

Incredible India Calling



Siliguri

Inaugural edition



Issue 01



March 2023



A note from the Minister of Tourism Shri G. Kishan Reddy

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In the backdrop of India's ongoing G20 Presidency as well as the grand celebrations of India@75 Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, we're celebrating this year as 'Visit India' year, inviting travellers from all over the world to come & experience India's cultural diversity, illustrious heritage, sumptuous delicacies, enchanting wildlife, intricate artforms and a lot more.

This newsletter is just one of the many exciting initiatives planned for you to elevate your travel experience with our incredible land. With open hearts and folded hands, we invite you to visit Incredible India!

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City spotlight: Siliguri



VISIT THE INCREDIBLE GATEWAY TO NORTHEAST INDIA

Nestled amidst the foothills of the majestic Himalayas, Siliguri is a city steeped in history and natural splendor. Its name, which means "a stack of pebbles or stones", alludes to the many boulders that once dotted the banks of the Mahananda and Teesta rivers, which flow gracefully through the heart of the city.

But Siliguri is more than just a city with stunning natural beauty - it is also a strategic hub that connects four international borders, including China, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Bhutan. As such, it plays a crucial role in linking the Northeast region of India with the rest of the country, making it an important economic and cultural center.

The city is also home to an incredible 45 tea gardens, each producing some of the finest teas in the world. The surrounding sub-Himalayan forests are home to an incredible array of flora and fauna, making it a popular destination for nature lovers and wildlife enthusiasts.

Whether you're looking to explore the city's rich cultural heritage, sample some of its world-famous teas, or immerse yourself in the stunning wilderness that surrounds it, Siliguri is a must-visit destination.

Fun fact: Siliguri is one of the host cities for the official G20 meetings in India in 2023.



TOP 5 EXPERIENCES IN SILIGURI



— Toy Train

Take a fairytale journey with the Toy Train, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, to experience the spectacular views of the Himalayas. The experience is so magical, it made Mark Twain exclaim after a ride on the train, "It was the most enjoyable day I have spent on earth." The train passes through Ghum – the highest railway station in India, and covers a distance of 88 kms.

Tea Gardens

Take a tour of Siliguri's lush tea gardens, learn about the tea-making process, and sample some of the finest teas in the world! What's more, you can even choose to stay at one of the tea gardens. Some must-visit tea gardens include Sepoy Dhura Tea Garden & New Chumta Tea Estate which is one of the oldest tea gardens in the region.



Jungle Safari

Spot some of the most exotic and endangered species up close and in their natural habitats with a variety of safaris in North Bengal Wild Animals Park, or Bengal Safari. Spread over an area of 297 hectares, the park offers Tiger Safari, Mixed Herbivore Safari, Asiatic Black Bear Safari apart from sprawling landscapes, and diverse range of flora and fauna to satiate the wildlife lover in you.

Coronation Bridge

Locally called as Bagh Pool (Tiger Bridge), the Coronation Bridge was made to commemorate King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. It took 8 years to build this engineering marvel & could only be completed with the help of three Bengali architects who came to the rescue of the British counterparts when they faced challenges building this bridge.



Monasteries and Temples

From Salugara Monastery that houses a stunning 100-ft stupa and honours the legacy of Dalai Lama to Kali Mandir that is revered by newlyweds to seek blessings for a happy married life to the resilient Syed Gued Monastery that stands tall today after being destroyed by the Chinese army, Siliguri is home to sanctuaries of spirituality that are bound to offer you an ethereal experience.

[Explore more](#)

India Celebrates

India is a melting pot of different religions, cultures, and traditions, where people of all faiths come together in harmony to celebrate an array of festivals that are as colorful as they are diverse. With these celebrations, the country comes alive with a kaleidoscope of sights, sounds, and flavours that offer a truly unforgettable experience.

TOP FESTIVALS TO EXPERIENCE IN MARCH-APRIL



BAISAKHI

Baisakhi is a cherished festival, as it signifies the commencement of the Sikh new year and the establishment of the Khalsa Panth by Guru Gobind Singh Ji in 1699. It is also a time when farmers begin their Rabi crop harvest and express their gratitude to nature. The lively preparations for Baisakhi begin days before the festival, with decorated Gurudwaras, men practicing Martial Arts, and artisans selling their handicrafts. From experiencing the Kada Prasad and Guru ka Langar at the Golden Temple to spectating Nagar Kirtan and dancing to the beat of Bhangra and Gidda, Baisakhi is a time of immense joy and celebration in Punjab.

Where to celebrate: Head to Shri Anandpur Sahib, Punjab to celebrate Baisakhi on April 14.

RAJASTHAN DIWAS

The royal state of Rajasthan, also the largest state in India, celebrates Rajasthan Day every year on 30th March for it is the day when four princely states - Jodhpur, Jaipur, Bikaner and Jaisalmer were merged to form the Rajasthan of today. The name 'Rajasthan' refers to 'Abode of Kings' and the Rajasthan Day is celebrated with much fervour showcasing the best of its rich culture, colourful art forms, music and dance, heritage, delicacies and more. Don't miss the vibrant festival!

Where to celebrate: Head to Junagarh Fort, Bikaner, Rajasthan to experience the best of Rajasthan Diwas.



RAMA NAVAMI

The revered Hindu festival commemorates the birth of Lord Rama, the seventh avatar of Vishnu. Devotees mark the occasion by participating in Rama Katha recitals, reading of the Ramayana epic, and prayers at temples or within their homes. Some take part in bhajans or kirtans with music and decorate miniature statues of infant Rama. The festivities are grandly celebrated in Ayodhya, Rameswaram, Bhadrachalam, and Sitamarhi, cities significant to Rama's life as per the Ramayana legends. Celebrated every year on the ninth day of Chaitra (the first month in the Hindu calendar), Rama Navami will fall on 30th March this year.

Where to celebrate: Visit Hazaribagh, Jharkhand for its famous procession (now 100 years old) on the occasion of Rama Navami.

Explore India in April

April, a delightful time to experience India's diverse destinations, where clear skies and rare rain make for an excellent vacation. With spring flowers still in bloom in the valleys and meadows, there are plenty of places to explore. Here are five enchanting locations for a memorable April adventure:



North

Rishikesh: A hub for yoga and spiritual seekers, Rishikesh offers a plethora of options, from meditation classes to trekking to white water rafting, ensuring a holistic experience.

West

Pench Tiger Reserve: Situated on the border of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, the tiger reserve is home to various species, including the majestic tiger, leopards, sloth bears, and a diverse range of bird species.



East

Konark: A must-visit destination in Odisha, Konark is famous for the Sun Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage site renowned for its exquisite carvings and architecture.



South

Munnar: A picturesque hill station located in Kerala, Munnar is renowned for its tea plantations, stunning waterfalls, and scenic beauty, providing an ideal setting for a serene getaway.





Northeast

Kamakhya Temple: One of the most famous temples in Northeast India, located in Guwahati, Assam, dedicated to Goddess Kamakhya, is celebrated for its unique architecture and spiritual significance, making it a significant cultural destination.

Beyond incredible



India is not just a destination for the wanderlust traveler, but it is also an increasingly popular choice for those seeking a blend of business and leisure travel, commonly known as bleisure travel or MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) tourism.

With world-class facilities and infrastructure, India offers a multitude of opportunities for professionals to connect, network, and collaborate while simultaneously indulging in the country's rich cultural heritage, diverse cuisine, and natural beauty.

Emerged as one of the most sought-after MICE destinations, India provides an impressive mix of comfortable accommodation, cutting-edge tech support, and other world-class conference support facilities to hold successful conferences.

HERE ARE SOME UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCES TO ENJOY DURING YOUR BLEISURE TRAVEL



Watch the majestic Taj Mahal at sunrise



Go Tiger sighting in Ranthambore, Rajasthan



Catch the snake boat races in Alappuzha, Kerala



Experience the bliss of yoga in Rishikesh, Uttarakhand

Truly Indian

Take a break from the hustle and bustle of the city life, and live through the quaint and rustic experiences found only in India.

LEPCHAJAGAT - A PRISTINE HAMLET IN THE LAP OF NATURE



Nestled at an elevation of 6959ft, Lepchajagat is a charming quaint village and a hidden gem in Darjeeling, renowned for its tranquil atmosphere and awe-inspiring vistas of Mount Kanchenjunga and the surrounding ranges.

Enclosed by verdant rhododendron and coniferous forests, this offbeat destination allures nature enthusiasts with its breathtaking panoramas and serene ambiance. In the local language, Lepchajagat translates to "the haven of the Lepcha tribe," the original tribe of the Eastern Himalayas, adding to the village's cultural significance.

Lepchajagat is a perfect escape for those seeking solace amidst the enchanting Himalayan wilderness.

Things to do:

- ▶ Immerse yourself in the beauty of nature by indulging in **scenic walks** and listening to the melodious chirping of exotic birds or exhilarating treks along the forest trails that surround Lepchajagat.
- ▶ Discover the Himalayan avifauna by embarking on a **bird-watching expedition** along the nature trails, where you can witness exquisite species of birds in their natural habitat.
- ▶ Explore **Sukhiapokhri**, a renowned destination situated on the Indo-Bhutan border, just 5km from Lepchajagat, offering an unobstructed view of the Himalayan Range. Sukhiapokhri is also home to a bustling market where travelers can buy souvenirs for their loved ones.
- ▶ Visit **Jorpokhri**, a famous destination enclosed by the lush forests of **Senchal Wildlife Sanctuary** - one of the oldest wildlife sanctuaries of India, where the twin lakes offer a serene ambiance. Jorpokhri is one of the few places in the world where you can spot the Himalayan Salamander.
- ▶ Discover the serene forest settlement of **Manebhanjan**, a base for exploring the hilltop of Sandakphu. At an elevation of 3636 mt, Sandakphu offers a panoramic view of the world's tallest peak. Witness the largest collection of vintage Land Rovers while visiting Manebhanjan, and enjoy the famous Land Rover **Jeep Safari to Sandakphu**.



[Learn more](#)

Win with
incredible India!

[Take the fun Incredible India quiz and take home some amazing prizes!]

- Q1.** Name the famous train that passes through Siliguri, that's also a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Q2.** Lepchajagat is a picturesque village in which state?
- Q3.** Complete the global campaign line – Visit _____ Year 2023.

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

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