

DESTINATION ITINERARY

Jammu and Kashmir

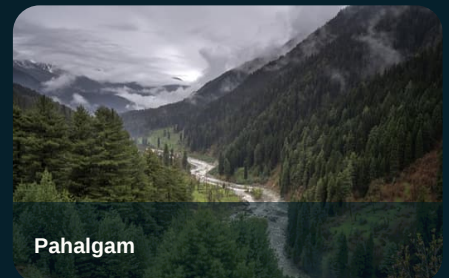
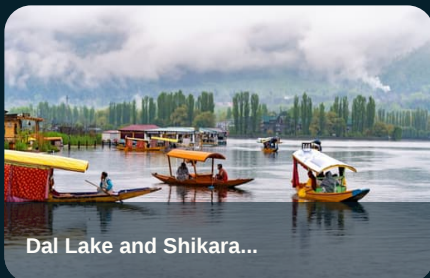
6-8 Days

From INR 23,000 per person

Best: Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Sep, Oct

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FEATURED IN THIS JOURNEY



DOMESTIC INDIA HOLIDAY PLANNING BRIEF

Destination overview

A Kashmir holiday usually starts in Srinagar, where an arrival day can ease into a first afternoon beside or on Dal Lake. The valley is a broad bowl ringed by the Pir Panjal and the greater Himalaya, threaded by the Jhelum and filled in spring with almond and apple blossom, in summer with paddy and saffron fields, in autumn with chinar. Srinagar is the centre - houseboats on Dal Lake, shikaras, the Mughal terrace gardens, the old city's wooden mosques and shawl workshops. Beyond it the valley opens into meadow country at Gulmarg, Pahalgam and Sonmarg, where the walks, ponies and gondola rides are. Jammu adds a different journey altogether in the pilgrimage to Vaishno Devi. It suits honeymooners, families and older travellers, since much of the sightseeing is gentle and the driving days are short.

PACKAGE DURATION

6-8 Days

STARTING PRICE

From INR 23,000 per person

BEST TIME

Peak: Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Sep, Oct | Shoulder: Jan, Feb, Jul, Aug, Nov, Dec

TRIP TYPES

hill, honeymoon

8 APPROVED SUBLOCATIONS

Places you'll visit



Dal Lake and Shikara ride (Srinagar)

LAKE | 2-3 HOURS

The lake along the edge of Srinagar, lined with moored houseboats and worked by shikaras, the long paddled boats used as taxis. A ride takes you past floating vegetable gardens, lotus beds in season and vendors who come alongside selling flowers, saffron and tea. Many visitors also stay a night aboard.



Gulmarg (Gondola)

HILL STATION | FULL DAY

A high meadow bowl below Apharwat peak: a ski resort in winter and a walking and pony-riding ground in summer. The gondola runs in two stages, the upper one climbing to the snow line for views across the Pir Panjal. There is also a golf course and short forest walks.



Pahalgam

VALLEY | FULL DAY

A valley town where the Lidder runs down through pine forest and grazing meadows. Visitors take pony or vehicle trips out to Aru, Betaab and Chandanwari, walk beside the river and fish for trout. It is also the traditional starting point for the annual Amarnath pilgrimage.



Sonmarg

VALLEY | FULL DAY

A meadow at the head of the Sindh valley on the road towards Ladakh, ringed by snow peaks. The usual outing is a pony ride or walk up towards the Thajiwas glacier, which holds snow into summer. The road onward beyond Sonmarg closes with the winter snow.



Mughal Gardens (Nishat / Shalimar)

HERITAGE SITE | HALF DAY

Terraced gardens laid out on the eastern shore of Dal Lake by the Mughals, stepping down towards the water in levels with channels, fountains and old chinar trees. Nishat is the larger and steeper, Shalimar the older and more formal. Both are best in spring blossom or autumn colour.



Betaab Valley

VALLEY | 1-2 HOURS

A small meadow valley near Pahalgam, enclosed by pine slopes with a stream running through it and laid out as a landscaped park with paths and bridges. It takes its name from a film shot here. Visits are short - a walk, photographs, tea - and usually combined with Aru and Chandanwari.



Vaishno Devi (Jammu)

TEMPLE | FULL DAY

A cave shrine to the Mother Goddess in the Trikuta hills above Katra and one of the most visited pilgrimages in India. The ascent from Katra is made on foot, by pony, palanquin or helicopter and takes most of a day with the queue for darshan. Registration is required before starting.



Doodhpathri

VALLEY | HALF DAY

A high meadow in Budgam district, far less developed than the better-known valleys, with streams running white over the stones - the name means valley of milk. Little is built here; visitors walk on the grass, ride ponies and picnic. The approach road is rough and it closes under winter snow.

6 DAYS

Suggested day-by-day plan

01

DAY 1

Dal Lake and Shikara ride (Srinagar) and Vaishno Devi (Jammu)

Visit Dal Lake and Shikara ride (Srinagar), Vaishno Devi (Jammu).

02

DAY 2

Gulmarg (Gondola) and Doodhpathri

Visit Gulmarg (Gondola), Doodhpathri.

03

DAY 3

Pahalgam

Visit Pahalgam.

04
DAY 4
Sonmarg

Visit Sonmarg.

05
DAY 5
Mughal Gardens (Nishat / Shalimar)

Visit Mughal Gardens (Nishat / Shalimar).

06
DAY 6
Betaab Valley

Visit Betaab Valley.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Travel essentials

CURRENCY

The Indian rupee. Srinagar has ATMs and card acceptance, but houseboats, shikara rides and shopping in Pahalgam or Gulmarg usually prefer cash.

LANGUAGE

Kashmiri is the valley's language, with Urdu and Dogri also in use. Hindi and English are spoken comfortably by hotels, drivers and shopkeepers.

TIME DIFFERENCE

India uses one national time zone, so no clock change is required. Daylight hours vary by season and longitude.

WEATHER

Cold snowy winters, blossom through spring, mild green summers and a crisp golden autumn. The valley escapes the heaviest of the Indian monsoon.

CONNECTIVITY

Prepaid SIMs issued outside the region do not work, so carry a postpaid connection. Coverage is good in Srinagar and thinner in Gulmarg, Sonamarg and the high meadows.

Food and culture

Kashmiri cuisine uses meat, dried fruit, saffron and aromatic spices; wazwan is its formal multi-course feast. Simpler vegetarian choices include haak greens, rajma and nadru, alongside saffron-almond kahwa. Pashmina, sozni embroidery, walnut carving, papier-mache and hand-knotted carpets are important valley traditions.

AIR, RAIL AND ROAD

Getting there from India

AIR

Srinagar serves the Kashmir Valley and Jammu supports the pilgrimage and lower-hill circuit. Direct and connecting flights operate from multiple Indian cities.

RAIL

Jammu Tawi and Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra are the main railheads. Kashmir Valley sectors continue by road after the rail journey.

ROAD

Road access is through Jammu and the national highway to Srinagar. Conditions can change with weather or security controls, so confirm the route before travel.

FROM OUR PLANNERS

Practical notes

- Prepaid SIM cards issued in other states often will not work in Jammu and Kashmir - carry at least one postpaid connection between the group.
- Vaishno Devi needs a yatra registration slip before you begin the climb, and leather items, bags and phones are restricted near the shrine.
- The Srinagar-Leh road over Zoji La opens only after the spring snow clearance and shuts again for winter, so do not plan on it outside the summer months.
- Gulmarg's upper gondola stage runs on weather and is suspended at short notice; queues are longest through the middle of the day.
- Shawl and carpet showrooms often work with drivers on commission - buy where you choose to stop rather than only where you are taken.
- Dress modestly at shrines and in Srinagar's old city and carry a scarf; the valley is conservative once you are away from the tourist meadows.

**PLAN WITH ORBITZ HOLIDAYS**

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Explore
Experience
Remember

This itinerary is a planning guide based on the approved destination information held by Orbitz Holidays. Final services and inclusions depend on the confirmed booking.