathtaking view of the Sahyadri ranges. Boating on the Venna Lake and exploring the historical Pratapgad Fort are delightful activities.





Darjeeling - Ride the toy train up for nature's beauty and the world's best tea

Darjeeling, 90 km from Bagdogra, lies in the foothills of the Himalayas in West Bengal, and is one of the most popular hill stations that exudes charm during the summer and monsoon seasons. Famous for its tea gardens that stretch across rolling hills, Darjeeling offers a unique blend of natural beauty and colonial heritage. The Toy Train, a UNESCO World Heritage site, provides a scenic ride through the green forested mountains. You can enjoy the cool climate while exploring landmarks like Tiger Hill for sunrise views, and the bustling local markets that reflect the town's diverse culture.

Sakleshpur – A coffee country with historic forts and railway bridges

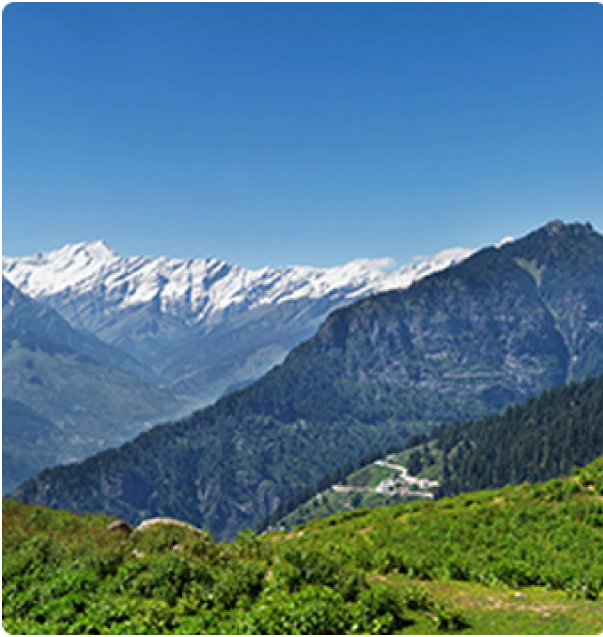
130 km from Mangalore, Sakleshpur becomes a rich green forested hill town in the Western Ghats of Karnataka in the monsoon season. Known for its lush coffee plantations, dense forests, and flowing streams, Sakleshpur offers a refreshing escape with its cool, cloudy climate. The town is dotted with historical sites like the Manjarabad Fort, a star-shaped fort. Nature enthusiasts can visit the Bisle View Point, which provides breathtaking views of the rain-soaked hills and valleys, or trek through the forests to reach the cascading Manjehalli Waterfalls. The legendary Sakleshpur Railway Bridge is part of the Green Route trek with stunning landscapes of the deep valleys below.



Mussoorie – Its proximity to Delhi makes it a very popular summer getaway

Mussoorie, 60 km from Dehradun, often referred to as the "Queen of the Hills," is a captivating hill station in Uttarakhand that comes alive during the monsoon season. Lying in the Garhwal Himalayan range, the monsoon rains intensify the beauty of its natural attractions, such as Kempty Falls, where the waterfalls cascade with greater vigour, and Cloud's End, that gets enveloped in mist. The town's Mall Road buzzes with life, offering a blend of shops, cafes, and local eateries. With excellent highways connecting it to most northern metros it is a very popular summer and monsoon destination.

Beyond Incredible



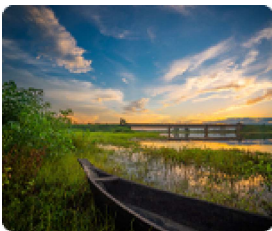
INDIA'S HILL TOWNS FOR A SUMMER & MONSOON RETREAT

Visiting India's hill towns during the summer and monsoon seasons is a delightful experience, offering a refreshing escape from the heat and a chance to witness nature at its very best. In summer, hill stations like Shimla, Manali, and Darjeeling, amongst many others provide a cool respite with their pleasant temperatures, serene environments, and many activities. The lush greenery, blooming flowers, and clear skies make for picturesque landscapes, perfect for leisurely strolls, trekking, and exploring local cultures and bazars. Accessibility is generally good in India, even during this season, with well-maintained roads and frequent transport options, making it convenient for travellers to reach these high-altitude areas. For those wary of India's summer heat, the hill stations offer a compelling alternative.

During the monsoons, hill towns such as Munnar, Coorg, and Mahabaleshwar transform with the rains breathing new life into the flora and fauna. Waterfalls gush with renewed vigour, the air is filled with the earthy scent of fresh rain, and misty mornings add a touch of magic to the washed green scenery. While some hinterland roads may become challenging due to heavy rains, the monsoon season offers a unique charm that attracts those looking for natural beauty and to get away from the heat of the plains. Travelling to these hill stations during this time requires a bit more planning, but the rewards of experiencing their lush landscapes and serene ambiance are well worth the effort. These towns not only break the stereotype of India's oppressive summer heat but also provide an ideal retreat for holiday makers.

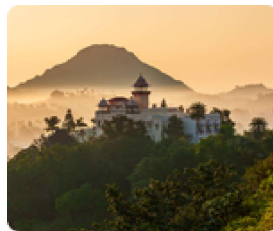
#MonsoonModeOn

ENJOY A COOL SUMMER GETAWAY & ADVENTURE IN INDIA'S LESSER KNOWN HILL TOWNS



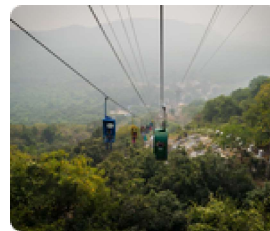
MAJULI ASSAM

Marvel at the rainy facade of the world's largest river island



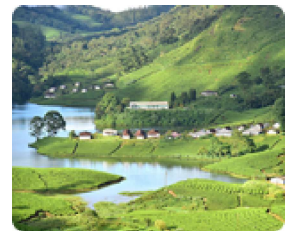
MOUNT ABU RAJASTHAN

Witness the confluence of majestic palaces and vibrant green landscapes



RAJGIR BIHAR

Explore the lovely monsoon trails in 'The City of Kings'



MEGHAMALAI TAMIL NADU

Where clouds drape the hills, and the gush of waterfalls create a soulful sound

Truly Indian

The Indian government has launched several initiatives to promote rural tourism, aiming to drive socio-economic development. Key among these is the 'Swadesh Darshan Scheme,' which develops theme-based tourist circuits in the lesser-known areas in India's hinterlands. The 'Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana' enhances rural connectivity, making remote villages more accessible. The 'Incredible India' campaign encourages both domestic and international travellers to explore these areas to support local artisans, provide jobs, and preserve traditional crafts and lifestyles.

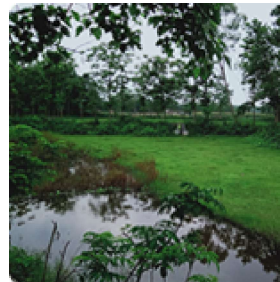
VISIT KOKRAJHAR IN ASSAM FOR ITS WILD NATURAL & CULTURAL BEAUTY



Kokrajhar

Kokrajhar, located in the BTR Region of Assam, is a beautiful rural destination with a rich heritage and natural beauty. This picturesque city is a melting pot of ethnic communities, each contributing to its diversity. A visit to Raimona National Park is a must, with its sprawling 422 square kilometers teeming with unique flora and fauna. The park's scenic landscapes are thoroughly enjoyed by wildlife enthusiasts and photographers. Another highlight is the Chakrashila Wildlife Sanctuary, renowned for its rich biodiversity, making it a perfect spot for bird watchers. Outdoor activities include hiking and trekking through the park's various lush green trails.

For those looking for a peaceful spot to spend time, the Saralpara Picnic Spot near the India-Bhutan border is beautiful with waterfalls, rivulets, and mountains, making it an ideal picnic destination in summer and winter. You can enjoy the local culture by attending colourful festivals, shopping in local traditional markets, and tasting delicious Assamese cuisine like Masor Tenga (sour fish curry) and Pitha (rice cakes). You can enjoy nature hikes, trekking, and bird watching, while community-based activities and homestays in local villages offer a genuine glimpse into rural life. Visitors can also engage in local crafts workshops, learning weaving and handicraft techniques from the artisans themselves.



Things to do:

► Visit Raimona National Park:

- Explore rich biodiversity and unique flora and fauna.
- Enjoy scenic landscapes and natural beauty.
- Ideal for wildlife photography and nature walks.

► Explore Chakrashila Wildlife Sanctuary:

- Observe diverse wildlife in their natural habitat.
- Perfect for bird watching and nature enthusiasts.

► **Relax at Saralpara Picnic Spot:**

- a. Enjoy picturesque waterfalls and rivulets.
- b. Take in the scenic views of the mountains.
- c. Ideal for picnics in both summer and winter.

► **Local Cultural Activities:**

- a. Experience the rich traditions of diverse ethnic communities.
- b. Attend local festivals and cultural events.

► **Nature Hikes and Treks:**

- a. Explore various trails in the national park and wildlife sanctuary.
- b. Enjoy the lush greenery and fresh air.
- c. Activities for adventure seekers and outdoor enthusiasts.

► **Bird Watching:**

- a. Spot a variety of bird species in Chakrashila Wildlife Sanctuary.
- b. Capture beautiful photographs of the local avian population.

► **Village Tours:**

- a. Experience rural life and hospitality.
- b. Learn about traditional farming and local customs.
- c. Participate in community activities and homestays.

► **Savour Local Cuisine:**

- a. Taste traditional Assamese dishes such as Masor Tenga (sour fish curry) and Pitha (rice cakes).
- b. Enjoy local delicacies like Bamboo Shoot Pickle and Eri Polu (silk worm delicacy).
- c. Relish meals made from fresh, locally-sourced ingredients.
- d. Try unique flavours and recipes from diverse ethnic communities.

Incredible India!

Welcome to the Shillong Quiz!

Known as the "Scotland of the East," Shillong is a beautiful hill station in the northeastern state of Meghalaya. This charming town is renowned for the beauty of its landscapes, pleasant climate, and rich culture. This quiz will test your knowledge about Shillong and its many attractions. Let's get started and see how much you have learnt about this enchanting place!

Q1. Which of the following lakes is a popular tourist attraction in Shillong?

- a. Dal Lake
- b. Naini Lake
- c. Umiam Lake
- d. Loktak Lake

Q2. What is the primary ethnic group of Shillong?

- a. Garos
- b. Bodos
- c. Khasis
- d. Nagas

Q3. Which famous three-tiered waterfall, located near Shillong, is a popular tourist spot?

- a. Elephant Falls
- b. Nohsngithiang Falls
- c. Kynrem Falls
- d. Sweet Falls

Q4. Which prominent peak offers a panoramic view of Shillong and its surroundings?

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| a. Tiger Hill | b. Nandi Hills |
| c. Shillong Peak | d. Aravalli Hills |

Mail your answers to us at incredible-india@gov.in with your Name, Age, Country for a chance to win prizes.

You are receiving this message because you have been in contact with MINISTRY OF TOURISM or an affiliate. To no longer receive messages from MINISTRY OF TOURISM [click here](#).

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms Of Platform Use](#) | [Important Links](#) | [Emergency](#)

© Ministry of Tourism, Government of India