

# PRAVEG'S TOURISM ONE

Published by PRAVEG COMMUNICATIONS LIMITED | [www.praveg.com](http://www.praveg.com)  
(Formerly known as PRAVEG COMMUNICATIONS PVT. LTD.)

January 2020

Vol. : 5 | Issue : 5 | Pages : 52 | ₹ 200 RNI Regd. No. GUJENG/2015/70098

*A high-end monthly magazine*

PRAVEG'S TOURISM ONE | January 2020

*Must Visit in*  
**2020**

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## *A New Chapter*

So where are you planning to go in 2020? We entered not only in a new year, but a whole new decade! Isn't that a reason why we should travel more this year? And when it comes to travelling, we are always ready to help. Here presenting you the most amazing destinations from across the World to visit in 2020.

And if you're not into visiting distant places, we bring the festive celebrations on the occasion of Makar Sankranti in various states of India. January is also an apt time to revisit the destinations to pay tribute to the freedom fighters and their contributions.

Read on!



# PRAVEG'S TOURISM ONE

January 2020



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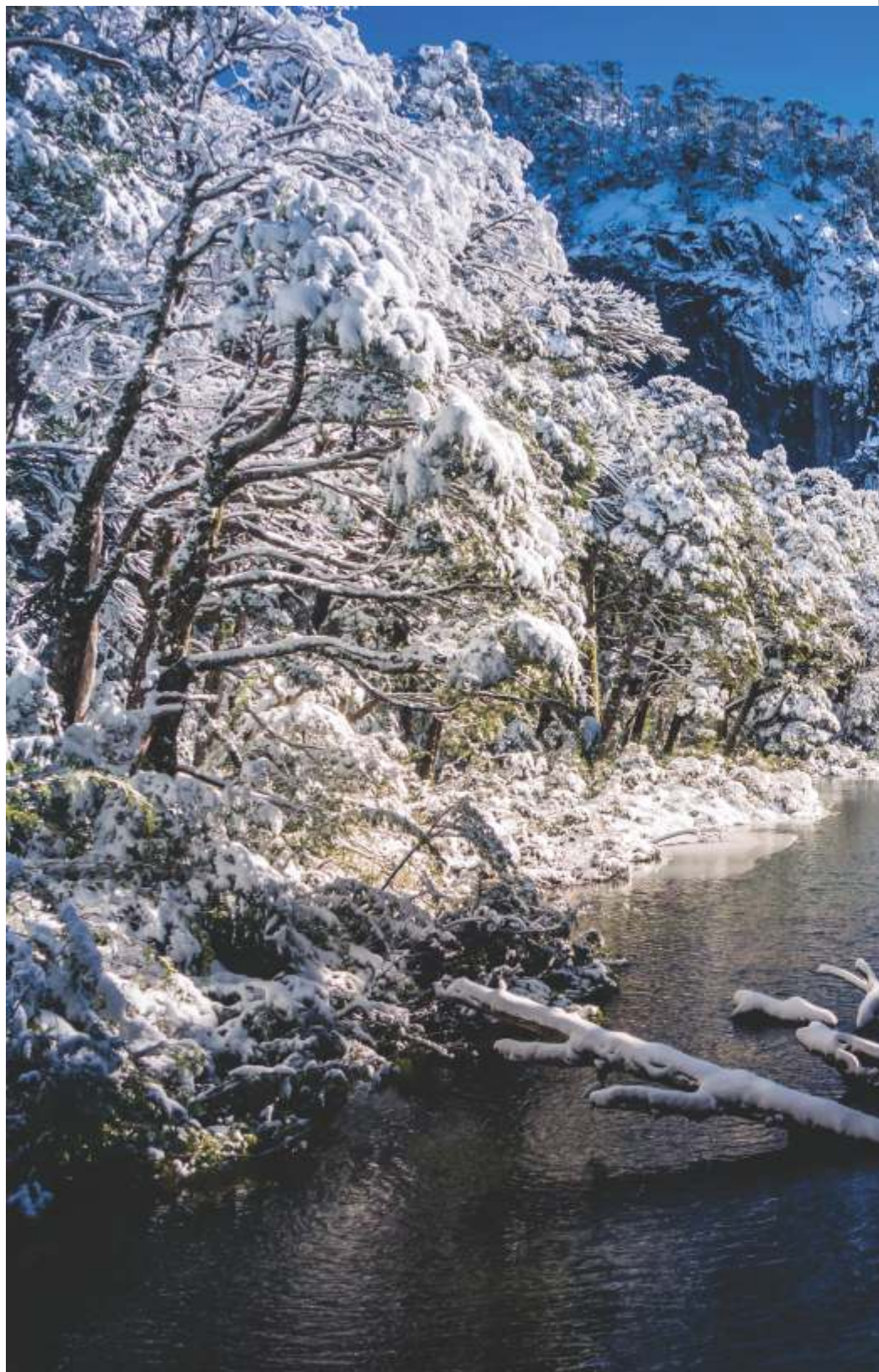
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# Must Visit in 2020



## Enjoy Gastronomical Delights of Tallinn

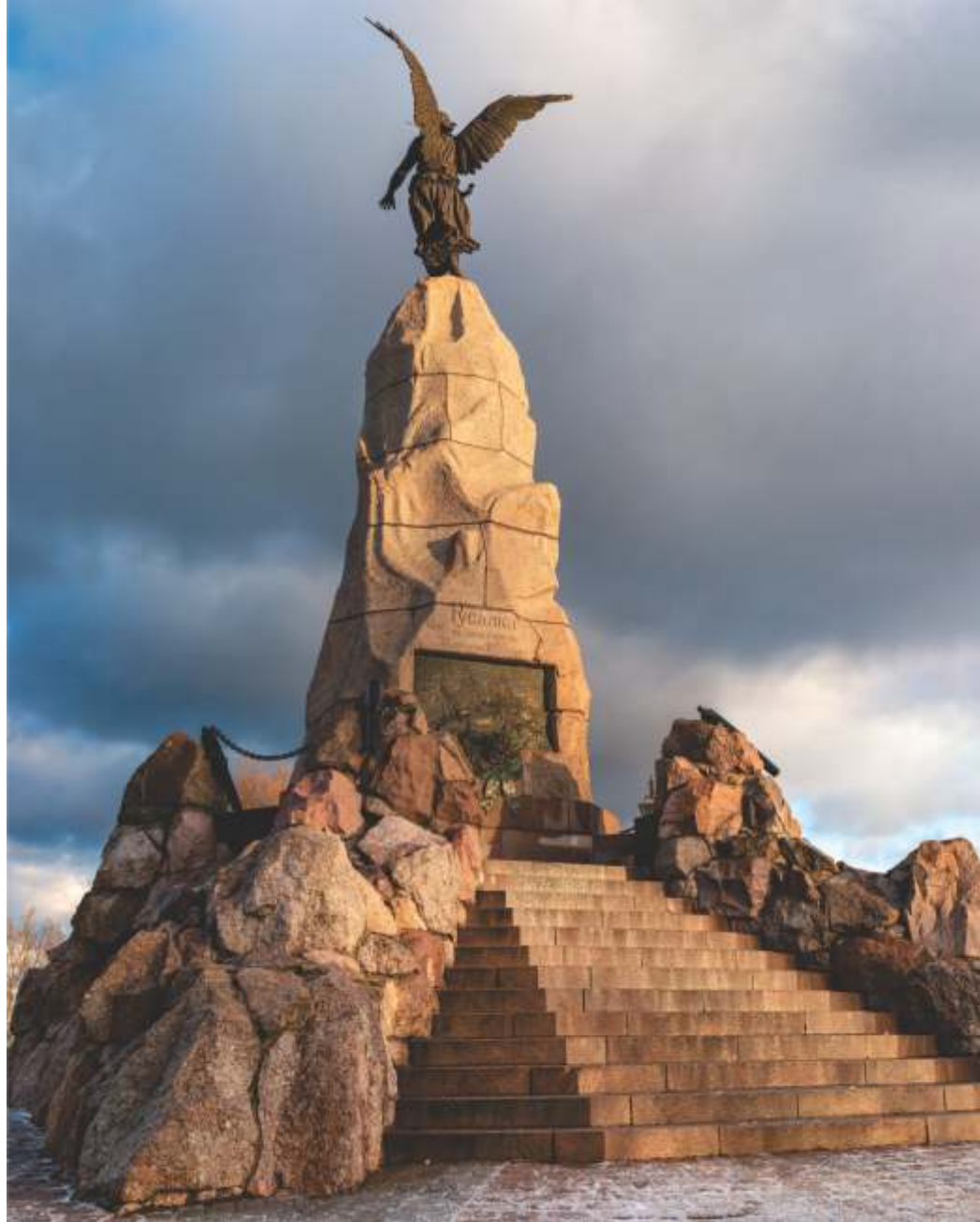
Though Tallinn has almost a 1000 fine restaurants offering anything from traditional to New Nordic cuisine and global cuisines, it is absolutely underrated as a foodie destination. This is set to change as the city is hosting Bocuse d'Or, the cooking contest that demonstrates once again its openness to new gastronomic nations as well as its commitment to promoting new types of cuisine around the world.

Start your morning in the old town that was built in the 13th Century and has viewpoints from where you can look across the spires of the old city and out

to Tallinn Bay. Walk along the walls and towers of this historical old town, which is one of the best preserved medieval cities in Europe and is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and then take the steep cobbled path up to Toompea Hill – here you can visit the majestic castle that now houses the Estonian Parliament and some impressive cathedrals.

Outside the Old Town, visit the 23rd floor of the Hotel Viru to see the former headquarters of the KGB. In contrast to the medieval heritage of Tallin, this city is known for its startup ecosystem –





one of the highest per capita concentrations of young startups. Viru Gate has cafes and restaurants that are a haven for the city's tech-kids. Proceed to see the maritime museum near the harbour.

Take a tram or bus to the Kadriorg Park and Palace, and visit the art galleries and museums in this part of Tallinn. Proceed to enjoy the evening at Pirita beach.

In the evening, head for Kalamaja, a former industrial area now dotted with modern eateries and bars in former factories, where you can try quality Estonian food at value for money prices.



## **Watch the Solar Eclipse in Pucon**

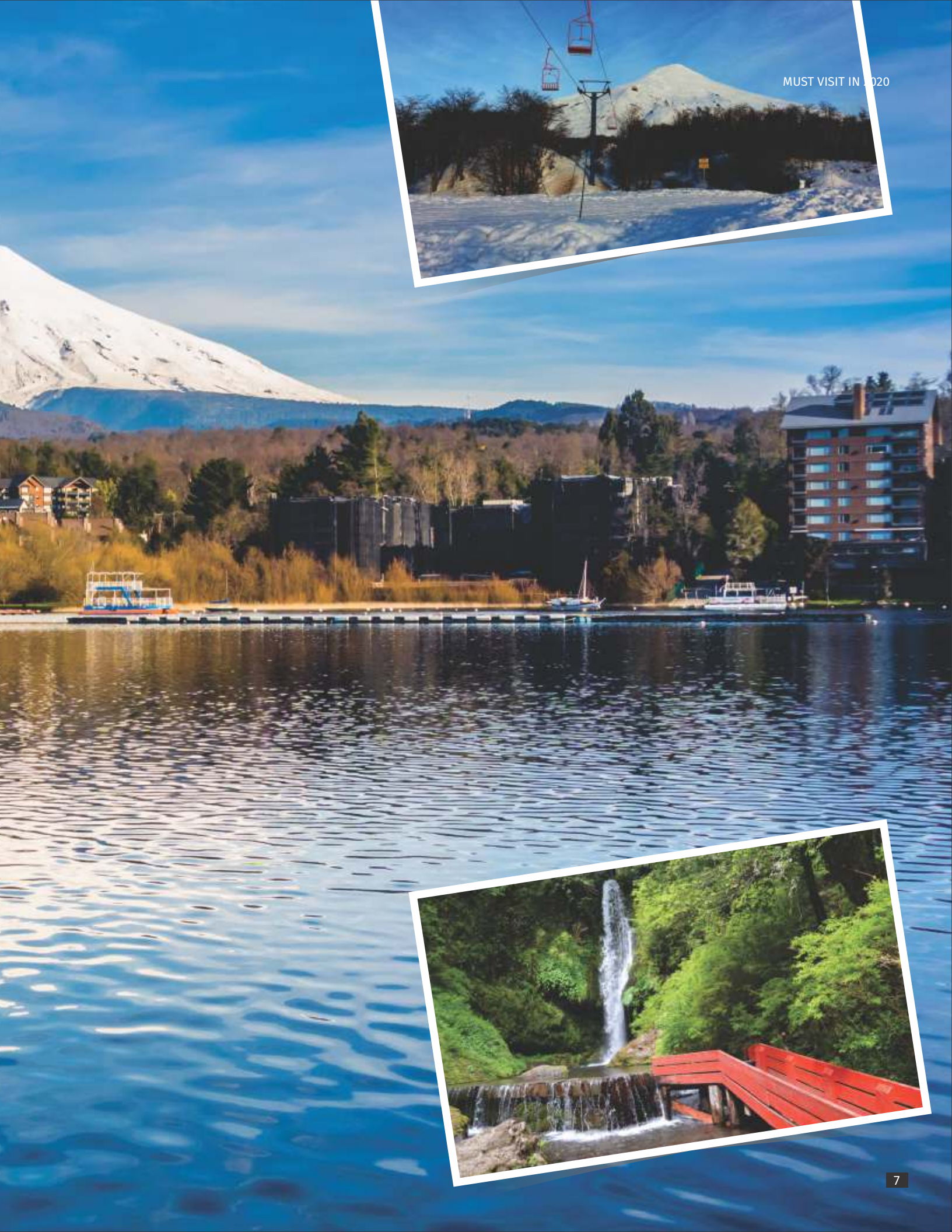
Pucon is a geographically interesting tourist destination with a lake and a volcano. It makes an excellent base for water skiing, snow skiing, backpacking, white water rafting and kayaking, horseback riding, natural hot springs, zip

line rides, skydiving, trekking in ancient forests and guided ascents of Villarrica volcano. Explore the quaint town, which has a charming alpine feel. It is a must-visit to view the solar eclipse that will occur on December 14, 2020.



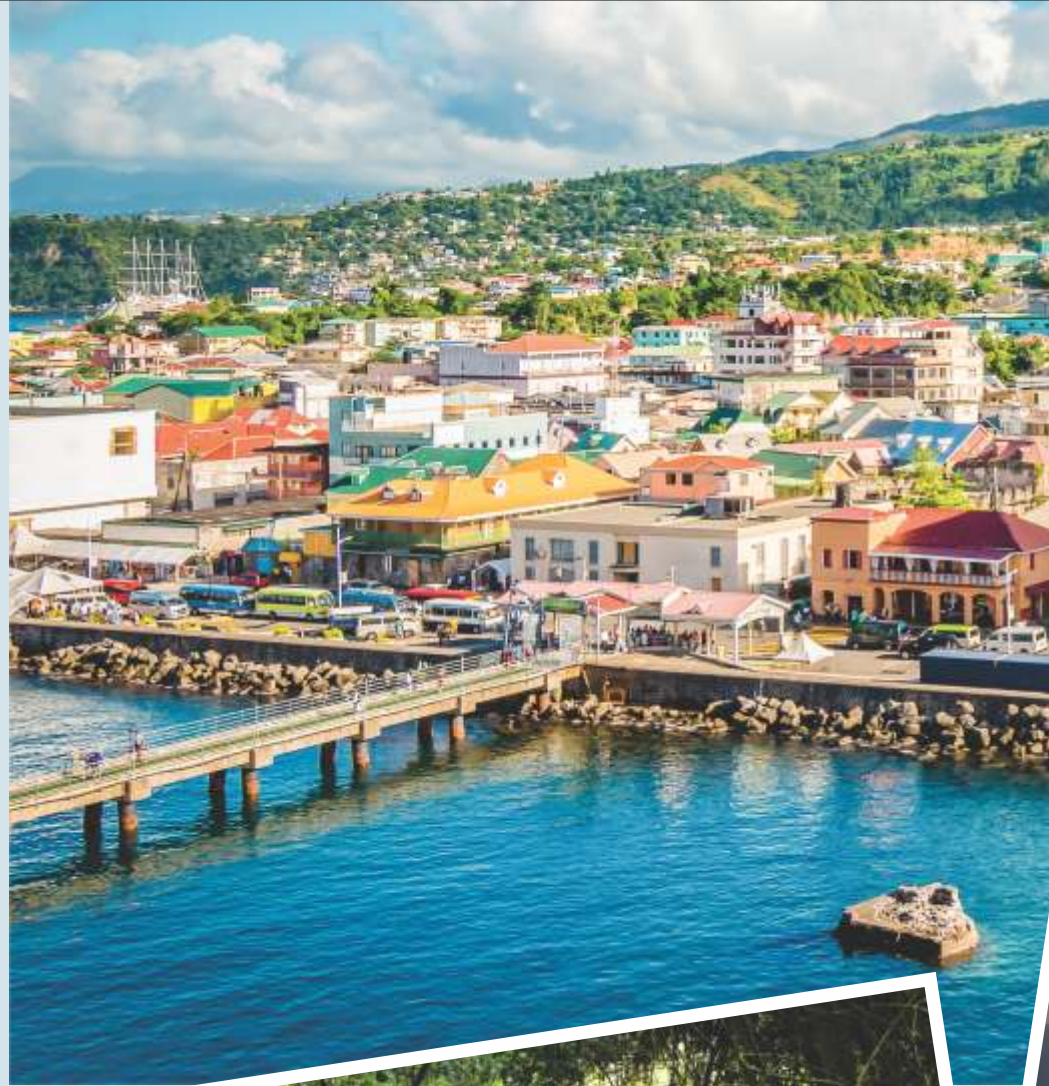


MUST VISIT IN 2020



## Get to Dominica before the crowds

Dominican Republic is not as popular as some of the other Caribbean destinations but it is on the crux of a tourism boom – many new hotels and restaurants have opened here. 2020 is a good time to visit this republic before it becomes an overcrowded destination. A must-visit for hiking is the Morne Trois Pitons National Park, which is a World Heritage Site. The National Park is named after its highest mountain, Morne Trois Pitons, meaning mountain of three peaks. Here you can visit lakes, fumaroles, volcanoes, waterfalls, hot springs and dense forest, with landscapes ranging from barren Valley of Desolation to lush surroundings and cloud forests. In the park, you must visit Valley of Desolation, a region of boiling mud ponds and small geysers like the Boiling Lake, Titou Gorge, and Emerald Pool.

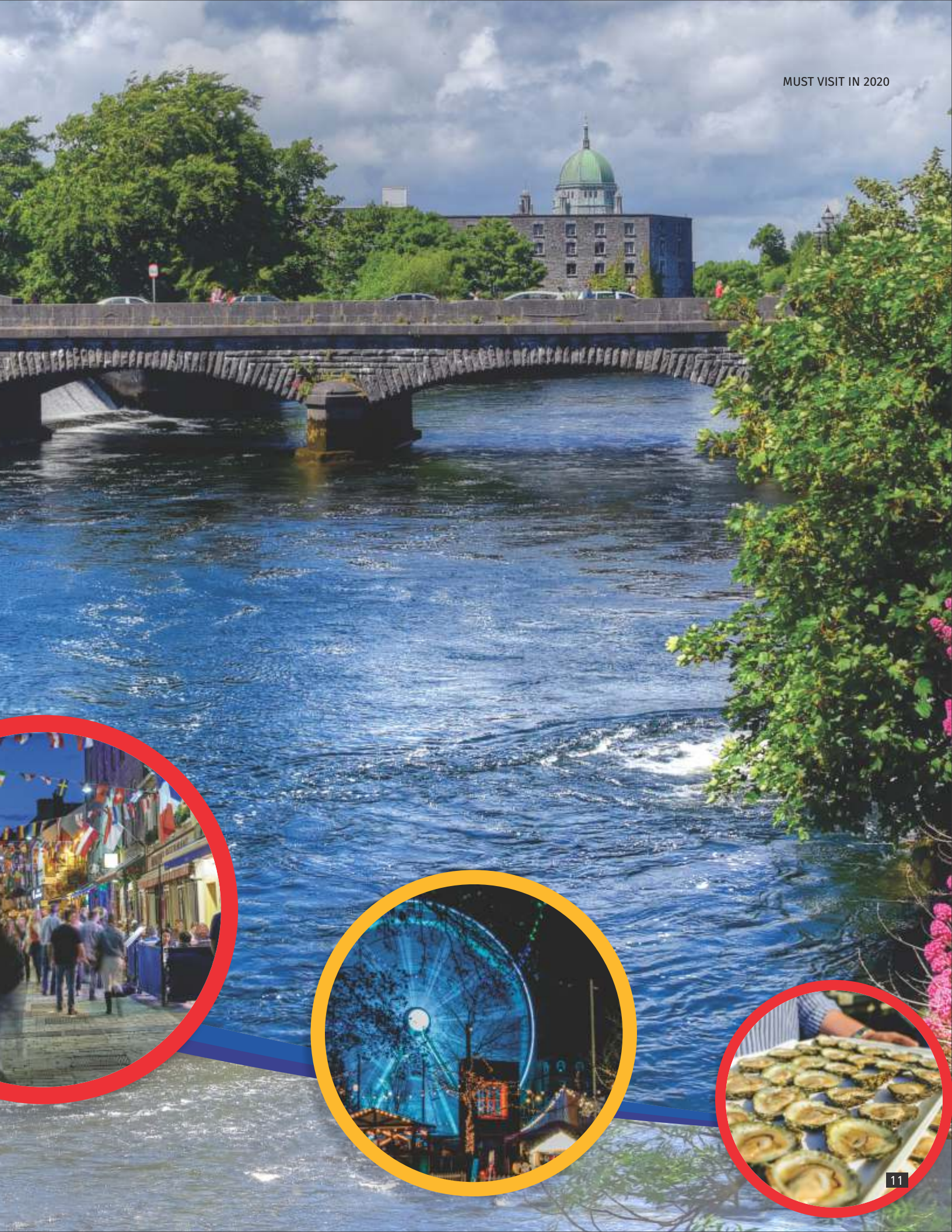






## Enjoy the vibes of Galway

One of the prettiest cities of Ireland, Galway lies on the western Irish shores, along the banks of the River Corrib. The city has many historical attractions. It is most known for its artsy scene, bohemian atmosphere and lively pubs. You can see plenty of public art, brightly painted pubs, where you can catch live music, restaurants and cafes and places, where you can watch buskers and street theatre. Not surprisingly Galway has been declared the European Capital of Culture for 2020.





## Visit Tokyo as it prepares for the Olympics

Tokyo is hosting the summer Olympics in 2020 and has been decked up for this sports extravaganza. While in Tokyo, there is much to see and do. Take the kids to Disneyland Tokyo, see the Imperial Palace with its garden and residence of the Emperor, visit Sensoji the popular 7th Century Buddhist Temple, shop on the streets and explore old areas of the bustling city. Ueno is for museum buffs - visit the National Museum of Western Art, the National Science Museum, Tokyo National Museum and Archaeological Museum. Go shopping in Ginza. Book a window seat on the Bullet Train for a view of Mount Fuji, one of Japan's Three Holy Mountains. 📷





Incredible India

# Festival of the Sun

*On 14th January, Makar Sankranti is widely celebrated across India. A look at some of the best celebrations you can participate in:*

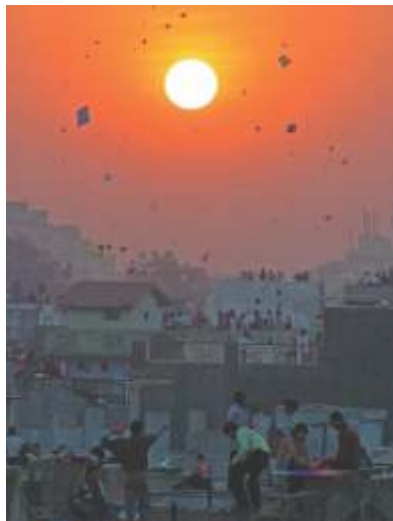




## 1 FLY KITES IN AHMEDABAD

Uttrayana or Makar Sankranti is like no other day in Gujarat. Commemorating the journey of the sun to the northern tropic bringing a promise of plenty, this is the time of the kite festival. On this day, the clear blue winter skies are enlivened by kites of every hue, as men and women, boys and girls, gather on terraces to fly kites, and enjoy snacks and sweets made using fresh produce of harvest. There is a spirit of friendly competition as each flyer skilfully manoeuvre the line to 'cut' other kites out of the air.

The kites flown on this day, called the Indian Fighter Kite, are made by expert artisans. They are made from light weight paper stuck on a bamboo frame of a bridle and spars, with a tail for stability. The balanced construction of the kite makes it possible for the flyer to manipulate them using a single line, while withstanding reasonably strong air currents and gravity, lift and drag. The design, crafting and quality of materials determine the spin, pull and wind withstanding performance of the kite. Much detail goes into setting the bridle position and balance of tension on the bamboo spars. The flyers use a line called the 'Manjha' to fly the fighter kites. This is typically a cotton thread coated with a mixture of finely crushed glass, glue and various abrasives. On the pavements of Gujarat's cities, it is a common sight in January to watch manjha makers encrusting the threads with the mixture that gives it the cutting edge and reeling the line onto spools or bobbins called 'phirkis'.

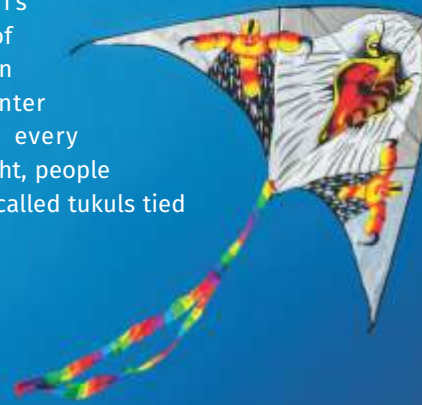


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As the kite festival approaches, temporary markets come up in the cities and towns to sell kites and manjha. These markets are a hive of activity on the eve of Uttarayana, with buyers gathering to select the best kites and lines for the festival days. The markets in the cities of Gujarat like Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Surat, Rajkot, Bhavnagar, etc. are vibrant and active. Shops decorate their frontage with ornamented kites, schools and clubs hold competitions for kite flying, kite decoration and kite painting, and many announcements are made for kite flying events.

On 14th January, the residential areas come alive with kites. The rooftops throng with kite flyers, their family and friends, with blaring music and joyous yelling adding to the festive atmosphere. Since Makar Sankranti is a harvest festival,

celebrating the arrival of warm sunshine to the northern tropics, food is very much part of the celebrations. Sugarcane, juices, sweets and snacks made from the regional produce like groundnuts, grains and sesame seeds are regulars on the rooftops. In most parts of Gujarat, the sought-after dish for lunch is Undhiyu, a variety of vegetables cooked in spices. This is a winter favourite of almost every Gujarati family. At night, people fly kite with lanterns called tukuls tied to the strings.



## 2 FEAST IN ASSAM

In Assam, Magh Bihu, also called Bhogali Bihu, is a harvest festival. This festival gets its name from Bhog, which means feasting as food and enjoyment is very much part of the celebrations. From Guwahati, head for the rural areas, where this festival is celebrated with community meals and melas (fairs). Some of the food specialties associated with this festival are rice cakes (pithas), coconut sweets called larus and various dishes made with pork, mutton, chicken, fish and vegetables. Hut-like 'mejis' or 'bhelaghars' with bamboo, hay, dry leaves, wood and twigs are erected for the festival. These become the centre for music and dancing. The mejis are burnt to appease the fire god, Agni, and seek his blessings for a good agricultural season. Pithas and other food items are also offered to the fire god.



### 3 ATTEND THE ISLAND FAIR ON CHILIKA LAKE

January is perhaps the best month to visit Odisha's Chilika Lake – the lagoon is glass-clear, large flocks of flamingo and migratory waterfowl can be seen, and dolphin sightings are frequent. From Rambha on the shores of the lake, you can take a boat ride to Kalijai Temple named for Goddess Kali. Highly revered by the local populace, the deity has been venerated in the local folklores and legends. On Makar Sankranti, a fair is held on the island, where fishing people gather for Shakti Mahayagna. Devotees from nearby places in Odisha and the Andhra coast come to the temple for worship and enjoying the celebrations.

While visiting Odisha on Makar Sankranti, you may get to eat makara chaula - uncooked newly harvested rice, banana, coconut, jaggery, sesame, rasagola, and chhena puddings. These are made as naivedya offerings to gods and goddesses.



## **4 TAKE A PILGRIMAGE TO GANGA SAGAR**

100km from Kolkata, Sagar Island lies at the Ganges estuary on the Continental Shelf of Bay of Bengal. On Makar Sankranti day, join hundreds of thousands of Hindu pilgrims who gather to take a holy dip at the confluence of River Ganges and Bay of Bengal. They also offer prayers in the Kapil Muni Temple. According to the legend, the king of Sagar sent his 60,000 sons to find a sacrificial horse. Mistaking Kapil Muni for the thief, the sons accused Kapil Muni, who in his wrath at the false accusation burned the sons to ash and sent their souls to Hell. Later having compassion for the King Sagar's sons, Kapil Muni acceded to the prayers of King Sagar's descendants,

agreeing to the restoration of the sons, if Parvati in the form of the river goddess Ganga would descend to Earth to perform the ritual of "Tarpan" mixing the ashes with holy water called niravapanjali. King Bhagiratha induced Shiva to order Ganga down from heaven and the 60,000 sons were freed (moksha) and ascended to Heaven, but the river Ganges stayed on the Earth. The date of the descent of Ganga was the date, as is at present the Makar Sankranti when Surya enters Makar Constellation – also called Uttarayan. The gathering for the Ganga Sagar is considered the second largest congregation of mankind after the triennial ritual bathing of Kumbha Mela.



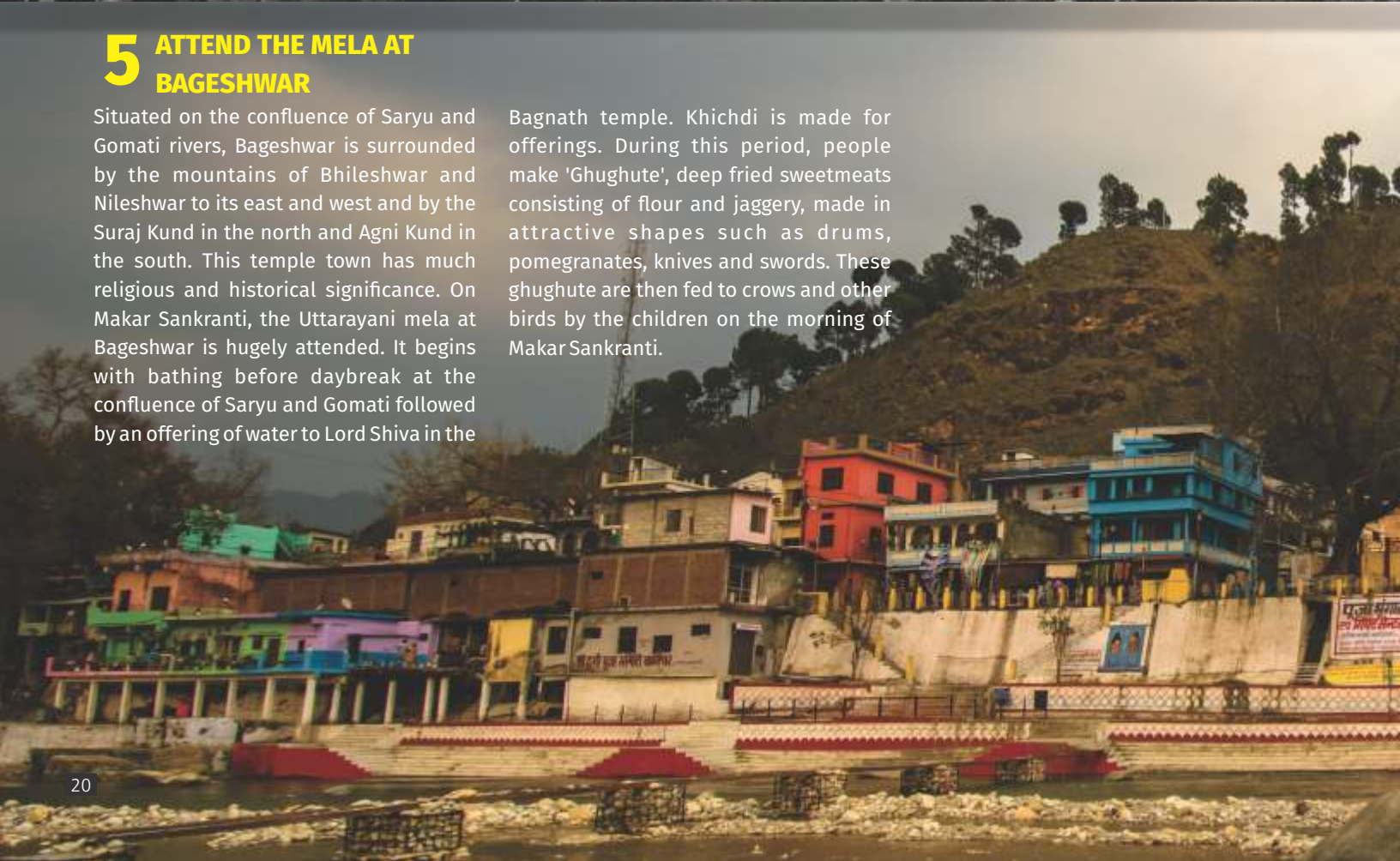




## 5 ATTEND THE MELA AT BAGESHWAR

Situated on the confluence of Saryu and Gomati rivers, Bageshwar is surrounded by the mountains of Bhilleshwar and Nileshtar to its east and west and by the Suraj Kund in the north and Agni Kund in the south. This temple town has much religious and historical significance. On Makar Sankranti, the Uttarayani mela at Bageshwar is hugely attended. It begins with bathing before daybreak at the confluence of Saryu and Gomati followed by an offering of water to Lord Shiva in the

Bagnath temple. Kichdi is made for offerings. During this period, people make 'Ghughute', deep fried sweetmeats consisting of flour and jaggery, made in attractive shapes such as drums, pomegranates, knives and swords. These ghughute are then fed to crows and other birds by the children on the morning of Makar Sankranti.





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**6 TAKE A BATH IN THE GANGA**

Kicheri is a festival during Makar Sankranti during which millions of people gather at Varanasi and Allahabad for ritual bathing. You can enjoy til ladoo and gud laddo, and participate in the kite flying activities.



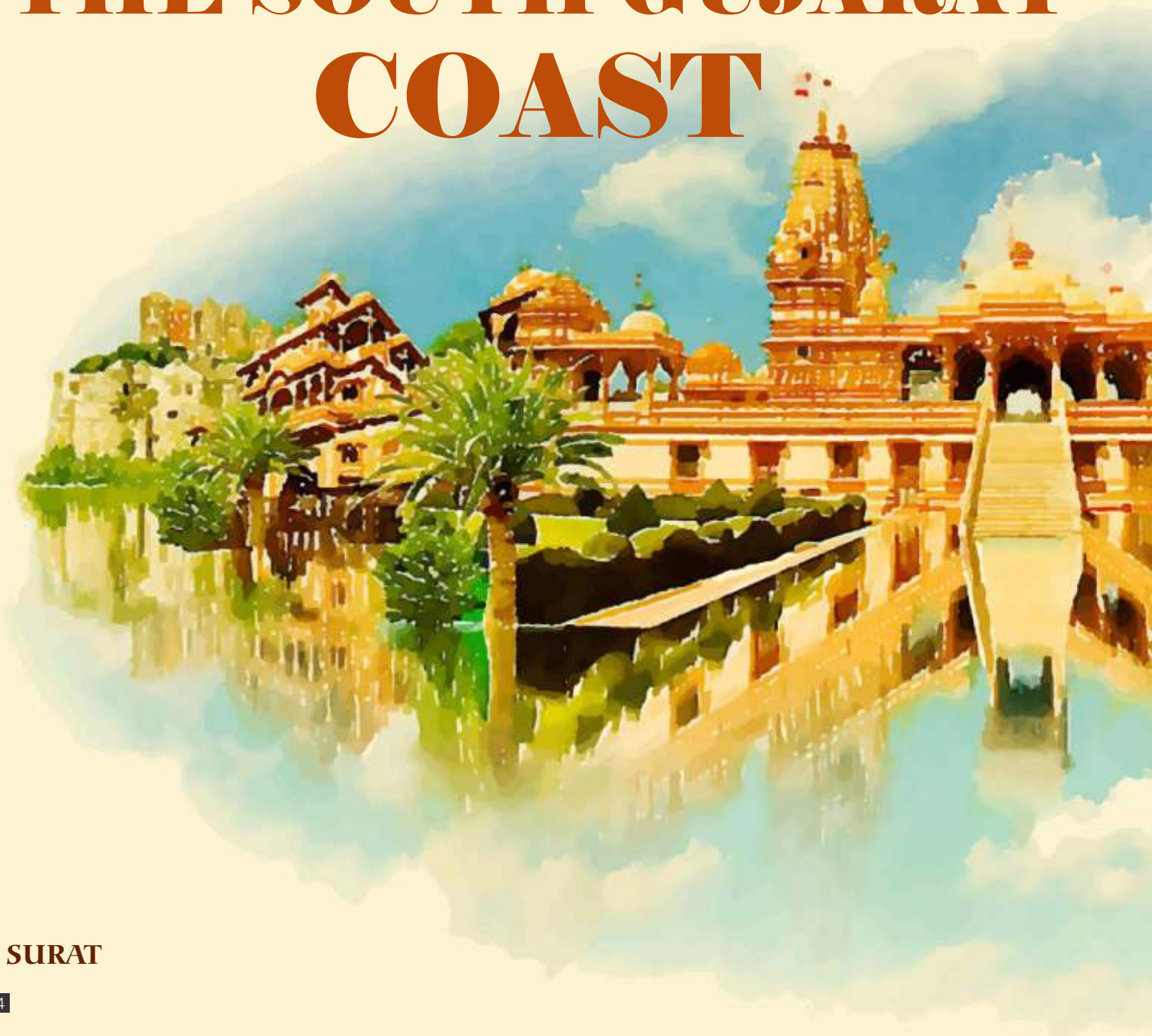


## 7 ENJOY PONGAL AT MADURAI AND THANJAVUR

During Makar Sankranti, Tamil Nadu celebrates Pongal, which means overflowing in abundance, this is also symbolically represented in the overflowing milk and rice that is prepared as the tasty dish called pongal. Temples and cultural centers organize the ritual cooking of Pongal dish, along with fairs (Pongal mela) with handicrafts, crafts, pottery, sarees, ethnic jewelry for sale. These sites hold traditional community sports and activities. In the fields, you can see colourfully dressed cows. A special event to look out for is the Brihadeeshwara Temple's celebration of Mattu Pongal as many cows are lined up by the owners for puja at the temple. 🐮



# FOOD TRAIL ALONG THE SOUTH GUJARAT COAST



**SURAT**

The coastal area of South Gujarat, especially the Tapti basin, has played an important role in the history of India. The Zoroastrians or Parsees from Iran landed at Sanjan more than 1000 years ago and the Jews from Bagdad fleeing religious persecution also landed at Surat about two centuries ago. The City was once an emporium of the East, where people from all over the world came to trade. The ports in and around Surat had maritime links with different parts of Asia, Africa and Europe. The British and Dutch established factories in Surat and their cemeteries can be seen in the city as can those of the Armenians. The Portuguese established their dominion over Daman, then called Damao, and the neighbouring areas of Dadra & Nagar Haveli, both of which are union territories.





In modern times, Surat has become an important centre of textile manufacturing, diamond cutting and polishing and other industries, attracting businesspeople and workforce from different parts of India. All these varied influences can be experienced during a gastronomical holiday in South Gujarat. Multinationals at Hazira have increased the city's cosmopolitan mix, creating a market for multi-cuisine and specialty restaurants.

In the morning, crowds gather for Surat's famous farsans. Apart from khaman and dhokla, Surat is famous for the locho. Another specialty of this coastal region is Nariel pattice, coconut-stuffed cylindrical snacks. Gopal is one of the farsan shops that opens early for breakfast – it has Khao Dil Se Jiyo Dil Se as its tagline. There are many other iconic shops for surti khaman, sev khamani, nariel pattice and locho in Surat.

Winter is a great time for snacking in Surat. This is the time when you can get ponk, a Surti favourite of tender roasted sorghum grains. Sorghum seed head stalks from grassy areas near Hazira and the Tapti River are roasted and the grains later taken out from the soft shell, and served mixed with sev and spices usually in a newspaper cone. It is also used to make snacks like ponk wada. In January-February, you also get yams like Ratalu that is used in a curry served with puri or in pakoras. The seashore of Dumas has many vendors for ratalu made in various ways.

With ratalu, papdi and greens in season, January is a great time for undhiyu (mixed vegetables and other ingredients cooked in oil) and matla undhiyu or Ubadiyu (mixed vegetables steamed or roasted with spices in an earthen pot) around South Gujarat.

Surti food is also one of Gujarat's

finest. As a saying goes in Gujarat, "Eating in Surat is as fulfilling as being cremated in Kashi. With fertile alluvial lands and higher rainfalls compared to other parts of Gujarat, South Gujarat is rich in vegetables, herbs and spices. Green garlic and green chilies are profusely used in Surat's winter dishes. Spice Restaurant at Taj-run The Gateway Hotel is one of the best places to get South Gujarat mains like papdi lilva nu shaak, muthiya turiya nu shaak, rigana vatana and surti dal.

Around Athwa, you can also look for meat dishes of the Khattris of Surat like tapelu gosht and mambas.

God Road is one of the popular places for North Indian, Chinese and other cuisine. Parle Point and Nanpura are also bustling restaurant hubs.

Evening is the time for street food around Tapti's Chowpatty, the Chowk near the Surat Castle and other hubs. Cold Cocoa is one of the popular drinks. Egg

dishes are very popular in Surat, and places like Ganesh and Bhai Bhai are very crowded at night. For non-vegetarian food, you can head for Zampa Bazaar.

If you are in Surat on a Sunday, it is worth spending an evening in the historical neighbourhood of Rander. As many people from here went to Burma but had to return after Myanmar became communist, the khowsa (Surti take on khow suey) and Rangooni palata can be enjoyed here.

One of Surat's most popular sweets is the ultra-rich ghari. Another good buy is nankhatai, butter biscuits and other bakery products. Dotivala claims to be one of India's oldest bakeries, started about 200 years ago by the late Faramji Pestonji Dotivala who worked in the kitchens of the Dutch Factory at Surat. Using the techniques learnt from the Dutch, Dotivala developed products for the local market like Farmasu Surti Batasa (Butter Biscuits), Nankathai and Irani Biscuits. Today, Dotivala has modernized with a factory that even makes packaged baked goods for export market and multiple outlets. The must-buys are the Nankathai, Surti Batasa and Khari



(including various versions like twisted, cheese, masala, etc), but their other products like cakes, sweet bread sticks, biscuits and puffs are also fairly good. There are also many other Parsee-owned bakeries near Makai Pool bridge with

historical connections. In narrow lanes, you can find bakeries like Khurshed that still make biscuits on bhatti. Butter biscuits like batasas with malai (cream) is a favourite in many Surat homes.



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NAVSARI

Surat's twin city, Navsari, has strong Parsee connections – you can see the houses of ancestors of many tycoons here. Near the Parsee temples, you can find Parsee shops. In 1885, Edalji Kolah started a shop, where his grandchildren are still making food products like pickles, sweets, sugarcane vinegar and masalas. They take pride in talking about their fish role pickle served to Bill Clinton and their Gajer Meva that was served in Rastrapati Bhavan.

From Navsari, drive to Udvada, which is the spiritual hub of Parsees with the most sacred of their fire temples. Here, there are places serving Parsee dishes like chicken farcha, patrani macchi, Sali

murg, kolmi no pati, saas ni macchi, jardaloo sali boti and mutton cutlets in tomato gravy. If you are here for breakfast, try the egg dishes like akoori or pora. You can also get freshly made ice-creams and mawa cakes in Udvada.

A short drive from Udvada brings you to Daman. Sea fish like dhara (threadfin) and other seafood like prawns are fresh and superbly made in Daman. Daman Delite is one of the best restaurants for Damanese dishes made using fish, prawns, chicken, brinjal and vegetables. 🍴

### Where to stay

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tibvanz@gujarattourism.com

Toran Hotel, Matwad

Contact Details

Address:

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hotelmatwad@gujarattourism.com



## UDVADA

Incredible India

# Leopard Spotting in Bera





The night was cold. The only sound I could hear was the occasional hoot of an eagle owl. The bonfire, around which we were sitting, had ebbed, but a gentle wind fanned the embers into a bright glow. It was around 10 pm when we heard the alarm signal of a Nilgai. The signal was immediately picked up by a number of stray dogs in the village nearby. The Nilgai had seen or sensed the presence

of a predator lurking in its vicinity. The raucous barking of the dogs continued for a while. Its cover blown by the antelope, the predator stealthily withdrew. A while later all was quiet once again.

I was in a wildlife resort in Bera, in Bali District of Rajasthan, which reportedly had the highest population density of leopards in India. Bera is

about a two and a half hour drive from Udaipur. It had an area of about 18 sq.km. and was estimated to have about 50 leopards. The area has a cluster of villages. The land was fertile. The mainstay of the folks living there was agriculture.



Like most places in Rajasthan, the land was interspersed with craggy hillocks and was covered with jungle shrubs and trees. It was here, between huge boulders that the leopard, one of the most beautiful animals of the Indian jungle, dwelled. From a vantage point, he waits with patience, immaculately camouflaged, before going in for the kill.

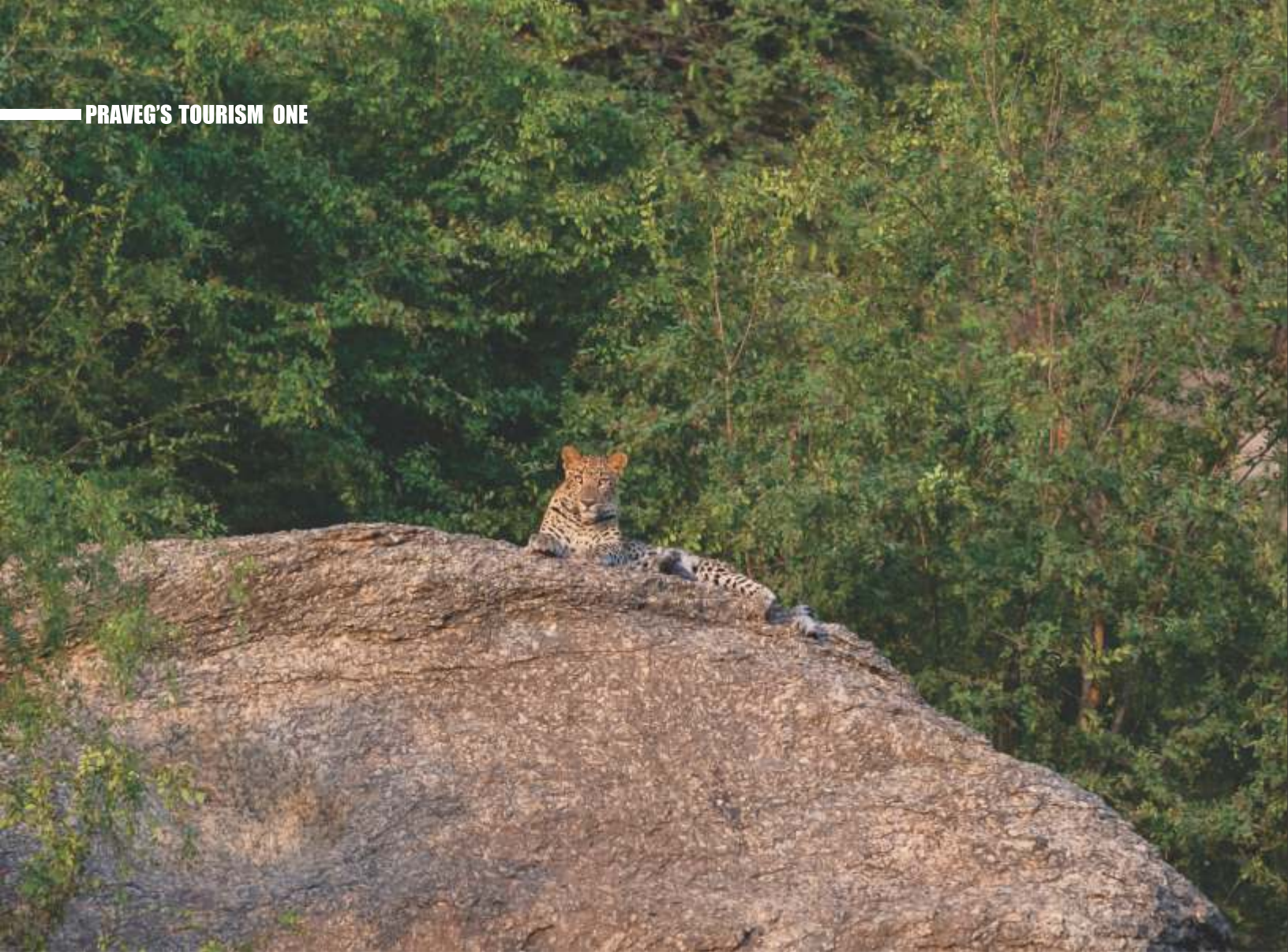
In this hamlet, the leopards and men have been living in perfect harmony for ages. The leopards are treated with deference by the villagers. They contend that Lord Shiva sits on a tiger's skin, but drapes himself with the skin of a leopard. If the leopard eats one of their herds, they consider it as an oblation to the Lord. The loss of livestock is not grudged. So far in Bera, there had been no cases of leopards turning man eaters.

Why have the leopards not turned man-eaters here? Leopards are semi-nocturnal animals. They emerge from the caves or from the deep recesses of the jungle just before dusk. Leopards are to some extent scavengers. They also prey on livestock and stray dogs. They turn man eater only when the means of subsistence becomes scarce or are injured and unable to hunt. Jim Corbett had stated in his book that the two man-eating leopards of Kumaon had eaten five hundred and twenty five human beings, before they were shot dead.

However in Bera, there are a few temples on hillocks, where leopards roam. They venture close to the temples to drink water from the trapped rain water. The driver of my vehicle showed me a picture of a Pujari praying at the temple with the leopard sitting on its roof. There was no fear or interference from either side. It was not an uncommon sight to see a lone man walking across his field at dusk.







Looking for leopards is far different from looking for animals in a game sanctuary. Unlike in a game sanctuary, where you drive to a spot inhabited by leopards frequently, which is usually on steep rocky terrain on a hill. You take up a vantage point below and wait. Other leopard watchers come and cluster around silently in their vehicles. You could end up waiting from half an hour to almost two hours. It calls for enormous patience to catch a glimpse of these extremely shy and elusive predators.

When they finally made an appearance, a frisson of excitement pulsed through the watchers. A mother leopard and two cubs emerged from a cave, high on the cliff. It paused for a while before ascending further up. It was easily one of the most spectacular sights of my jungle experience. The mother leopard

easily ascended to the ridge of the hill in swift effortless strides that only feline species are able to achieve. It was an epitome of grace and athleticism. The cubs followed clumsily. After the siesta, they were in a playful mood. On the ridge they pranced around their mother. One of them harbored a vaulting ambition to trap a bird. They were about 50 meters away and we were watching them through binoculars.

The sight was indeed wonderful. I sadly wondered how long would this carefree freedom last? Bera was not a wildlife sanctuary. It was a sprawling jungle with habitation. The inexorable drive of progress was beginning to be felt here too. A railway line and the newly constructed Dedicated Freight Corridor cut right through the forest. On this busy route, the cacophony of the high speed

trains, as it trundled past, continued through day and night.

Were we seeing the last of these leopards in their natural environment before they were driven off, captured or killed? Like many other animals, would they too be driven to extinction? I sincerely hope not. It was sheer delight to see these magnificent creatures roaming freely. Occasionally, I could hear the squeaks from the cubs. I looked around. Everybody was engrossed at the spectacle on the ridge, perhaps fearing that the scene may not be seen again. I wondered if the cubs would grow into adulthood and enjoy the same freedom. For the nonce, I trained my binoculars on them and vicariously enjoyed their romp with the mother. ■



# RARE CRAFTS

## Visit the Ashavali weavers at Ridrol

Ridrol village in Gandhinagar is the only major centre for the Ashavali saree weaving. When Ahmedabad was called Ashaval (named for a chieftain named Asha) and later became Karnavati under the Solanki king Karna in the 12th century, it was a centre for a weaving tradition called Ashavali. The brocade

weaving traditions of centres like Varanasi are said to have been influenced by the Ashavali, making this one of India's most historical traditions.

Duarte Barbosa, a Portuguese writer and officer from Portuguese India in the 16th century, Ain-e-Akbari, Mirat-e-Ahmadi and other writings refer to

Ahmedabad as a centre for kinkabh and silk sarees. During this period, Pushtimarg Vaishnav sect founded by Shree Vallabhacharya (also known as Mahaprabhuji) gained much following among the wealthy mercantile families of Ahmedabad, and nearby areas in Gujarat and Rajasthan. The Vaishnav motifs, like



*Gandhinagar makes an ideal base to explore a number of textiles and handicrafts of Gandhinagar and Ahmedabad districts some of which have become rare.*

the Pichwai paintings used as curtains at the Shrinathi Temple of Nathdwara, were recreated in brocade by the weavers.

Ashavali fabrics were woven by Kanbi Patels who were also agriculturalists as well as artisans called Khhatris using jala pitlooms - 'jala' is a kind of frame on which the design is first created using threads. Twill weave is an integral part of the Ashavali's construction. They were worn as sarees, jamas and patkas, or used for canopies and decorations for camels and elephants by ruling and wealthy families. These fabrics are the enamelled look of the border with multiple colours. The pallu or end piece is also very important. Ashavali has birds, horses, human figures and other motifs. The stylized Swastik and floral motif was

popular during auspicious occasions like weddings.

The rich kinkhab brocade tradition of Ahmedabad had a setback in the 1700s, when the city was disputed between the British and the Marathas, following the decline of the Mughal Empire. The modern textile industry later led further to its decline. A few weavers continued to practice the skills in their villages like Ridrol, Nardipur, Upera, Gajhariaya and Charda. Over the last few decades, many weavers found it unviable to continue the profession of making Ashavali. One of the weavers continuing the tradition, Vishnu Patel built the cluster in their village of Ridrol. The Ashavali was woven on jala looms, a kind of frame on which the design is first created using threads by

nakshabands or pattern-makers. This intricate arrangement of threads is such that the weaver can lift a particular set of threads resulting in a design to be repeated on the fabric. Gradually, jacquards with perforated cards began to be fitted to a loom to facilitate the weaving of figured and brocaded fabrics. This made the process easier and quicker than the jala or naksha process, which would require months to complete a saree. His son Paresh Patel is reviving old weaving styles and motifs from historical times. In this era, when sustainability is focal point for discussion, the use of traditional pit looms and vegetable dyes is fascinating for tourists visiting Ridrol.



## The wood block carvers of Pethapur

Pethapur is one of India's leading centres for the making of woodblocks used for textile printing. Artisans believe that Pethapur has been a centre for carpentry from centuries. The carpenters realized the potential for making wood blocks for printing and since then it has been the main source for wooden blocks. Pethapur was also a centre for block printing textiles, much of which went to Java and Sumatra, but this tradition also died over the years.

The surface of the teakwood block to be used for printing is planed and smoothed to be completely flat. The drawing is transferred by means of sticking a paper on it. The pattern is carved out on the block, with holes created to let out air at the time of pressing the fabric on the fabric. When ready, the pattern on the woodblock appears like a high-relief carving. Today, Pethapur is a national hub for woodblocks used for textile printing across the country from Kutch to Karnataka, Delhi to Chennai, wherever the art of textile printing using hand-held blocks is still practiced.

### The kalamkari artisans

From Gandhinagar, travel to Ahmedabad where artisans produce hand-painted ritualistic cloths, called Matani Pachhedi. The artisan produced Matani Pachhedi and Matani Chadarvo cloths for rituals in a distinctive painting style passed on through generations of the Vaghari community, using colours extracted from vegetables, flowers, herbs and other natural source. The Matani Pachhedi and Matani Chadarvo cloths are offered to the mother goddesses especially during the Navratras. They become scaffoldings for temporary shrines created during the festivals and then are offered to the rivers. The labour involved in the intricate painting of



Pachhedi and Chadarvo made the hand-painted ones unaffordable for farmers, pastoral people and the economically backward.


Thus, the hand-painting method was replaced by the use of mud-blocks to replicate the drawings and make multiple copies for sale, and then durable wooden block. However, some of the artisans continue the kalamkari tradition of hand-

painted fabrics. Entire families get involved in the processes of preparing the fabric, making the dyes, drawing, painting and fixing. The dyes are made from natural materials – madder and alum for red, henna for orange, pomegranate and mango extracts for yellow, indigo for blue, iron and molasses for black, and so on. Myrobalan extract, herbs, tamarind seeds, castor oil are used in the dye-





making and dyeing process.

After treatment with Myrobalan and applying alum for the red, the fabric is immersed in the Sabarmati River in Ahmedabad, after which the other colours are applied. The exquisitely detailed paintings that result from the process are now becoming popular among art enthusiasts and are used in fashion design too. 

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# FREEDOM TRAILS

## SATYAGRAHA TRAIL IN SOUTH GUJARAT

Satyagraha refers to the non-violent resistance to British rule started by Mahatma Gandhi. Two major episodes of civil disobedience and revolt in the Indian Independence Movement that broke the back of the British Raj in India took place in South Gujarat – one at Bardoli and other at Dandi.

From Surat, it is a drive of about 40

minutes to Bardoli. The Bombay Presidency raised tax rates causing problems in the face of the calamities when farmers could not afford the taxes after selling crops, let alone feeding their families. Sardar Vallabhai Patel led the Bardoli Satyagraha in 1928, where people refused to buy any properties confiscated by the British.





The Government agreed to restore the confiscated lands and properties, as well as cancel revenue payment not only for the year, but cancel the 30% raise until after the succeeding year. The success of the Bardoli Satyagraha was a major force in the resurrection of the freedom struggle nationwide. Bardolise India became a term following this Satyagraha and Vallabhai Patel was called Sardar for the first time by the women of Bardoli as he established his credentials here as one of India's finest leaders. Visit the Swaraj Ashram or Sardar Niwas, which was the base for the Bardoli Satyagraha. Later Mahatma Gandhi stayed here and this became a venue for All India Working Committee meetings of the Congress. Nearby, Haripura is a place, where Mahatma Gandhi and Subhash Chandra Bose shared the dais for one of the independence movement meetings.

From Bardoli, travel to Dandi, where Mahatma Gandhi ended his 24-day salt march from 12<sup>th</sup> March, 1930 to 6<sup>th</sup> April, 1930, protesting against taxes and the salt monopoly imposed by the British Government. The following morning, after a prayer, Mahatma Gandhi raised a lump of salty mud and declared, "With this, I am shaking the foundations of the British Empire" before boiling the lump in water to produce illegal salt. This led to mass civil disobedience throughout India as millions broke the salt laws by making salt or buying illegal salt. The Salt Satyagraha thus became a national movement that led legitimacy to claims by Gandhi and the Congress Party for sovereignty and self-rule. See the haveli where Mahatma Gandhi stayed as a guest and the prayer place before strolling out on the Dandi beach.





*Sabarmati Ashram - Ahmedabad*



## SEE THE MEMORIALS OF PUNE

The Poona Pact refers to an agreement between Babasaheb Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi on behalf of depressed classes and upper caste Hindu leaders on the reservation of electoral seats for the depressed classes in the legislature of British India Government.

Today, Pune has the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum conceptualized by Dr. Mujumdar, Founder Director of Symbiosis & Chancellor, Symbiosis International University, in honour of the man who wrote India's Constitution. The memorial and museum was founded on 14th April, 1990, which was the birth-centenary of Babasaheb Ambedkar. Since Babasaheb inspired the Dalit Buddhist movement, the memorial is designed like a Buddhist

stupa. The museum was inaugurated on 26th November, 1996, marking the date when Ambedkar presented the Constitution of Independent India to the President of India. The museum houses several of Ambedkar's personal belongings, including his Bharat Ratna Award and the urn containing his ashes. Most of these have been donated by Dr Maisaheb Ambedkar, Babasaheb's wife.

From the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum, continue to the heart of Pune, where you find many places associated with the freedom struggle. Lokmanya Tilak stayed at the Kesari Wada, where his printing press and belongings, including his desk, letters and documents, are housed. Originally a palatial mansion erected for the Gaekwad dynasty, it

became a gathering place for independence activists.

Proceed from here to the magnificent Aga Khan Palace. Set in sprawling gardens and lawns, this palace has graceful arches and Italianette features. Once built by a Sultan as a drought-relief measure, this palace is where Mahatma Gandhi, his wife Kasturba Gandhi and his secretary Mahadev Desai were interned during the launch of Quit India Movement. Kasturba Gandhi and Mahadev Desai died during their captivity period in the palace and have their Samadhis located over there. Prince Karim Aga Khan donated this palace to Gandhi Smarak Samittee and it now houses a memorial museum.





## THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE MUTINY IN KOLKATA

Kolkata is a city that produced many nationalists – Rabindranath Tagore, Shri Aurobindo, Benoy Basu, Rash Behari Bose, Subhash Chandra Bose, Jogesh Chandra Chattopadhyay, Chittaranjan Das, Jatindra Nath Das, Badal Gupta, Dinesh Chandra Gupta, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, Bipin Chandra Pal, Bidhan Chandra Roy and Ashoke Kumar Sen. Netaji Bhawan, the ancestral house of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, is where he lived and was put under house arrest till his escape to Berlin in 1941. The Netaji Research Bureau, founded by Dr. Sisir Kumar Bose in 1957, is an internationally renowned institute of history, politics and international relations. Its Netaji Museum has many reminders of the Indian independence movement. Relics of Bose's footprints are exhibited in the museum.

Head north from this house to the BBD Bagh, which gets its name from Benoy Basu, Dinesh Chandra Gupta and Badal

Gupta, a revolutionary trio who entered the Writers' Building and shot dead the brutal police officer named Simpson. British police started firing and overpowered the trio but Badal took Potassium cyanide, while Benoy and Dinesh shot themselves with their own revolvers. Benoy was taken to the hospital, where he died on 13th December, 1930. The martyrdom and self-sacrifice of Benoy, Badal and Dinesh inspired further revolutionary activities in Bengal.

Travel to Barrackpore, part of the Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority (KMDA). This was the site of two rebellions - the Barrackpore Mutiny of 1824, led by Sepoy Bindee Tiwari and the second. In 1857, Mangal Pandey, attacked his British commander, and was subsequently court-martialed. In order to commemorate his sacrifice, a park named 'Sahid Mangal Pandey Udyan' was opened by River Hoogly. ■



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