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APRIL 2023

ZEST

TRAVEL IN THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT
BY ORANGE DMC

ADVENTURE AWAITS!

Dear Colleagues and Travel Partners,

We recently completed nine years of operations and it's been a terrific journey! We want to take a moment to pause, look back, and sincerely thank each and every partner who has supported us at Team Orange. As we launch into our tenth year, we look forward to taking our company to the next level, bringing you the best of the Indian Subcontinent and more.

This summer we get active in the mountains. Trekking through the rugged landscape, rafting down rushing rapids and icy rivers, mountain biking down steep passes, or riding a Bactrian camel through the Trans-Himalayan sand dunes, we're only scratching the tip of the iceberg.

Let's throw in a touch of history and culture, with visits to erstwhile kingdoms, colonial-era hill stations, and old world plantations. Amazing cuisine, warm hospitality, and fabulous locations – what more do you want?

Sleep beneath the stars in tented camps, or enjoy a touch of old world charm in lodges and plantation homes from a bygone era. Stay in beautifully refurbished village dwellings, or check in to a heritage palace or two. The mountains are calling. Are you ready to explore?

Best regards
Manan Mahajan





NUBRA

OFF THE GRID

THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME

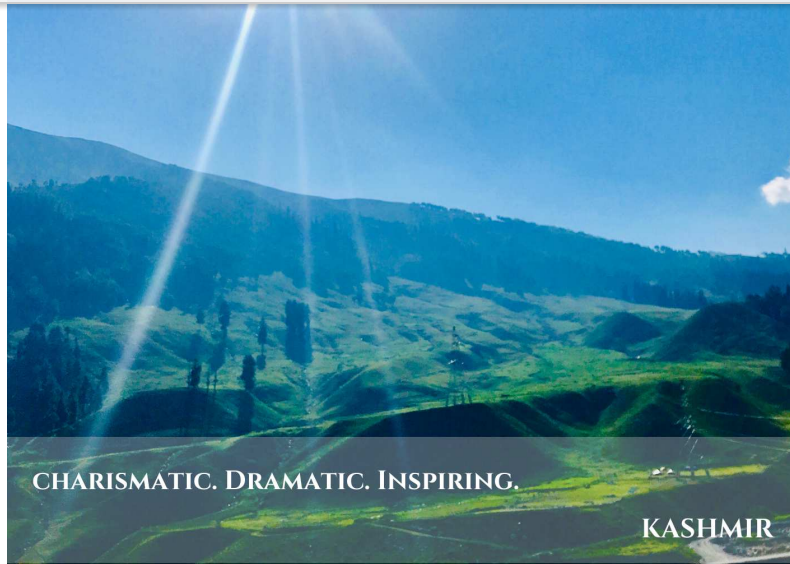


THROWBACK TO THE SILK ROAD ERA

TRADE ROUTES IN THE TRANS-HIMALAYA

In the old days, merchants and monks, traders and explorers crossed the steep passes of the Himalayas to travel across into the Tibetan plateau and into Central Asia and Western China. Even today, they call it the roof of the world. The terrain is intense and the climate is harsh, but the raw beauty of the landscape and the incredible sense of achievement of simply having made it is one of a kind. Rediscover that feeling when you travel into the exotic Nubra Valley. This is a landscape unlike any other.

Nubra is ideal for those who have a yen for adventure. If cycling is your thing, then head down steep mountain passes and pedal your way along its river banks. If rafting is your thing, then enjoy a fantastic ride along rushing, snowfed rivers as you explore the stark beauty of the landscape. But if you're looking to recreate that adventurous feeling of yore, then there's nothing quite like a safari through the rocky mountains on the back of a Bactrian camel!



CHARISMATIC. DRAMATIC. INSPIRING.

KASHMIR

The cool climate and sunny skies of Kashmir make it ideal for mountain biking. Start off from the capital, Srinagar, and head out towards the holiday towns of Sonmarg and Gulmarg. Thick forests, gorgeous lakes and magnificent mountain vistas only enhance the joy of riding through this rolling countryside.

What we love about Kashmir is that every turn opens up yet another gorgeous locale. Stop en route for a picnic in a wooded glen, or enjoy a delicious local meal in one of the small hamlets that you pass through. As you explore the countryside, you may come across local craftsmen who have made Kashmiri handicrafts for generations. From walnut wood carvers, to papier mache makers, to carpet weavers, and silversmiths, Kashmir is a treasure trove of art and craft. These skilled artisans take immense pride in their work and create legacy pieces that are world renown.

Kashmiri food is known for its succulent meats, fresh vegetables straight from the farm, delicious mushrooms and berries from the woods, and delicate spices like saffron and cardamom. Kashmir is also famous for its delicious fruit! From apples to peaches, pears and more, a juice or smoothie on the road gives you that extra fuel to take you to the top! Few destinations have such a rainbow of reasons to visit! Ask us today to add Kashmir to your itinerary.



KASHMIR'S ROYAL RESIDENCE
KARAN MAHAL, SRINAGAR

HISTORY REAWAKENED

STUNNING VIEWS

1 The Shankaracharya mountain on one side and the Pir Panjal range on the other, with the Srinagar valley at your feet!

EXQUISITE INTERIORS

Handcrafted Khatamband ceilings, original Kashmiri carpets, antique crystal chandeliers and a fantastic collection of Art Deco furniture.

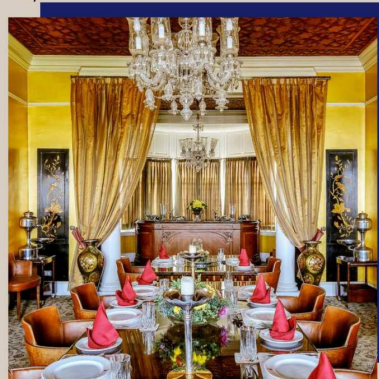
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KASHMIRI CULTURE

3 From traditional folk singers who perform live for guests, to craftsmen who create one of a kind objets d'art based on your preferences, Karan Mahal brings you true Kashmiri culture.

EXPERIENTIAL LUXURY

A heritage structure dating back to the 1920s, Karan Mahal is owned by Kashmiri royalty. This magnificent mansion is full of history and old world charm, an eye-opening insight into the Kashmir Valley. A stay at this hotel gives you an authentic peak into Kashmir's incredibly rich culture. From the cuisine to the artefacts to the hospitality, this is a once in a lifetime stay.



HIMALAYAN HOSPITALITY

LUXURY IN THE MOUNTAINS

SRINAGAR
GULMARGVivanta Dal View,
Srinagar
#01

If you're looking for a luxurious resort, then Taj Group's Vivanta Dal View in Srinagar is ideal. Situated at a slight height overlooking Dal Lake, the views are fabulous. Spacious rooms, friendly service and exquisite cuisine, make this one of our favourite hotels from where you can explore your surroundings. Sit out on your balcony and relax or enjoy a delicious meal around a bonfire as you lounge, Kashmiri-style, on comfy sofas with a cup of Kahwa tea!

Khyber Resort & Spa,
Gulmarg
#02

Luxurious rooms and suites, a terrific location, and top notch service make the Khyber the first choice in Gulmarg. This hotel is the ideal place to stay and base yourself while you explore the landscape around Gulmarg. The grounds are beautiful and spread over 7 acres of forest. Unwind in your serene environs, head outdoors to explore, or enjoy wellness rituals at The Khyber Spa by L'Occitane.

SIMPLY
MAGICTHE
KANGRA
VALLEY

Calling all trekkers and hikers! The Kangra Valley is the ideal place to stretch those legs and get a lungful of crisp mountain air. Start off in the hill station of Palampur, with its lush tea gardens and pine forests. Wake up to the bird song and head out for a delightful morning walk to Triund peak. Discover mountain villages, navigate through herds of sheep along your path, and pause for a moment at a local shrine. Breathe in the fresh air and let your spirit wander.

Descend in time for a late and leisurely lunch, a typical Kangra cuisine feast, straight from the kitchens of Kangra's grandmas! You've worked up an appetite after all. Light, flavourful and full of nutritious ingredients, Kangra's home cooking is the stuff of legend. Top it off with a delightful cup of tea, which the Valley is known for. A small historic note: Palampur has the very first tea gardens to be planted in the Central Himalaya during the British era. In the afternoon, ease those muscles out with a soothing spa treatment or a yoga session outdoors. The cool weather, bright sunshine, and lush surroundings are bound to lift your spirits.

EXPERIENTIAL STAYS

SUSTAINABLE STAYS IN THE KANGRA VALLEY

PALAMPUR



The Lodge at Wah

#01

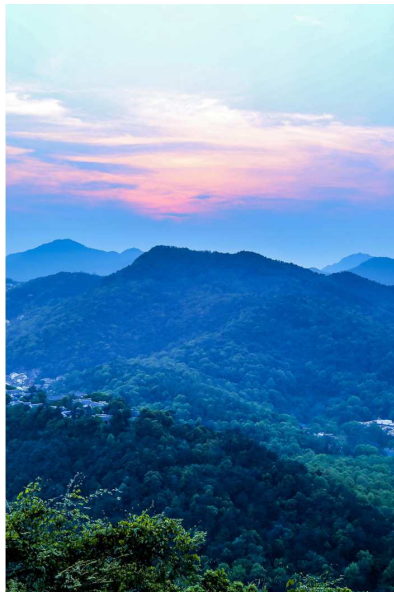
A gem in the middle of the oldest tea gardens in Palampur, the Lodge at Wah is a lovely retreat. The heritage structure has been lovingly converted into a small hotel with just six rooms – private, boutique and personal. Your hosts are members of the family which owns the property, and they share their love for the Kangra Valley and it's culture. Farm to table food and friendly service make this a fabulous experience.



Araiya Palampur

#02

An elegant resort within a stone's throw of the centre of Palampur, the Araiya Palampur is a delightful retreat to restore your mind, body and soul. Delectable cuisine, sourced directly from the homes of Kangra's locals, and spacious rooms and suites make for a blissful stay. A large spa and yoga deck, as well as a pool, add that extra touch of luxury. A laid back vibe and warm service enhance its charm.



RAMBLES IN THE RAINFOREST



ADVENTURE + WILDLIFE IN THE NILGIRIS

If you want a little rainforest romance but don't want to melt away in the heat, then Coorg is your happy place. This gorgeous region in the Nilgiris is a slice of heaven. Take long walks through forested trails or zip line your way across the tree tops. Raft down foamy rapids or go spelunking through some of incredible caves.

Coorg's undulating countryside is also terrific for experienced mountain bikers. But what we love most about Coorg is its wildlife. This is one of the most unique biospheres in the world. If you're a birder, then Coorg is a delight, with several endemic species that are native to the region. You'll also see a host of unusual animals like Malabar Mountain Squirrels and the Lion Tailed Macaque. Explore coffee and spice plantations and don't miss out on the unusual cuisine. Locally sourced ingredients like bamboo shoot, black pepper and cinnamon add a distinct flavour to the cuisine.

Taj Madikeri

ROMANCING A RAINFOREST

Coorg



Set amid a 180 year rainforest, the Taj Madikeri in Coorg is one of our favourite hotels.

Enormous rooms and suites, some with their own private pool, make staying here simply bliss.

A Jiva Grande Spa offers a variety of traditional and Ayurvedic treatments, the perfect tonic after a day spent outdoors. If communing with nature is more your thing then head over to the delightful Buddha Garden, a tranquil meditation spot in a secluded corner of the property, or try your hand at the potter's wheel. What we love most about this property is that it's in its own rainforest! Take a guided walk through the jungle, head out on a mountain bike ride through the enormous estate, or zip line over the trees! Return to your hotel for a dip in the pool and relax with a cooling beverage and a delicious meal each evening



ADVENTURE IN THE HIGHLANDS

TEA COUNTRY, SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka may be a tropical island, but it has some gorgeous mountains to explore. Start your journey in Kandy. Explore the rich blend of tribal culture, Buddhist heritage, nature and adventure that this destination has to offer. Then set off through the winding mountain roads into the tea country.

If you're a hiker, this is absolutely pristine countryside. Hidden hill stations, winding trails, gushing waterfalls and breathtaking views will make you want to stay forever. Discover verdant nature and lots of birdlife around Ella. Enjoy gorgeous hikes in the Knuckles Range, and explore the tea gardens around Dickoya. If you're feeling intrepid, then a trek up to Adam's Peak is a must. You will not only soak up the natural beauty of the landscape, but will also discover the depth of history and culture that has seeped into the environs over time.

Sri Lanka offers that perfect blend of gorgeous countryside, an easy vibe and and incredibly warm hospitality. Flavourful and nutritious, the cuisine is a delight and adds to the charm of your holiday experience. So dig into those hoppers and head out on the trail. There's a cup of Ceylon tea waiting for you when you return.

Nine Skies

By Teardrop Hotels
Demodera, Sri Lanka



HERITAGE REVISITED



Nine Skies by Teardrop Hotels is a colonial tea bungalow with a touch of contemporary luxury. It's perched on a hill that is lined with tea bushes and has stunning views over the countryside.

With just five bedrooms, this is as boutique as it gets. The service is warm, discreet and personalized. Lounge by the pool with gorgeous views over the famous Demodera Loop. Nine Skies is situated within easy reach of Ella. It's a terrific jumping off spot to explore the tea gardens, head into Ella's town centre, or set off walking or biking on a mountain trail.

The poolside is tranquil and the ideal place to cool off after a day spent outdoors in the Sri Lankan sun. Kick back and relax, and soak up your surroundings.

CULTURAL HERITAGE

ANCIENT LANDS



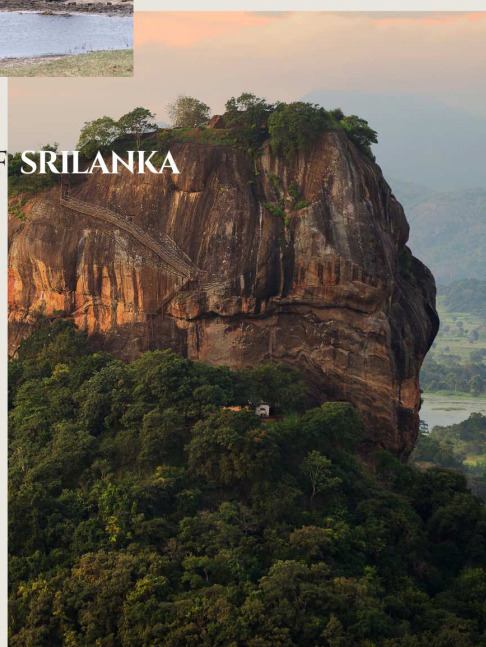
SIGIRIYA - UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE

If you like your adventure with a bit of history thrown in, then head up to Sigiriya. This ancient rock fortress sits perched at a height and a steep walk up from the base of its craggy outcrop! But we assure you that it's well worth it to explore the beauty of this UNESCO world heritage site.

THE HEART OF SRILANKA

Sigiriya is easily combined with a visit to Dambule, Polonnaruwa and Anuradhapura. Explore Sri Lanka's ancient kingdoms and discover a culture that once reigned supreme. The ruins at Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa tell us of the island's rich cultural legacy and its connections to ancient Hinduism.

If you want to add on some wildlife, then head over to Minneriya National Park, which is famous for its elephants!



A BIG THANK YOU

From Team Orange



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