



Punjab

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◦ Eat well, whatever your preference

We recommend the best local cuisine, but also give you fine-dining and Pan-Indian options.

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Our job is to make amazing travel experiences happen. We visit the places we write about each and every edition. We never take freebies for positive coverage, so you can always rely on us to tell it like it is.

1ST EDITION
Published in September 2018
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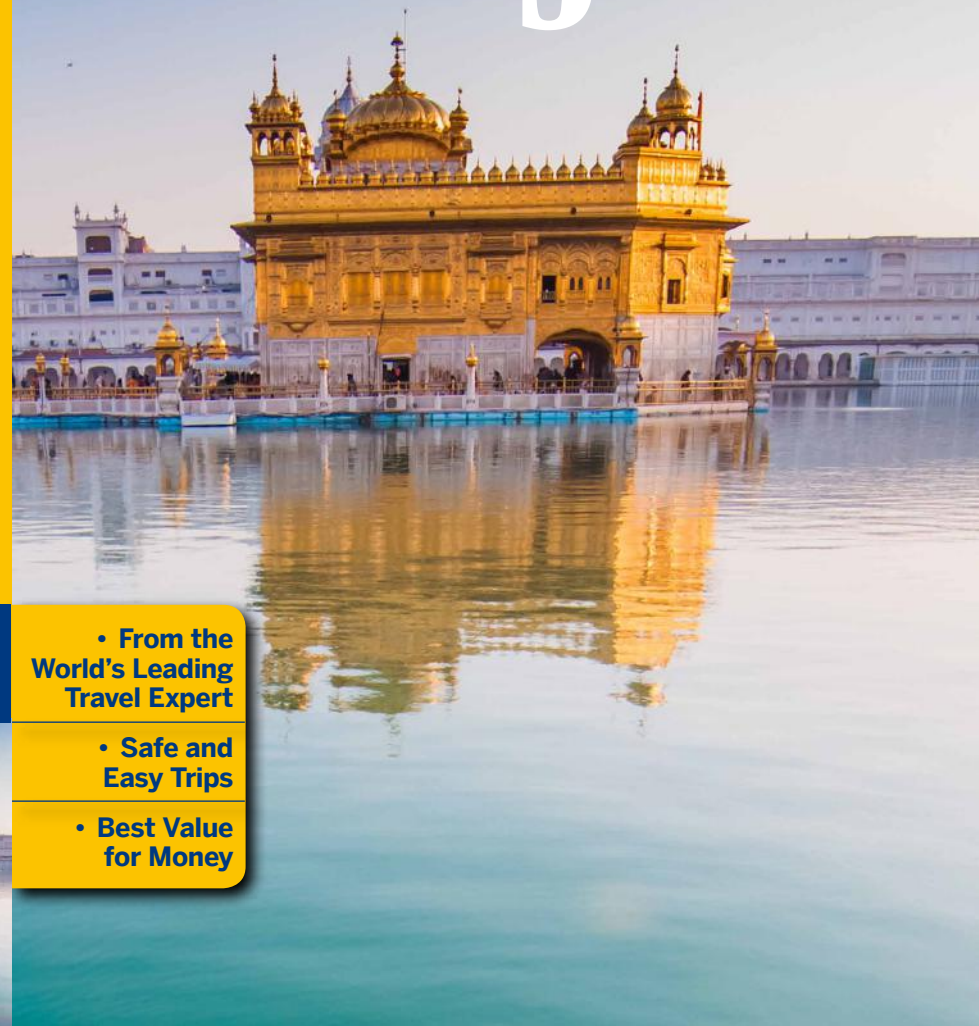
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• Safe and
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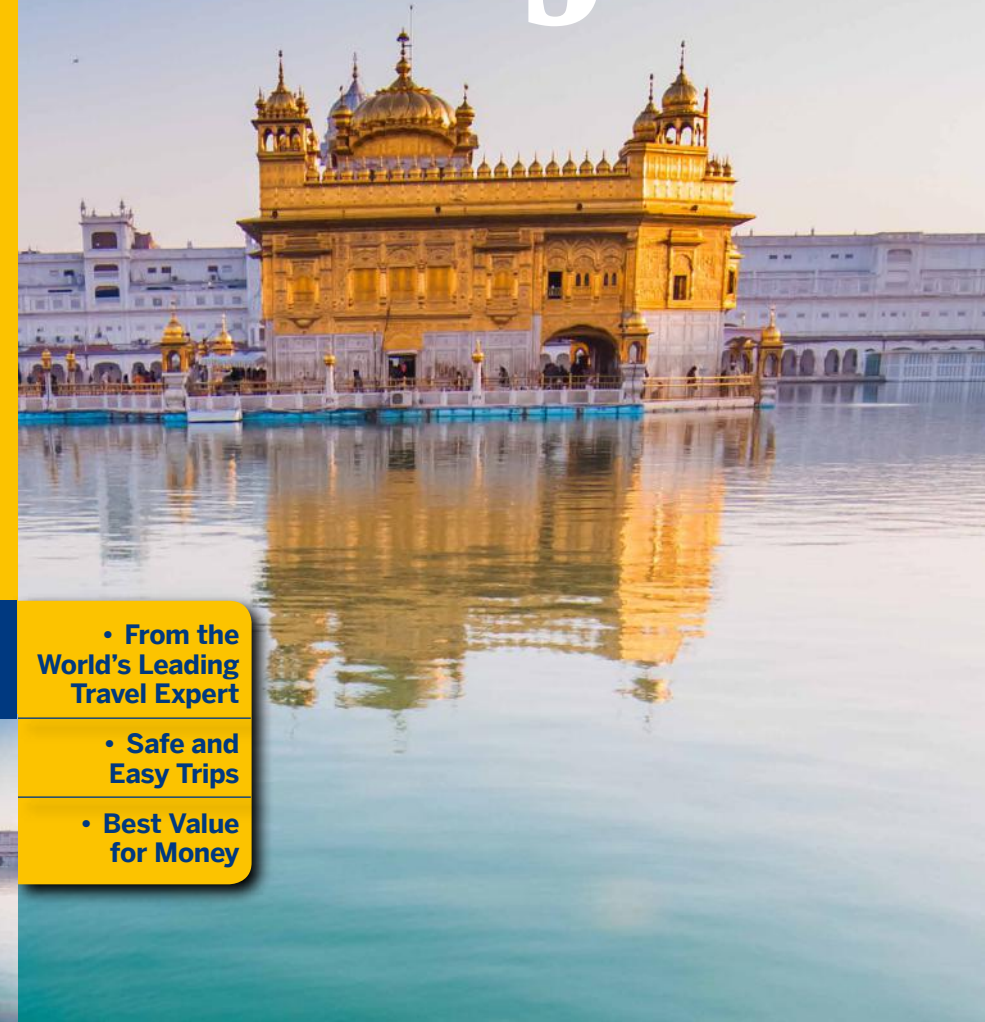
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The Lonely Planet Story

In 1972, Tony and Maureen Wheeler set off on the adventure of a lifetime, crossing Europe and Asia overland to Australia. At the end, they sat at the kitchen table and wrote their first travel guide *Across Asia on the Cheap*. In a week it sold 1500 copies and Lonely Planet was born. Today Lonely Planet has published more than 500 books to 190 countries. It also runs a popular website other than magazine, apps and ebooks.

We are the world's leading travel authority.

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We bring you expert information on how to plan the best trips both in India and abroad.

Each holiday is important to you, and you need to have the greatest experience of your life. So, why not plan your very own holiday with this travel guide? We will help you decide which places to visit, and where to stay, eat, shop and have fun. We have taken care of every detail you need for a memorable trip, such as:

- Food and shopping options
- Money-saving tips
- Detailed information on local transport

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Front Cover The Golden Temple

Back Cover Bhangra dancers

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ਮੁੱਖ ਮੰਤਰੀ, ਪੰਜਾਬ CHIEF MINISTER, PUNJAB

Foreword

Punjab – the Land of Five Rivers – is India's frontline state. Through the annals of history, it has been at the vanguard of the defence of the country, forever resisting invaders from the north-west. Consequently, its people have rightly come to be characterized as brave, martial and industrious. Once stretching from south of Delhi all the way to the river Indus, its vast expanse was bisected by Partition in 1947 and further truncated through creation of the states of Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. Today, it encompasses an area of 50,000 square kilometres in the north-west of the country and shares a border with its other half, now in Pakistan.

Many regard Punjab as the veritable cradle of civilization. During proto-historic times, the cities of the Harappan Civilization dotted its landscape. During the Vedic period, it was called the *Sapta Sindhu* or the Land of Seven Rivers, the area where the Vedas are reputed to have been composed. Its unique geographical location also made Punjab a place of ferment where ideas mingled and gave birth to new. It is rightfully regarded as the Land of the Gurus for the First Guru of the Sikh faith, Sri Guru Nanak Dev was born here in 1469 in Nankana Sahib, now in Pakistan. He and his nine successors left behind a religion and philosophy that continues to guide millions across, not only Punjab, but throughout the world.

Through the vicissitudes of time, Punjab and Punjabis have always registered their presence, both in India and abroad. They form a significant and successful portion of Indian diaspora across the globe. In India, Punjab has come to acquire yet another sobriquet, the Granary of India, having been at the forefront of the Green Revolution. The industry of the Punjabi yeomen has been a singular factor in the success of the Green Revolution and our country attaining self-sufficiency in foodgrain production. On the other hand, its soldiers have served the Indian Army, right from the British times, with great distinction. The famous Battle of Saragarhi of 1897 bears ample testimony to the bravery of the Sikh troops.

Punjab, with a rich and proud past, offers many places of interest for the traveller. The holy city of Amritsar with the resplendent Golden Temple has come to be regarded as almost symbolic of the state. Punjab also has its historical forts and palaces; in Amritsar, Patiala, Kapurthala, Nabha and Bathinda. Many an old bazaar beckon those who seek traditional artefacts and handicrafts, not to mention the cuisine associated with each city. For the faithful, the holy cities of Amritsar, Anandpur Sahib, Fatehgarh Sahib and Sultanpur Lodhi, to name a few, along with the historic gurdwaras across the state offer great potential to travel and explore. The *Virasat-i-Khalsa* at Anandpur Sahib has come up as a fine museum dedicated to the development of Sikhism and draws tourists in large numbers. For eco-tourists, the Harike Pattan and Kanjili wetlands offer interesting places to explore. Today, many enterprising farmers have converted their farms into cosy homestays and offer a lovely snapshot of rural life.

I am sure that this Lonely Planet Guide on Punjab will aid millions of domestic and international tourists to access Punjab better and to discover its splendour. I am confident that the state and its warm and vibrant people will not disappoint you.

Amarinder Singh
Chief Minister, Punjab



Navjot Singh Sidhu

Tel. No. : 0172-2740423 (O)
0172-2740931 (Fax)

Local Government, Tourism, Cultural Affairs
Archives & Museums Minister
Punjab, Chandigarh

Foreword

It gives me immense pleasure to know that Lonely Planet India is publishing a guide book on Punjab after exploring and conducting research on different tourism destinations and places of importance in the State. Lonely Planet is renown for their publications in Tourism Sector. This book will be facilitating the tourists visiting the State. The book will provide information about different places of interest in the State and also facilitate in planning their tour. It will also highlight and promote the rich culture & heritage of our State. I extend my best wishes to the Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs and Lonely Planet for getting this useful book published.

(Navjot Singh Sidhu)



Punjab

This guide is researched and written by
Pallavi Pasricha



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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

1

Plan Your Trip



- Researched by a travel expert familiar with Punjab.
- Our suggestions for the best things to do and see.
- Advice on everything you need to travel around, shop, eat and keep the family happy.
- Need to Know: A 'quick reference guide' for all the key information you will need.

2

Punjab's Best Trips



- Convenient itineraries to the main regions, covering the best attractions and activities.
- Expert recommendations tell you about not-to-be-missed highlights, local festivals and must-eats.
- Listings of accommodation, restaurants and shopping.
- Easy map, with clearly marked, numbered stops.



Special features

Look for these boxes to help you get the most out of your trip:

- ✓ **Top Tip** – insider advice
- ♥ **If You Like** – themed suggestions
- 💰 **Value for Money** – money-saving advice
- 📍 **Detour** – off-beat trips
- 📷 **Snapshot** – interesting facts
- 🏠 **TOP CHOICE** Top Choice – for accommodation & eating

OUR REVIEWS
Lonely Planet writers have visited every hotel, restaurant, shop and activity in this book. They don't accept any freebies and favours, so you can be sure our recommendations are unbiased.



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■ Hola Mohalla is celebrated with gusto in Punjab

Need to Know

i Quick Facts

LANGUAGES

Punjabi (several dialects) and Hindi are spoken widely throughout the state. English is restricted to hotels, shops and restaurants in the big cities.

MONEY

ATMs of ICICI, HDFC, SBI, Citibank, AXIS, IDBI, YES Bank and Punjab National Bank are easily accessible in the bigger cities, but it is better to carry sufficient cash in the smaller towns. Most hotels and big restaurants accept credit cards, but dhabas mostly do not.

INTERNET ACCESS

Most hotels in the bigger cities have business centres or offer free wi-fi. In smaller towns, some hotels may not provide wi-fi and it might also be difficult to find cyber cafes in these areas.

TOURIST INFORMATION

Directorate of Tourism Punjab, Chandigarh (☎172 2699140, 2636874). Offices in all major cities. Tourist Helpline Number: ☎1800111363. Punjab Tourism website <http://punjabtourism.gov.in/> & app <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.punjabtourism&hl=en>



When to Go

Summer months in Punjab see temperatures soar up to 45°C. In the winters, temperatures touch as low as 1°C.

- **End October–March; high season:** This is the most popular time to visit. Room rates are at their highest and the tourist spots are crowded. It gets very cold in December and January, but it's the best time for travel here.
- **September–mid October; mid-season:** The heat eases all over the state and it is relatively less crowded. Room rates are the same as during the low season.
- **April–August; low season:** The blazing heat makes it difficult to roam around the state. The monsoon season from end June to mid-August brings some respite.

Plan your trip around Punjab's colourful festivals

First Time in Punjab

HEALTH & SAFETY

- **Medical aid:** It is advisable to carry a basic medical kit. Medicine shops and chemists can easily be found in the bigger cities but not along most of the highways. Ludhiana, Chandigarh, Jalandhar, Bathinda, Patiala and Amritsar have major hospitals.
- **Travelling alone:** The state is known to be safe, especially for visitors.

ADVANCE PLANNING

- **Two to three months before:** Plan your itinerary and buy tickets early since prices soar during the peak season; trains and flights (especially to Amritsar) are often overbooked.
- **One month to three weeks before:** Search online and book hotel early to avail of good prices.
- **One week before:** Read up about the places and make a note of the sights and activities that you want to see and do.

WHAT TO PACK

- **Dark glasses, sunscreen, scarves, caps or hats:** Stay covered to avoid sunburn during both summers and winters.
- **The right clothes:** Carry loose-fitting, comfortable cotton clothing in light colours for summer and layers of warm clothing – including a sweater, jacket, woollen cap and socks – for winter.
- **Comfortable shoes and sneakers:** Vital for the long walks up to and through the various forts, palaces and other sights.

Dos and Don'ts

- ✓ Carry light snacks such as biscuits, cakes, chips and also bottles of water when travelling between cities. Most highway routes have dhabas.
- ✓ Carry hand sanitisers and tissues – public toilets on the roads are best avoided.
- ✓ Carry a basic medical kit.
- ✓ Feel free to bargain at every stage – with autorickshaw drivers, shopkeepers and even with hotels, if you haven't pre-booked yourself.
- ✗ Do not ridicule words or accents that you do not understand.
- ✗ If you are visiting a religious site, dress modestly and make sure you have a kerchief or stole to cover your head.

Amritsar and Chandigarh offer Hop-on Hop-off bus rides





This is Punjab

The fertile plains of Punjab encompass dramatically varied travel experiences. Swaying green and gold fields contrast with vibrant towns and cities dotted with gleaming gurudwaras that stand proudly in this cradle of Sikh culture and religion. Imposing forts are a testament to the state's location on the crossroads of history while lavish palaces speak of the opulence of the princely states. Each visit here uncovers a new facet.

History

The rise of the Sikh faith and the powerful Sikh empire that grew under Maharaja Ranjit Singh became the defining features of Punjab in recent centuries. The Mughal-era tombs and sarais along the historic Grand Trunk Road (through which invaders, conquerors and travellers traversed the state) hark back to an earlier era. Several

princely states flourished in Punjab before Independence. It is home to some of the country's oldest cities such as Jalandhar (p100) and Bathinda (p132), and its most planned one, Chandigarh (p162), which is its shared capital with Haryana. Five rivers that once flowed through the state before it was divided gave rise to its name ('Panj' meaning five and 'ab' meaning water). Punjab proudly holds the title of the country's breadbasket.

Holy Grail

The iconic gold-gilded Golden Temple in Amritsar (p46) is the most visited place in the world as per the *London Book of World Records*. Besides Sikh devotees, people from all faiths come here. There are also many other grand gurudwaras in the state that mark significant events in the life of the ten Sikh gurus and attract a constant stream of pilgrims. The holy city of Anandpur Sahib (p86) is dotted with gurudwaras and the town of Dera Baba Nanak in Gurdaspur (p76) district is significant for the first Sikh guru who founded the faith.

The Golden Temple welcomes people of all faiths



Aloo paranthas make for a hearty Punjabi meal

Food

Punjab's rich, hearty and incredibly satisfying cuisine is one of the top attractions of the state. In the land of ghee and butter, food is king. Authentic Punjabi food (p32, p74) awaits you at every street corner and is best relished at little roadside stalls and dhabas often tucked away in narrow lanes of old bazaars. While aloo paranthas and chhole bhature may have made their way across the country, it is only in Punjab that you will get the genuine taste and flavour. Across the cities there are many options from hearty street food to mid-level multi-cuisine restaurants to fine dining experiences. For the taste of real Punjab, its heritage cuisine with its seasonal offerings is hard to beat. The wide variety includes makki ki roti and sarson ka saag, atta chicken, Amritsari fish, ghee-soaked paranthas, Amritsari kulcha, sweet treats like the dhodha and the creamy lassi.

Shopping

The local handicrafts reflect the colour and vibrancy of the state. A visit to Punjab is considered incomplete without

picking up its trademark traditional embroidery called phulkari (p34). Other inclusions on a shopping list are the embroidered and embellished juttis (p34, p161), and the wood inlay work from the northern city of Hoshiarpur (p94). The state is also a good place to pick up woollen shawls, hand-knotted carpets and textiles.

People

The people of Punjab are known for their tremendous zest for life and nothing symbolises this better than the bhangra, a vigorous foot-stomping dance that sets the joyful tone at every wedding and festival.

Monuments and memorials pay tribute to the state's proud martial tradition. Crowds flock to watch the border ceremonies held along the Indo-Pak border at Attari (p60) and Hussainiwalla (p128).

The extraordinary quality that you encounter most in Punjab is the incredible large-hearted hospitality of its people, who open their doors easily to visitors.

Festivals are celebrated with aplomb in Punjab



Punjab Map



12 Top Experiences

- 1 Farm Stays** (p38, 83, 98, 154) Enjoy Punjab's countryside delights.
- 2 Hola Mohalla, Anandpur Sahib** (p86) Witness the display of Sikh martial arts.
- 3 Rock Garden, Chandigarh** (p164) Enjoy Nek Chand's surreal art.
- 4 Partition Museum, Amritsar** (p51) Visit the first ever museum on the Partition.
- 5 Palki at Golden Temple, Amritsar** (p51) Be awed by the procession of the Sikh holy book on a palki.
- 6 Guru ka Langar, Amritsar** (p50) Eat at the Golden Temple's community kitchen.
- 7 Attari Border Ceremony** (p60) Watch the spectacle on the Indo-Pak border.
- 8 Capitol Complex Chandigarh** (p167) Behold Le Corbusier's architectural genius.
- 9 Heritage Street, Amritsar** (p53) Take a heritage walk.
- 10 Shopping in Patiala** (p160) Go berserk in these bazaars.
- 11 Baisakhi in Bathinda** (p134) Welcome the Sikh New Year with fanfare.
- 12 Food Trail in Amritsar** (p46, 67, 68, 69) Treat yourself in Punjab's food capital.

12 Top Experiences

1 Farm Stays

Punjab's lush green fields and fragrant fruit orchards provide the perfect setting for a tryst with rural life. The farm stays (p38, 83, 98, 154) come with tractor rides, fresh home-cooked Punjabi food and crackling bonfires. Plug into rustic living by milking a cow, watching farmers tend to their crops or sipping tea in a village home. Above all, a halt at a farm provides a chance to spend time with expansive Punjabi hosts whose warm hospitality

can only be experienced, not explained. It is here that you can convert the celluloid image of Kajol running towards Shah Rukh Khan through the mustard fields in *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* into your own reality. Indeed, for those who need a break from shrinking and crowded urban spaces, the sprawling farms of Punjab are ideal places to rejuvenate. If imbibing a slow pace of life is your intention, make sure that your stay is not limited to a rushed weekend. Roads are good in Punjab so accessing a farm stay is easy and you can locate one within a driving distance of a few hours from wherever you are. Farm stays offer the chance to get close to the local way of life and the slow rhythms of the countryside. This is a truly immersive experience that you and your family can soak in.



2 Hola Mohalla, Anandpur Sahib

This celebration of the martial arts tradition of the Sikhs transforms the quiet, holy town of Anandpur Sahib (p86) into a veritable fairground where daredevilry, showmanship, devotion and faith combine to form a colourful spectacle. Hola Mohalla (p41,90) held in Spring, after Holi, offers a first-hand insight into the very best Punjab has to offer: a proud tradition of bravery, large-heartedness and intense faith. Expect mock duels, riders astride two or even three horses charging by as crowds cheer them on, motorbike stunts by the young, volunteers urging you to partake of the langar, and the sound of gurubani emanating from nearby gurudwaras.



3 Rock Garden, Chandigarh

Lose yourself in this incredible garden with numerous sculptures crafted ingeniously from industrial and household waste, broken bangles, China plates and other junk. The one-of-its kind garden, which has won laurels worldwide, was created by the artistic vision of a local transport official, Nek Chand (p165), and is set over a 25-acre sprawl. The Rock Garden



(p164) is no ordinary park – it is a fantastical world of kings, queens and courtesans, of animals and birds that stand in separate chambers and courtyards linked by low arches and waterfalls.

4 Partition Museum, Amritsar

There were books and films along with stories handed down from an older generation about the Partition, but for a long time there was no museum to record the agony of the mass migration in the aftermath of the partition of India into two countries, India and Pakistan. The first-ever museum on the Partition (p51) powerfully captures those troubled times through exhibits highlighting real-life stories, newspaper clippings, personal artefacts of affected people and much more. A must-visit to get a perspective on the trauma that 1947 brought to millions of ordinary people caught on the wrong side of the newly drawn borders.





5 Palki at the Golden Temple, Amritsar

For a truly divine experience, watch the grand procession in which the Sikh holy book, *Guru Granth Sahib*, is moved in a flower-bedecked golden palki (palanquin) every night at 10.30pm from Harmandir Sahib to the Akal Takht. Devotion and reverence resonate as devotees carry the palki on

their shoulders amid loud chants and the faithful rush forward to touch the palanquin. The holy tableau is not to be missed. A similar ceremony called Prabhat Pheri takes place in the morning when the *Guru Granth Sahib* is taken back to the temple. The experience acquires a new dimension at night when the Golden Temple (p51), ever beautiful, becomes even more magical in the moonlight.



6 Guru ka Langar

While in Punjab, take part in a langar at a gurudwara to get a first-hand insight into the great values of sharing, equality and service that this centuries-old Sikh tradition stands for. At the langar or community kitchen, all barriers of faith and economic or social status disappear when diners sit on the floor as equals to share a simple, free meal. It is said that the Mughal emperor Akbar also partook of the langar when he came to meet the third Sikh guru. You could also lend a hand to experience the dedication and devotion of volunteers who do most of the work in the kitchens and the service at the langars. The langar at the Golden Temple in Amritsar (p50) runs round-the-clock and serves between 50,000 to one lakh people daily.

7 Attari Border Ceremony

During a visit to Amritsar (p46), it is virtually a tourist ritual to set aside an afternoon for the ceremonial lowering of flags and the closing of gates every evening at the Attari Border (p60) by the Indian and Pakistani border guards. Cheering crowds who pack the stands on both sides and the almost choreographed high kicks and strident posturing of the soldiers have turned this half-hour ceremony into a spectacle infused with a heady dose of patriotism, singing, cheering, dancing and flag-waving. The crowds are never thin, so make sure you reach well in time.



8 Capitol Complex, Chandigarh

The heart of India's first planned city embodies the architectural vision of Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier, the man behind the most feted urban experiment of independent India. The bold geometric lines of the imposing High Court, the Secretariat and the Legislative Assembly, shared by the states of Punjab and Haryana, are classic pieces of modernist architecture.



Make sure you take a walking tour and admire the Open Hand monument (p166) which is now an iconic symbol of the city. This urban space has the status of a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

9 Heritage Street, Amritsar

In its new avatar, the road (p53) from where you walk down to the famed Golden Temple now makes for a perfect introduction to this historic city. The once-crowded stretch in which rickshaws, hawkers and people jostled for space has been widened and made pedestrian-friendly, with uniform



building facades and bright illumination in the evening. It now counts as a tourist highlight in its own right. The city's proud heritage stands tall in the shape of massive statues, including one of the icon of Punjab, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, while the gurubani being telecast live harmoniously merges the past with the present.

10 Shopping in Patiala

This city was once a trendsetter in couture under the maharajas of Patiala, famed for their pomp and style, and some of that tradition lives on. Colourful and vibrant, the town's craft is best sourced by scouring the lanes and bylanes of its fascinating local markets: there is a mind-boggling array of footwear or juttis that you can match with every outfit, hair extensions called parandis (p161), a version of the traditional salwar known as the patiala salwar, or even silken drawstrings that this town specialises in. In fact, Patiala is a favoured stop for trousseau shoppers in the state. Adalat Bazaar (p160) is a great place to shop for these items.





11 Baisakhi Festival, Bathinda

Punjab brings in its New Year called Baisakhi (mid-April) with much fanfare as towns, cities and villages reverberate to the sounds and sights of colourful celebrations, music, dance and feasting. One of the state's most significant festivals, it has a dual significance: it is both a thanksgiving for a bountiful harvest and a commemoration of the establishment of the Khalsa in the 17th century. This is the time to witness Punjab's most joyous face, with people decked out in their festive finery enthusiastically performing traditional dances such as the bhangra and gidda to the vibrant beat of dhols. Sikh devotees across Punjab head to beautifully lit gurudwaras to celebrate the Punjabi New Year. One of the places which erupts with festive fanfare on Baisakhi is the Takht Sri Damdama Sahib 20km from Bathinda.

12 Food Trail in Amritsar

In this city which indisputably wears the title of Punjab's food capital, make ample room for a culinary overdose. Stick to the small places and dhabas that dish out the famed Amritsari cuisine (p32, p74) with zealously guarded recipes handed down over generations. The breads here such as the Amritsari kulcha are as famous as dishes like butter chicken, the succulent tandoori chicken and fried fish. Even the humble dal takes on a whole new avatar here. Nigh impossible to cover all from an inexhaustible list in one visit, experience a few at least: Giani's tea; Brijwasi's chaat; Ahuja's lassi; Gurdasram's jalebi, Monu Kulcha's Amritsari kulcha, Billa's chicken, Kulfa, Kanha's puri chhole, and Lubhaya Ram's aam papad (p72).



Punjab's Top Itineraries

These itineraries cover the quintessential Punjab, letting you delve into the state's top experiences, from iconic gurudwaras, forts and farm stays to museums and shopping.

Best of Punjab (7 Days)

- **Amritsar (2 DAYS)** Head straight to the Golden Temple (p48). Next, visit Jallianwala Bagh (p53) followed by the Partition Museum (p51). After lunch, head to the Maharaja Ranjit Singh Panorama and Museum (p57) and catch the Sound and Light show at Gobindgarh Fort (p54). The next day, visit the Durgiana and Ram Tirath temples (p56, p58), the Punjab State War Heroes' Memorial and Museum (p59), followed by the historic Pul Kanjari (p61) and Sarai Amanat Khan (p62). After lunch at Sarhad, witness the pageantry of the Attari Border ceremony (p60) and then, head to Sadda Pind for the cultural shows.
- **Jalandhar & Kapurthala (1 DAY)** Land up at the Jang-e-Azadi memorial in Kartarpur (p104) when it opens at 10am. Visit Devi Talab Mandir (p102) and head to Kapurthala to admire the architecture of Jagatjit Palace and the Moorish Mosque. Do take the kids to the Pushpa Gujral Science City (p103).
- **Patiala (1 DAY)** Begin with the iconic Qila Mubarak (p144) followed by the Old Moti Bagh Palace (NIS), the former royal residence. Visit Adalat Bazaar (p160) to pick up the city's specialities such as juttis, parandis and Patiala salwars. The Patiala Heritage Walk (p151) covers the city's main sights.
- **Chandigarh (1 DAY)** Explore the one-of-its kind Rock Garden (p164), then take a short drive to Chattbir Zoo (p170) for the lion safari and the walk-in aviary. In the afternoon, visit the Capitol Complex and in the evening, go boating at Sukhna Lake (p165) or stroll around in the Rose Garden in Sector 17 (p168).

- **Anandpur Sahib (1 DAY)** Visit this holy town to see gurudwaras that mark significant events in the evolution of the Sikh faith. Keep a couple of hours for the incredible Virasat-e-Khalsa Museum (p88). Spend an afternoon at the picturesque Nangal Dam (p92).

- **Farm Stay (1 DAY)** Visit Citrus County in Hoshiarpur (p99) and enjoy the countryside charms.

Farm Tourism Itinerary (4 days)

- **Amritsar (1 DAY)** Visit the Golden Temple (p48) and Jallianwala Bagh (p53), Partition Museum (p51) and Durgiana Temple (p56). Head to the Attari Border (p60) after lunch and end the day with a stop at Sadda Pind.
- **Gurdaspur (3 DAYS)** Spend the first day at The Kothi in Nawanpind Sardaran (p83) and dive into traditional farm activities like tonga rides, kite-flying and visiting a local's home. The next day, head to Punjabiyat (p83) in Gurdaspur. Spend two days here to immerse yourself in rural life. Try milking a cow, go on tractor rides, see how jaggery is made or just enjoy the food and stay at the mud houses here.

Experience Sikh religious culture and history at Anandpur Sahib



Getting Around

Travelling within Punjab is easy and quite affordable with a good network of highways, train connections and airports. The distances are not too great and you can usually reach one part of the state from another in five to six hours.

Trains

The Northern Railways (www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in) is the largest in terms of route connections, and links core destinations in Punjab with the rest of India. Trains from Delhi go to most cities and towns in Punjab. Amritsar Shatabdi and Kalka Shatabdi are the two fastest trains connecting Delhi to Amritsar and Chandigarh respectively. For more information on trains from each town and city, see 'Getting There & Away' at the beginning of each chapter.

Buses

The state-run Punjab Roadways (PUNBUS) provides good connectivity by AC Volvos, Mercedes Benz and ordinary buses across Punjab and neighbouring states. Bookings

Punjab is well-connected to the rest of the country by rail

i Quick Facts

- **Train:** Book trains on www.irctc.co.in at least one month in advance.
- **Bus:** The state-run bus services are operated by Punjab State Bus Stand Management Company, and tickets can be booked online at www.punbus.in. Private operators like www.redbus.in and www.makemytrip.com can be used to book comfortable AC Volvos with push-back seats.
- **Airport:** Chandigarh and Amritsar are the two main airports in the state. There are airports at Adampur, Bathinda, Pathankot and Ludhiana offering more options for quicker travel.

can be done on www.punbusonline.com. Reliable private operators have regular services too. All the big cities have an Inter State Bus Terminal (ISBT) from where one can take buses to various destinations.

Taxis

Taxi rates range from ₹1400–2000 for eight hours (depending on the kind of car) within the city for a distance of 80km. Outstation cabs usually cost anywhere between ₹9 to ₹12 per kilometre. Both Ola (www.olacabs.com) and Uber (<https://www.uber.com/en-IN/>) cabs operate in Amritsar, Chandigarh and Ludhiana. Ola also operates in Patiala and Jalandhar.

Autorickshaws

Autorickshaws or three-wheelers are mostly non-metered; negotiation skills may come in handy to settle fares. They usually charge anywhere between ₹30 to ₹50 for the minimum distance.

Hop-on Hop-off bus

Amritsar (p46) and Chandigarh (p162) have Hop-on Hop-off buses that take you to the main tourist areas of the city. This is a good way of getting around the city and to save on travel cost. One half-day ticket for this bus in Chandigarh costs ₹50 and in Amritsar it is ₹250. These buses are available at popular tourist spots.



Eating in Punjab

Already known as the country's bread basket owing to its vast stretches of farmland, Punjab also occupies a place of pride on the nation's culinary map. Throughout the state, you will find fresh and hearty food served with dollops of butter and ghee with unmatched generosity.

Punjabi food is a mix of Mughlai, Afghani and Persian cuisine. Throughout history, many conquerors traversed through the region, leaving behind culinary imprints which were absorbed into the state's food culture. Street food takes on a new meaning in Punjab, and some of its dhabas are legendary. Here are some dishes you must sample.

- **Amritsari fish:** River fish is coated in a batter, deep-fried, sprinkled with chaat masala and served with a dash of lime.
- **Amritsari kulcha:** The crisp kulcha, baked in a tandoor, is similar to a parantha. Made by binding many layers of dough and ghee, it has a thin filling of potato and onion and is generously slathered with butter and served with chhole.

Sarson ka saag is a winter staple in Punjab

- **Chhole bhature:** Punjab's twist on puri-sabzi is the dangerously addictive chhole bhature. A bhatura is a larger and thicker version of a puri. The bhatura dough, enriched with baking soda, yoghurt and ghee, billows when fried in oil. It goes perfectly with chhole (chickpeas), a side of onions and some pickle.

- **Sarson ka saag and makki ki roti:** This is a staple in the winter season. Mustard leaves are cooked with spices and jaggery, and served with makki ki roti, made of maize flour and topped with white butter. Farm stays across Punjab make this dish brilliantly.

- **Parantha:** This breakfast staple is like a roti, but stuffed with a filling (varying from potato to cauliflower to paneer) and then slathered with butter and ghee. It is usually relished with a generous helping of white butter or curd.

- **Lassi:** Punjab is famous for its dairy, and lassi is the quintessential drink that goes with every meal. It is churned and topped with a layer of dense cream and served cold.

- **Tandoori chicken:** This delicious chicken is marinated in spices and then cooked in the clay oven to perfection – making it so juicy and tender that it practically falls off the bone when you take a bite. It is sprinkled with lime juice and masala just before serving.

- **Sweets:** The land of sweets serves a great variety – gulab jamun, jalebi, phirni, kheer and gajar ka halwa; not to mention the famous dhodha sweet.

- **Patiala peg:** Patiala, where the regular 30ml and 60ml pegs don't work, is famous for its generous portions of a whisky peg, which has an interesting story behind it (p161).

i Quick Facts

In this guide, restaurant listings are organised by price category:

PRICE RANGE

Ranges used in this book are based on prices of mains for two people.

key to rates

₹₹₹	over ₹700
₹₹	₹300–700
₹	Under ₹300



Shopping in Punjab

The handicrafts of Punjab reflect the vibrancy of the state. Gorgeous local embroideries, beautiful accessories and textiles can be picked up both from old bazaars and bigger shops in cities like Amritsar, Chandigarh, Ludhiana and Patiala. The wood inlay work of Hoshiarpur is a fine craft.



Shop for Punjab's colourful textiles like phulkari

- **Phulkari:** The tradition of phulkari evolved when women began embroidering the base fabric in geometric and floral patterns to make them more attractive. Phulkari is usually done in bright colours such as yellow, blue, pink and gold. The finest type of phulkari is the bagh where the embroidery is so heavy that the base cloth is no longer visible. While phulkari dupattas are the most common, you can also buy salwar suits with this work. Handcrafted phulkari products are expensive, but machine-made imitations are also stocked in shops for the budget-conscious. Though available across the state,

the best phulkari creations are found in Patiala.

- **Juttis:** Punjab is famous for its dainty handcrafted footwear embellished with intricate embroidery, delicate beadwork and metallic threadwork. The traditional soft leather juttis

have been replaced by more contemporary styles with rubber soles. They can be bought almost anywhere in the state, but the shops at Patiala's Juttianwali Gali and at Amritsar's Hall Bazaar are famous for these.

- **Parandis & Patiala salwars:** Hair accessories, locally known as parandis, are made with long strands of thread with elaborate tassels at the end, and were traditionally used by women to braid their hair. These days Punjabi women use them on festive occasions. The Patiala salwar is a dressier variant of the Punjabi salwar and is worn under a short kameez. Pick these up at Patiala's Adalat Bazaar and AC Market and Amritsar's Katra Jaimal Singh and Hall Bazaar.

- **Wood inlay work:** Hoshiarpur, in the north of the state, is famed for its wood inlay craft and you can pick up a number of products such as wooden trays, screens, chests, boxes, chess boards and jewellery boxes with intricate patterns made of materials such as acrylic and shell. Pidhis or low wooden stools with intricate designs are another speciality.

- **Food items:** Tourists love to buy papad (thin lentil wafers) and wari (prepared with urad dal, this is used in a curry popular in Punjabi homes). Choose from the mild or the more fiery ones. Also popular is aam papad, tangy strips made with mango pulp and sugar. Shops in most cities carry these items but Amritsar is the most famous place for them.

Buy wood inlay crafts in bazaars

₹ Value for Money: Shopping in bazaars

Fascinating bazaars in the old city precincts feature rows of shops that sell specific goods in trade-specific katras and mandis. These are the places to strike good bargains. Pick up some specialties of Punjab including woven durries used as flat rugs or bedsheets and khes, a light cotton woven blanket.

Some bazaars worth visiting include Hall Bazaar, Guru Bazaar, Bazaar Papran and Katra Jaimal Singh in Amritsar; Adalat Bazaar, AC Market and Leela Bhawan in Patiala; Sector 17 market in Chandigarh; Rainak Bazaar and Sadar Bazaar in Jalandhar; and Chaura Bazaar in Ludhiana.



Travelling with Kids

Besides the usual dose of sightseeing and history, make sure your Punjab itinerary has a fun quotient for the young ones.

Zoos

The Chattbir Zoo, some 15km from Chandigarh (p170) offers a deer safari and lion safari. It also has a new aviary. At Bathinda's Bir Talab Zoo and Deer Park (p136), kids can spot deer, black bucks, sambar and more.

Boating

Enjoy a spell of boating at Sukhna Lake (p165) in Chandigarh. Sunset is the best time to visit. There is also a park with a few rides here. At Bathinda Lake View Park (p134), children can experience a shikara ride. Older children can try parasailing.

Citrus County's farm stays offer hands-on experiences for children



Folk Performances

Sadda Pind (p58) in Amritsar will introduce kids to village life and treat them to live performances of gatka (martial arts) and dances like gidda and bhangra. Many farm stays stage performances, and Rangla Punjab Haveli in Jalandhar is well known for them.

Farm Stays

Learning how to milk a cow, plucking fruits from orchards, and observing farming at close quarters are just some of the activities children can enjoy during a farm stay.

Theme Parks & Gardens

In Chandigarh, the Rock Garden (p164) keeps kids of all ages bewitched with



its 'junk' creations. The Wonderland theme park (p102) in Jalandhar offers fun rides and a water park. Pushpa Gujral Science City (p103) on the Jalandhar-Kapurthala highway is an interesting educational science centre.

Take the kids to the zoo to spot a variety of animals

Museums

Chandigarh's Natural History Museum (p169) is a great place to learn about fossils and dinosaurs. The International Dolls Museum in Chandigarh (p169) as well as the interactive Virasat-e-Khalsa in Anandpur Sahib and Jang-e-Azadi museum near Jalandhar are informative. Amritsar's Partition Museum (p51) brings alive the kids' school history texts.

Sound & Light Shows

The Sound and Light show, Whispering Walls, at Gobindgarh Fort in Amritsar (p54) uses laser lights and computer animation. A 7D theatre here screens a film about Maharaja Ranjit Singh's life. The laser show at the Jang-e-Azadi museum is also dramatic.

Border Ceremony

Children will enjoy watching the pomp and show at the border ceremonies at Attari (p60) and Hussainiwala (p128).

Farm Stays in Punjab

Swaying green and golden fields stretching as far as the eye can see – these have not just established Punjab as the country's granary, they have also transformed its undulating plains into a scenic, picturesque countryside. The best way to experience the heart of rural Punjab is to veer off the main cities to experience a slice of rustic life on a farm.

Farm stays have sprung up all across Punjab (p38, 83, 98, 154). Ranging from luxurious old-world bungalows and private cottages to more modestly priced ones, they all offer modern amenities that make for a comfortable stay. In most cases, the farm owners themselves are the hosts and are happy to engage with the visitors, share anecdotes, and provide a first-hand insight into life in the countryside.

The winter months from November to March are the best time to go on a farm stay. As the state offers a good network of roads, they are easily accessible.

Life on the Farm

In the midst of sprawling fields, a range of activities takes you through the typical life of a farmer: wake up to birds singing, ride or even drive a tractor, take a walk or cycle through the fields, sit under the shade of a tree, pluck fruits, milk cows and buffaloes or get your hands dirty in the field. Some farms are situated close to canals that cut through the countryside where you can go fishing and angling.

You can explore nearby villages and might be invited to homes for a cup of tea with the locals. There's no better way to understand why Punjab's farmers have earned a reputation for being enterprising and hard-working.

Farm Fresh Food

The food served at farm stays is home-cooked and prepared fresh, very often with ingredients just sourced from the fields.



Meals will usually consist of quintessential Punjabi dishes such as aloo paranthas, sarson ka saag (mustard greens) and makki ki roti (a flatbread made from maize flour) during the winter season, fresh milk and white butter and generous glasses of creamy lassi. Some farm stays host evening barbecues and bonfires in the middle of the fields to the tune of Punjabi folk songs or put on cultural programmes with displays of the traditional Punjabi dances, bhangra and gidda.

Punjab's bountiful crops include wheat, mustard, cotton and rice, but many farms also grow fruits such as kinnows and plums. Some farmhouses are nestled in the midst of luxuriant groves of fruit.

Slow Travel

While many people choose a farm stay for a weekend, a longer halt helps to actually get into the rhythm of the slow and tranquil pace of life in the countryside. Farm stays are highly recommended for those travelling with family, giving children an insight into a life that is close to nature.

The experience of staying on a farm in Punjab is greatly enhanced by the warmth and hospitality of a large-hearted people who have always opened their doors to guests.

Hop on a tractor for a feel of farm life

Festivals of Punjab

Punjab erupts into joyous celebrations at festivals linked with the seasons, religious occasions and the bounty of harvests in a state known for its abundant produce. The festivals that showcase the brawny prowess and martial traditions of the state's people are even more interesting.



A colourful festive procession

- **Lohri** Marking the passing of the cold season, this festival is usually held on 13 January when the fields are resplendent with the blooming winter crop. This is the time when farmers rest between the sowing and harvesting of crops. This quintessentially Punjabi festival sees people gather around sacred bonfires at night, sing and dance to the sound of dhols, and throw popcorn, peanuts, rewri and gajak into the crackling flames (p153). It is especially significant in homes where a wedding has taken place or a child has been born.
- **Baisakhi** Celebrated in mid-April, Baisakhi (p136, p153) marks the Sikh New Year as well as a celebration of a

bountiful harvest. Gurudwaras throughout Punjab are beautifully lit, and it is customary to take a dip in the holy rivers or sarovars amid cries of "Jatta aai Baisakhi." In villages, Baisakhi is celebrated in the fields with energetic bhangra and gidda dances performed by men and women dressed in their best attire. Numerous melas or fairs are also held.

- **Hola Mohalla Festival** The Hola Mohalla festival essentially showcases the Sikh religious-martial tradition. The epicentre of celebrations is the holy town of Anandpur Sahib (p90), where demonstrations of skills with weapons such as swords, as well as horse riding and many other events take place. The festivities are held throughout the state too. The three-day celebrations begin after Holi.

- **Kila Raipur Sports Festival** Showcasing the physical prowess of people from the villages of Punjab, this sporting festival has won the title of the Rural Olympics (p107). Held in Kila Raipur, close to Ludhiana, thousands turn up to watch participants compete in sports like kabaddi, tug-of-war and horse racing. The demonstrations of sheer strength include villagers performing feats such as lifting cars and tractors or showing off some original skills such as picking up bricks with their teeth. It is usually held in early February.

- **Aagman Purab of Baba Sheikh Farid** This festival held in Faridkot (p126) is a celebration of the Sufi saint, Baba Sheikh Farid after whom the town is named. It attracts many devotees and includes cultural and sporting programmes, a qawwali competition and other events. It is held in September.

Witness daredevil feats at the sports festival in Kila Raipur



What's New

Travel-friendly Punjab is constantly adding attractions cutting across interests and age-groups that enhance a tourist's experience of the state.

Partition Museum & Punjab State War Heroes' Memorial & Museum, Amritsar

The Partition Museum (p51) showcases the stories of 1947. It has 14 galleries and was fully opened to the public in 2017. The War Heroes' Museum pays tribute to Punjab's brave martyrs.

Hop-on Hop-off Bus, Amritsar

This bus service (p52) launched in 2017 is a great way to see the important tourist attractions including the Attari Border.

Gobindgarh Fort, Amritsar

This 18th-century fort was opened to the public in 2017. Don't miss the sound and light show here (p54).

Golden Temple Interpretation Galleries, Amritsar

These four galleries showcase four short films on the Golden Temple and Sikhism using techniques such as '270-degree' projection technology, 3D and laser shows.

Adampur Airport, Jalandhar

This airport (p101), located 28km from Jalandhar, opened on 1 May, 2018 and has one daily flight (Spicejet) to New Delhi.

Aviary at Chattbir Zoo, Chandigarh

A 300-metre long walk-in aviary was opened at the zoo (p170) in May 2018.

Gobindgarh Fort is now a unique museum



Get Inspired



Jagjeet Sandhu stars in Qissa Panjab

Books

A History of the Sikhs (Oxford India) Khushwant Singh's book is an authoritative treatise on the subject.

Pinjar: The Skeleton & Other Stories (Tara Press) Amrita Pritam's tale of families torn apart, the abuse of women and the test of their loyalties during the time of Partition remains a classic.

Lest We Forget (Variety Book Depot) Chief Minister Amarinder Singh's book on war and Sikh history is one among his many scholarly works on Punjab.

Films

Zero Dark Thirty (2012) The local women of Manimajra, near Chandigarh, distributed chai and samosa after *Zero Dark Thirty* picked up an Oscar in 2013, as this small town was painstakingly recreated to resemble Pakistan's Abbottabad bazaar in the movie.

Bride and Prejudice (2004) Gurinder Chadha's desi ode to Jane Austen showcased a merry Amritsari family and the big fat Punjabi wedding.

Bhaji on the Beach (1993) The film follows a group of Punjabi women, across generations, in Birmingham who go on a picnic to the nearby Blackpool beach.

Websites

Punjab Tourism Website: Check <http://punjabtourism.gov.in/> for the latest travel information on the state.

Punjab Tourism Mobile App: Download the Punjab Tourism app (<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.punjabtourism&hl=en>)

The Punjabi Filmi Connection

SHAHEED-E-MOHABBAT BOOTA SINGH (1999) The tragic love story of Boota Singh and Zainab during Partition is set in Manakpur Sharif near Mohali and Mullanpur Garibdass.

JEE AAYAN NU (2002) In this film, the Punjabi puttar introduces 'apna Punjab' to the NRI leading lady.

PUNJAB 1984 (2014) This film explores the troubled times of terrorism and insurgency in the state. Shooting locations include the Wagah border area, near Tarn Taran.

QISSA PANJAB (2015) Jatinder Mauhar's gritty film cuts through the back alleys of Punjab and runs along the banks of the River Sutlej dotted with poplar trees.

ARDAAS (2016) Gippy Grewal acquaints us with the picturesque village of Jayanti Majri some 25km from Chandigarh.



Punjab's Best Trips

This section explores the different regions of Punjab, and provides you with planned trips.

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■ Soak in the ambience of Heritage Street in Amritsar

Amritsar

Why Go?

Amritsar is a juxtaposition of two different worlds: the sacred and the commercial. The serenity of Harmandir Sahib, the holiest of Sikh shrines in the city provides a stark contrast to the hustle and bustle of a vibrant mercantile hub. Deriving its name from the Amrit Sarovar, the holy tank that surrounds the famed Golden Temple, Amritsar is the spiritual heart of Punjab and is inextricably linked with the Sikh faith. The quintessential spirit of Punjab lives on in the city's labyrinth of buzzing bazaars with narrow alleys and numerous dhabas whose traditional offerings such as the Amritsari kulcha, chhole and lassi have put them on the nation's culinary map.

Getting There & Away

Air: Amritsar's Sri Guru Ram Dass Jee International Airport has connections to major Indian cities such as Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Chennai, Chandigarh and Srinagar. It has international flights to London, Birmingham, Dubai, Kuala Lumpur and Tashkent among others.

Train: Amritsar Railway station has trains to several cities across the country including the metros. Amritsar Shatabdi to Delhi, Amritsar Howrah Mail to Varanasi and Kolkata and Golden Temple Mail to Mumbai are among the ones connecting the metros.

Road: The state-run Punjab Roadways (PUNBUS) has daily connections across Punjab and its neighbouring states including New Delhi. The roadways provide great connectivity with AC Volvos, Mercedes Benz and regular buses. Bookings can be done on www.punbusonline.com. By car it takes about five hours to reach Chandigarh via NH3 and about eight hours to reach New Delhi.



■ The resplendent Golden Temple stands in the midst of the Amrit Sarovar

Amritsar

Amritsar's history encompasses the conflict of the Sikh kingdom with the Mughals and later the East India Company; the lives of the ten Sikh gurus; and the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh, one of the most defining moments in India's freedom struggle.

While the iconic Golden Temple is its biggest draw, Amritsar has many new experiences on offer. A revamped Heritage Street has transformed the hub of this 450-year-old city, while a historic fort, now open to the public, tells the story of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the hero of Punjab. In a city engulfed by the tumult that accompanied the division of India and Pakistan, the Partition Museum gives an insight into that chapter in history, while a Punjab State War Heroes' Memorial and Museum pays tribute to the state's proud martial tradition. One can easily spend three to four days here, so don't go with just one weekend in hand.

Highlights

- 1 Golden Temple
- 2 Guru ka Langar
- 3 Partition Museum
- 4 Heritage Street
- 5 Jallianwala Bagh
- 6 Gobindgarh Fort
- 7 Durgiana Temple
- 8 Ram Bagh
- 9 Khalsa College
- 10 Maharaja Ranjit Singh Panorama & Museum
- 11 Ram Tirath Temple
- 12 Satta Pind
- 13 Punjab State War Heroes' Memorial & Museum
- 14 Attari Border
- 15 Pul Kanjari (Pul Moran)
- 16 Sarai Amanat Khan
- 17 Sham Singh Attariwala Memorial

1 GOLDEN TEMPLE

Glowing in the midst of a holy tank, the resplendent Golden Temple is a breathtaking sight no matter how many times you visit it and is the key focus of the holiest of Sikh shrines, Harmandir Sahib. A blend of Hindu and Islamic architectural styles, a shimmering dome, gilded with hundreds of kilograms of gold, stands atop two levels – a marble level engraved with pietra dura motifs in the style seen in the Taj Mahal and a second level encased in intricately engraved gold panels. The main access to the temple is from an imposing clock tower that provides a stunning view of its golden reflection in the waters of the Amrit Sarovar. The approach to the Golden Temple has been refurbished and the front courtyard has marble flooring.

This holy tank, from where

₹ Value for Money: Getting around

From the train station to the Golden Temple, a rickshaw/autorickshaw ride will cost around ₹50/100 but you'll have to haggle hard for a fair price. Taxis around the station can be hailed or booked at the prepaid taxi booth (Sri Harmandir Sahib Marg) to the east of the Golden Temple, while Uber Cabs and Ola Cabs (☑ 183 3355335) have swift radio taxis plying in Amritsar round the clock. An autorickshaw to the airport costs around ₹250 and a taxi costs about ₹500.

Taxis taking you to the Golden Temple area will often drop you at Fuwara (Fountain) Chowk or the Town Hall from where you can walk the last few hundred metres to the temple.

Amritsar takes its name, is believed to have healing powers and draws pilgrims from across the world to take a dip in its sacred waters. It was excavated by Guru Ram Das, the sixth Guru, in 1577 and is encompassed by white marble causeways.

Before entering the temple, visitors must take off their shoes, cover their heads and wash their feet. Given the never-ending stream of devotees, you have to wait in a long line to enter the inner sanctum where granthis keep up a soothing chant from the Sikh holy book, the *Guru Granth Sahib*. This is ceremoniously installed in the temple every morning and returned at night to the Akal Takht (Timeless Throne), the temporal seat of the Khalsa brotherhood. Despite the

Devotees
through the
Golden
Temple all
year round



crowds, a visit to the Golden Temple always infuses a sense of serenity. More shrines and memorials dot the edge of the compound, while the clock tower also houses the Sikh Museum.

At one end of the tank stands the Ramgarhia Bunga, a protective fortress with adjoining watchtowers. Inside are beautiful pillars and a stone slab once used for Mughal coronations.

A multimedia interpretation centre with four galleries is located at the basement level. Four short videos using laser images and 3D techniques to create special effects are screened here, highlighting the different aspects of Sikhism and the Golden Temple. They are in Punjabi, but English and Hindi audio guides are available free of cost. A divine experience is the evening palki procession.

📞183 2553953-7; www.goldentempleamritsar.org; 24 hours

The Guru ka Langar is among the world's largest community kitchens

2 GURU KA LANGAR

The Guru ka Langar at the Golden Temple, where 75,000 to 100,000 pilgrims eat every day, is counted among the largest community kitchens in the world. The meal usually consists of dal, a vegetable dish, roti, rice and kheer. No one is ever turned away, and the kitchen caters equally to everyone from



📷 Snapshot: The roti-making machines

If you are joining the Guru ka Langar at Harmandir Sahib, where 75,000 people have a meal on an average day, take a minute to glance at the roti-making machines that help streamline this stupendous task. One machine churns out an astounding 6000 rotis an hour and on heavy days when the numbers swell, they usually run all five – producing 30,000 rotis in an hour. The machine kneads the dough and this is transferred into another which churns out round balls of dough. These are flattened and roasted before being dropped into a basket. A volunteer hands over the basket to a group that slathers the rotis with ghee and serves them. To spot the machine, look to the left side after you enter where you are handed the plate and spoon for your meal.

the rich to the poor to people from all faiths, demonstrating the Sikh principles of hospitality, community service and charity. While some of the staff or sevadars are permanent, most of the work is done by volunteers. There's no charge to eat here, but a helping hand is always welcome.

Golden Temple Complex

3 PARTITION MUSEUM

Housed in the red brick Town Hall building, this is the first museum to record the trauma that resulted after the exodus of millions of people across the newly carved borders of India and Pakistan in 1947. Its 14 galleries, starting from the pre-Partition period, take the visitor through various phases of Partition. Of these exhibits, the most dramatic representation is a giant saw cutting through a wall. In the Gallery of Migration, black and white footage of a train carrying refugees plays continuously, while a broken down




The Partition Museum is housed in the majestic Town Hall building


house symbolises the violence during the rioting.

Photographs, newspaper clippings, donated personal belongings and letters of those caught in the violence tell poignant stories of those troubled times. The display includes a briefcase and a phulkari jacket that belonged to a man and a woman who were betrothed but separated during the mayhem of Partition and later reunited at a refugee camp. Take out some time to listen to interviews of survivors being played on screens. The journey ends with the Gallery of Hope where visitors can leave messages on paper shaped like green leaves strung from a barbed wire tree. An initiative by The Arts and Cultural Heritage Trust, the museum provides a glimpse into a violent chapter in the subcontinent's history.

Value for Money: Hop-on Hop-off bus

The Hop-on Hop-off bus service is a convenient and cost-effective way to see the city. The double decker bus has an air-conditioned lower deck and an open air upper deck; in warmer months, make sure you reach in time to get a seat on the lower deck. The tour touches all the major attractions such as the Golden Temple, Jallianwala Bagh, Town Hall, Partition Museum, Durgiana Temple and Gobindgarh Fort. The last spot before returning to the city is the Attari Border.

The ride begins at 10.30am and the cost of a full city ride is ₹350. There is also a special Attari-Wagah border ride that begins at 2.30pm from the Golden Temple pick-up point and is priced at ₹250. You can book a seat on www.amritsardekho.com;  7029690001

 8130001947; www.partitionmuseum.org; Town Hall, a five-minute walk from the Golden Temple; Indian/foreigner ₹10/250; 10am–6pm; Mon closed

4 HERITAGE STREET

The makeover of the stretch from the Town Hall to the Sri Harmandir Sahib has dramatically transformed the street that every visitor to Amritsar will invariably tread upon. Neatly tiled pathways have replaced the road, while tall statues of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and BR Ambedkar, and a marble sculpture depicting the martyrs at Jallianwala Bagh showcase the heritage and history of Punjab. Building facades around the attractive boulevard have been given a facelift and the once-crammed shops now present a neat and uniform look. A huge LED screen plays a live telecast of the Gurubani Kirtan taking place in the Golden Temple. Stroll down the road at night if you can, and witness the brilliant glow of the bright lights that illuminate the approach to the Harmandir Sahib.

5 JALLIANWALA BAGH

Located at a stone's throw from the Golden Temple, this walled garden accessed through a narrow passage bears testimony to one of the most horrific chapters of colonial rule. It was here that on 13 April, 1919, a British squad opened fire on a peaceful and unarmed gathering of men, women and children protesting the Rowlatt Act which gave

Stroll down Heritage Street to come close to history and culture





The memorial at Jallianwala Bagh honours the memory of the martyrs

arbitrary powers to imprison people. Bullet-marked walls and a well inside the garden into which men, women and children jumped in a desperate attempt to avoid the gunfire serve as reminders of the tragic episode. At the end of the garden, a red-hued Martyrs' Memorial in the shape of a flame commemorates the innocent people who lost their lives. Just before the entrance, there's a new marble sculpture dedicated to the martyrs.

Heritage Str, near the Golden Temple; 6.30am–7pm Apr–Sep, 7am–6pm Oct–Mar

6 GOBINDGARH FORT

Originally erected in the 1760s by a local chief, Gujar Singh Bhangi, this historic fort was rebuilt in the early 19th century by Maharaja Ranjit Singh to serve as a major defence against invading armies. The fort, held under the control of the army for a long time, was opened to the public in 2017 after a massive restoration, and provides a window into a crucial chapter of Punjab's history. The sword used by the Maharaja and the largest canon of its time called 'Zamzama' are the landmark exhibits here.

A Sound and Light show – Whispering Walls – in the evening uses laser lights, computer animation and projection

mapping to recreate the history of the fort. Don't miss *Sher-e-Punjab* (Lion of Punjab), a 7D film about the life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The 15-minute film is in Punjabi with English subtitles and has been directed by filmmaker Ketan Mehta.

You can catch performances of Punjabi folk dances such as the bhangra. Camel and horse rides add to the fun element.

📞183 5217666; www.fortgobindgarh.com; Old Cantt Rd, Vijay Chowk, inside Lohgarh Chowk; 9am–9pm; Whispering Walls Sound and Light show timings: 7.45pm (Punjabi), 8.45pm (English) for 30 minutes each; ticket price combinations available include Express Super Pass: Indian/foreigner ₹590/₹800 valid after 5pm incl entry, two shows, rides and food; Express Mini Pass: ₹450 valid till 5pm incl entry, show and food; Maharaja Combo: Indian/foreigner ₹290/₹500 incl entry and two shows; Sawari Combo: Indian/foreigner ₹120/₹200 valid till 5pm incl entry, horse, camel or tandem ride, Segway or virtual world or 2 traditional rides; Combo 1: Indian/foreigner ₹160/₹200 valid till 5pm incl entry and Sher-e-Punjab show; Combo 2: Indian/foreigner ₹160/₹200 valid after 5pm incl entry and Whispering Walls show; Sher-e-Punjab show: Indian/foreigner ₹150/₹200, tickets available only at the Sher-e-Punjab counter

The Gobindgarh Fort has a sound and light show



7 DURGIANA TEMPLE

Rising from the midst of a tank, this Hindu temple has a gold-covered dome and a white marble pathway surrounding the sarovar. Dedicated to the goddess Durga, it originally dates back to the 16th century but was rebuilt in the early 20th century. The exquisite silver doors of the sanctum are embossed with incarnations of Hindu deities. It is also known as Lakshmi Narayan Temple because a section is devoted to the Hindu deities, Lakshmi and Narayan. The best time to visit is early morning or late evening when the aarti or singing of devotional songs creates a soothing atmosphere. The place where the temple stands is associated with the epic *Ramayana*, and it is believed that Sita performed puja at this very spot.

📍183 2550800; Hathi Gate, Goal Bagh; 5.15am–9.30pm

8 RAM BAGH

The former palace grounds of Maharaja Ranjit Singh are now a public park with rolling lawns that draw many of the city's residents. Fountains and seasonal flowers add to

Detour: Harike Wetlands

Sprawling over 4000 hectares, Harike Wetlands, also called Hari-ke-Pattan, are shallow marshlands between the Beas and Sutlej rivers. The wetlands are northern India's largest manmade wetlands created as a result of a barrage across the Sutlej.

With about 400 documented bird species, the wetlands are a bird watcher's paradise and a big draw for nature lovers. Thousands of migratory birds arrive in winter to escape the harsh winter of Europe and Siberia and from the Himalayan ranges.



November to February is the best period to spot a variety of birds and animals. A major attraction here is the sighting of Gangetic dolphins. Permission to visit is granted by the forest department.

56km from Amritsar



the charm of Ram Bagh styled in the pattern of Shalimar Bagh in Lahore. In the park, which was named in honour of Guru Ram Das, stands a two-storey house that served as the summer palace of the maharaja. Although a modest building in comparison with some other princely palaces, it has great historical significance. A statue of Maharaja Ranjit Singh astride a horse has been erected at one end of the garden. It is currently undergoing renovation and is not open to the public.

Mall Rd

9 KHALSA COLLEGE

Owing to its grandiose architecture, passers-by might understandably confuse this college for a palace. Sprawling over 300 acres, it was built in the Indo-Saracenic style with an imposing domed red-sandstone facade fronted by grassy fields, and is a great place for architecture buffs. It has served as a location for many Bollywood films such as *Veer Zaara* and *Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi*.

GT Rd

10 MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH PANORAMA & MUSEUM

This museum in Ram Bagh gives an in-depth insight into the life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, also known as the

The Khalsa College has striking red sandstone architecture

'Lion of Punjab'. It is better to first see the panorama and then go through the museum. The panorama exhibits include weapons that were used in wars, replicas of the maharaja's gold throne that is now in London's Victoria & Albert Museum and the Koh-i-Noor diamond. The museum has various representations from his life and the iconic ones are on the first floor – a depiction of all the battles he fought and a 3D representation of his grand durbar in Lahore. Visitors must remove their shoes to enter the museum.

Mall Rd, Maharaja Ranjit Singh Nagar, Ram Bagh; entry ₹10; 9am–6pm

11 RAM TIRATH TEMPLE

This massive complex is home to many temples but the most important one is the Valmiki temple. Legend has it that this is where Valmiki wrote the *Ramayana* and where Sita gave birth to Luv and Kush. The complex has recently been revamped. A sarovar with fountains adds charm to the place.

Amritsar Lopoke Rd

12 SADDA PIND

Located on the road to Attari, this recreation of a Punjabi village is one of the best places to experience the rich rural life and culture of the state. 'Sadda Pind' means 'our village.' Just past the security checkpoint is a huge cot that a signboard declares as India's largest cot. Villagers traditionally use

The Ram Tirath Temple complex is surrounded by a sarovar



these cots (also known as a manji) to rest after a heavy meal in the afternoons. You can enter a farmer's house and taste makki ki roti and sarson ka saag, the winter staples of a Punjabi kitchen. You can also visit a weaver's house to see how phulkari embroidery is made and visit a wedding hall to witness a traditional Punjabi wedding. Folk dances and martial arts performances complete the ambience. Don't forget to have a meal at the restaurant here. The cost is included in the ticket price.

📞 183 5082277; www.saddapind.com; behind Guru Nanak Dev University, Main Bypass Rd; adult/child ₹650/₹500; 10am–10pm

13 PUNJAB STATE WAR HEROES' MEMORIAL & MUSEUM

On the way to Attari on NH1, there is no way you can miss a gigantic 45-metre sword jutting out into the sky with four lion heads at the base. This 54-tonne stainless steel sword symbolises the courage and valour of Punjab's proud martial tradition. The War Memorial is impressive, sombre and appropriate for a state that was frequently in the midst of conquests and wars in the Indian subcontinent. There's a cafe in the shape of a bunker and a 7D theatre screening films about these wars. Battle trophies from the 1965 and 1971 wars with Pakistan such as the Pakistani Patton and Sherman tanks (taken in 1965), the Centurion Mark 7 Indian tank, the

The 54-tonne sword is a symbol of Punjab's proud martial heritage



✓ *Top Tip: Attari Border trip*

Keep one full day in hand for things to do on the road to the Attari Border. Start with the Punjab State Heroes' War Memorial and Museum which will take you more than an hour. Follow this up with a visit to Pul Kanjari, about half an hour away. Have lunch at Sarhad and then head on to Sarai Amanat Khan (about 25 minutes away) followed by a stop at the Sham Singh Attariwala Memorial. By the time you finish, it will be time to join the crowds for the Attari-Wagah border ceremony. After this, head to Sadda Pind for authentic flavours of the dance, culture and cuisine of Punjab.

MIG-23 and a replica of the INS Vikrant are showcased here. Eight galleries (two are yet to open) chronicle wars waged in different periods, with the last gallery focusing on the Kargil war. The gallery displays artefacts on Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the battles he fought.

India Gate Bypass; entry ₹100; 9.30am–6.30pm Apr– Sep, 10am–5.30pm Oct–Mar

The border closing ceremony is a sight to behold



14 ATTARI BORDER

Every evening, the military showmanship at the Attari-Wagah border between India and Pakistan gets infused with patriotic revelry as a huge crowd gathers to watch the ceremony of shutting the border gates and lowering the flags on both sides. The border guards engage in competitive foot stomping and high-kicks and the atmosphere becomes electric as people wave flags, cheer, clap rapturously and even dance to Bollywood numbers. It is a high-voltage, theatrical experience and well worth the 30-kilometre journey from Amritsar. The venue is packed to capacity every day, so arrive early to get a ringside seat in the viewing gallery and soak in the full flavour of the ceremony. No handbags are allowed.

Follow the Grand Trunk Rd (NH1) past Khalsa College, Guru Nanak Dev University and the War Heroes' Memorial; Retreat ceremony 5.30–6pm Apr– Sep; check with your hotel for summer and winter timings

15 PUL KANJARI (PUL MORAN)

A slight detour from the Attari Border brings you to this hidden gem also known as Pul Moran. There is no actual bridge (pul) here like the name suggests, but an interesting tale explains its origin. Maharaja Ranjit Singh used to camp here and would often summon dancers for his entertainment. Once, his favourite dancer Moran lost one of her silver

📷 *Snapshot: Sarhad*

This restaurant close to the Attari Border promotes and celebrates cross-border friendship by offering cuisine from both the Pakistani and Indian sides of Punjab. Before you enter, you pass two colourful mini trucks designed by Pakistani truck artist, Haider Ali, emblazoned with the words 'India-Pakistan friendship'. On the left, a long mural on a wall says 'Borders without Barriers' on top and has five panels, each depicting a different phase – pre-Partition, Partition, the Attari-Wagah border ceremony and a futuristic vision of breaking barriers. Do get a close look at the logo: the eagle in white is made by writing the word 'peace' in 25 different languages. This is one of the few restaurants that offers Pakistani dishes. Do try the Lahori thali, the Lahori lassi and Lahori handi murg.

📞 183 2382000, 9815555931; 11.30am–10pm; www.sarhadindia.com; 1km away from the Attari Border on the NH1



sandals as she crossed a stream while on her way to perform. Upset, she refused to dance. Legend has it that the king promptly ordered a bridge to be built there and hence, this place came to be known as Pul (bridge) Kanjari (dancer).

A Shiva temple with striking frescoes and a water tank are located here. Steps on the three sides of the tank are made of Lahori bricks typically used in the Mughal era.

About 100 metres away is a memorial dedicated to the soldiers who lost their lives in the 1971 war when Pakistan attacked the border observation post. A Sikh army officer heroically decided to recapture it just before the ceasefire and did so with the help of 40 soldiers. The memorial is dedicated to the nine people who died during the operation.

Dhanoa Klan Village, near Attari Border; 10am–5pm

16 SARAI AMANAT KHAN

This monument built in 1640 was commissioned by Amanat Khan, the calligrapher for the Taj Mahal. The sarai was given as a gift to Amanat Khan by Shah Jahan, who was pleased with Khan's work on the Taj Mahal. Enter through the Delhi Gate and go on to the Lahori Gate. The standout feature is the glazed blue and yellow tile work embellished on these two doorways; although faded with time, it is still impressive. In the olden days, the sarai was an inn or a place for weary travellers to rest. It has small rooms and a mosque, now in a dilapidated condition. The drive to this place along the Attari Border is scenic.

Sarai Amanat Khan Village; 17km from the Attari Border and 30km from the Golden Temple

17 SHAM SINGH ATTARIWALA MEMORIAL

The complex has a water tank, and a small museum that pays tribute to the life of Sham Singh Attariwala, a valiant general of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who fought bravely but lost his life in the Battle of Sobraon in 1846. The Vijayanta Tank was installed here on 10 February 2018 to mark his 172nd Martyrdom Day. If you find the museum closed, approach the caretaker who has the key to the place and will show you around. The place is managed by a family trust.

Attari Village

If You Like: Walking tours

THE AMRITSAR HERITAGE WALK INCLUDES:

- **Town Hall:** Part of the Heritage Corridor, this colonial-era building now houses the Partition Museum.
- **Saragarhi Gurudwara:** This nine-storey sarai was built in memory of the 21 soldiers who lost their lives in 1897 fighting Pashtun tribesmen at Fort Lockhart in Saragarhi.
- **Qila Ahluwalia:** The bustling market, accessed through a grand door, was once a fort built by the Ahluwalia dynasty.
- **Jalebiwala Chowk:** This chowk got its name from Gurdasram Jalebiwala who set up the shop in 1956. In a unique display of solidarity against British imperialism in 1919, Muslims and Hindus joined hands at this shop to celebrate Ram Navami here.
- **Udasin Ashram Akhara Sangalwala:** Not to be confused with a wrestling ground, this akhara, founded in 1771 is a sarai (resting place) for holy men.
- **Chitta Akhara:** This akhara is over-200 years old and has an ancient tomb with architecture of bygone times worth admiring.
- **Darshani Deori:** This is the spot from where Guru Arjan and Guru Hargobind would gaze at the Golden Temple, but the view is now marred by the bustling bazaar. Note the richly painted ceiling.
- **Baba Bohar:** Halt at the unusual sight of this massive sacred banyan tree amidst a busy market. Do try the aloo puri at the stall here.
- **Thakurdwara Dariana Mal:** View the frescoes and intricate floral patterns depicting scenes from Hindu mythology here.
- **Chowrasti Atari:** The complex, set up by Guru Hargobind in the 1600s at the junction of four lanes, is where the sixth Sikh guru spent time.
- **Taksal:** This is Amritsar's first mint, where the coins of the Sikh kingdom were minted.
- **Thakurdwara Rai Kishanchand/Shani Mandir:** Devotees throng this temple.

Punjab Tourism Heritage Walk, 8am and 5pm Mar–Nov, 9am and 4pm Dec–Feb; Indian/foreigner ₹25/₹75

www.amritsarwalks.com for heritage/bazaar/food walks, ☎9417848282, 8847445033, from ₹699 onwards incl breakfast/snacks

| Sample chhole bhature and other Amritsari treats on a heritage walk



Accommodation

Taj Swarna LUXURY ₹₹₹

☎183 6658000; www.tajhotels.com; Plot No C-3, Outer Circular Rd, opp Basant Ave; d from ₹12,000 (incl breakfast) One of the luxurious options in the city, this hotel is located close to the airport. It features spacious rooms and suites, a pillow menu, round the clock in-room dining, a spa, a health club and a pool. The Grand Trunk restaurant here offers typical Amritsari food and some international favourites, while the Chinese Room serves some of the best Chinese fare in town. Don't forget to try the cocktails at Peg, the bar and lounge. Guests depart on a sweet and traditional note with a spoon of dahi and gur for good luck.

| Windsong is set amid green surrounds

Windsong B&B ₹₹₹

☎9780907878; www.windsongboutiquebnb.com; 8/9 Amaltas Lane, Palm Grove, Ajnala Rd; r ₹6000, ste ₹7300 (incl breakfast) This bed-and-breakfast in a sprawling bungalow will make you forget the lavish trappings of a hotel. The personal touches given by the Sehgal family, a garden blooming with flowers and wind chimes on the trees make Windsong a good option for those who want a touch of home comfort and good service. The three rooms and suites are named after the five rivers of Punjab and the Indus river. There is also a pool for a dip. The property offers food tours of Amritsar that take you to some of the interesting eating hotspots in the city.

Holiday Inn HOTEL ₹₹

☎183 5088888; www.ihg.com; District Shopping Complex, Ranjit



Ave; d from ₹6500 (incl breakfast)

The 145 rooms and suites are well-furnished and spacious. The 11-floor hotel has a standalone Italian restaurant called Bella Italian Trattoria, a multi-cuisine restaurant called Ziva, a pool and a gym. Don't be surprised if you see the staff members break out into a flash dance in the lobby. They are quite enthusiastic and do that as a farewell gesture whenever someone from their team leaves.

Hyatt Regency Amritsar HOTEL ₹₹

☎183 5251234; amritsar.hyatthotels.hyatt.com; adjoining Alpha One City Centre, MBM Farms, GT Rd; d from ₹5500 (without breakfast), ₹6700 (incl breakfast) This is one of the poshest hotels in the city that also offers a spa with a range of therapies. It has a shuttle service to the Golden Temple at 4am and 8pm according to the

| Visit the crafts boutique at Hyatt Regency Amritsar

prayer timings. Their multi-cuisine restaurant has Amritsari food and shops here sell local crafts.

Ramada Amritsar HOTEL ₹₹

☎183 5025555; www.ramadaamritsar.com; Hall Bazaar; d from ₹5500 (incl breakfast) This hotel is the best and only top-end option if you want to stay in the old city. The lobby is somewhat chintzy, but the rooms are smart and modern and the service is excellent. It is at a walking distance from the Golden Temple, the rooms offer views of the old city, and there is a small pool on the terrace.

Ranjit's Svaasa HOTEL ₹₹

☎183 2566618, 9872626618; www.svaasa.com; 47-A, The Mall; d from ₹6500 This 18th-century heritage





■ Mrs Bhandari's Guest House offers homespun comforts

hotel is accessed through an easily missed alleyway. Turn on the main road and you will find it located under the Ratnavali Welfare Society signboard. Replete with arches, alcoves and verandahs, Ranjit's SVAASA is a delicate balance between a gracious old haveli and a boutique spa facility. A dining area provides meals only to in-house guests.

Country Inn & Suites

by Carlson HOTEL ₹₹

📞183 5050555; www.countryinns.com; Queens Rd; d from ₹5500 Fifty comfortable rooms are suitable for both business and leisure travellers. Owing to its location on a very busy road, crossing over to the hotel can be quite a task. It is fronted by a smallish

parking space but the hotel offers valet services to nearby lots.

Golden Tulip HOTEL ₹₹

📞183 5069991-4; www.goldentulipamritsar.com; 8, Grand Trunk Rd, Model Town; d from ₹5000 This deluxe hotel, furnished in contemporary style, is located in the heart of the city, in close proximity to the railway station and most places of interest. The 52 guest rooms are of reasonable size although the parking lot can get congested. Relish Punjabi delicacies at their in-house branch of the acclaimed Moti Mahal chain of restaurants.

Ritz Plaza HOTEL ₹₹

📞183 2562836-9; www.ritzhotel.in; 45, The Mall; d from ₹5000 This centrally located and sprawling

property spread over two acres was established in 1963 and has hosted many celebrities including the Queen of England. All guest rooms are comfortably furnished with modern conveniences. The Ritz Plaza houses a multi-cuisine restaurant, a bar and a 24-hour coffee shop.

MK Hotel HOTEL ₹₹

📞183 2504610, 2507911; www.mkhotel.com; District Shopping Centre, Ranjit Ave; d from ₹5500 Centrally located, this hotel offers 75 comfortable and large rooms. Close to most tourist attractions, MK Hotel is within walking distance of popular eateries too. It has a multi-cuisine restaurant called Taal, a 24-hour coffee shop called The Green House, and a bar called Dynasty.

Mrs Bhandari's Guest House GUESTHOUSE ₹₹

📞183 2228509; www.bhandari_guesthouse.tripod.com; 10, Cantonment; d ₹2200 A large private home set amid leafy-green environs in the cantonment area, it provides clean, comfortable accommodation in barrack-like outhouses and basic meals. It was started by Mrs Tahmi Bhandari in 1954 and is now run by her daughter.

Hotel Indus HOTEL ₹₹

📞183 2535900; www.hotelindus.com; 211/3 Sri Harmandir Sahib Marg; d from ₹2000 The dramatic million-dollar view of the Golden Temple from the rooftop is reason

TOP CHOICE Lassi

- **Gian di Lassi, Katra Sher Singh:** This 96-year-old shop dishes out creamy lassi of three types – sweet, salty and special. The last is an unusual peda lassi, made by crushing the sweet into the beverage.
- **Ahuja Milk Bhandar, Basant Avenue:** The recipe for the kesar lassi served here dates back to 1957 when the shop first opened. This saffron-laced lassi is the best thing on a hot day, but there are other flavours on offer as well.
- **Giani Punjabi Lassi, Katra Sher Singh:** Apart from the regular flavours, this place also offers strawberry, chocolate and caramel lassi.

enough to stay at this modern hotel. The rooms are compact but comfy, and suitably appointed for the price. Book well ahead to secure one of the two rooms with temple views.

Eating Crystal MULTI-CUISINE ₹₹₹

📞183 2225555; **Crystal Chowk; 11am–11.30pm** This classy restaurant, with its mirror-lined walls and colonial-era ambience, is a high-end dining option and worth a splurge when you want a change from the city's dhabas and street food. The menu is dominated by Mughlai favourites – the house speciality is the delicious murg tawa frontier (morsels of chicken in a thick onion gravy). The place also has a decent Continental menu featuring the usual range of grills, steaks, roasts and bakes.

Makhan Fish & Chicken Corner

INDIAN ₹₹

☎183 2573241; www.makhanfish.com;

21A near Madaan Hospital,

Majitha Rd; 11am–11pm

This restaurant is popular for a range of dishes, but the ones that stand out are the fried fish, special makhan fish and malai chicken.

Bharawan Da Dhaba

PUNJABI ₹₹

☎183 2532575; Town Hall Chowk;

8am–midnight

Pronounced 'praawaan', this Amritsar institution has been serving lip-smacking Punjabi fare since 1912. Order yourself a regional thali here, and you'll be treated to a delectable platter comprising dal and paneer served with naan, roti or

| The signature thali at

| Kesar da Dhaba is a must-try

rice (or all of these). The eatery has pleasant views of the Town Hall area through its glass shopfront.

Mohan Singh Meat Shop

INDIAN ₹₹

Near Gilwali Gate, Chowk Chabutra

Brain curry, mutton tikka, mutton chaamp or just good old mutton curry with fresh tandoori rotis – this place is for hardcore non-vegetarians.

Kesar da Dhaba

VEGETARIAN ₹₹

☎183 2552103; www.kesardadhaba.com;

Chowk Passian; 11.30am–

11.30pm, closed 5–6pm

One of the oldest eateries in the inner city, it has served a limited vegetarian menu since 1947 from the same location inside a narrow, congested alley. It is best accessed by cycle rickshaw. The signature thali meal, cooked in desi

ghee, offers two paranthas, dal, chhole and curd, and is not deemed complete sans the phirni, a creamy dessert.

Kanha Sweets

SWEET SHOP & RESTAURANT ₹₹

☎183 2222855; Shop No 1,

Lawrence Rd; 6.30am–10pm

Apart from selling the best pinni in town, this place is known for its tasty puri platters, with balloon-like puris, a savoury channa or chhole curry, gur ka halwa and pickle. This item is only served between 8.30am and 3pm, but the sweets counter remains open until 10pm.

Gurdasram Jalebiwala

SWEET SHOP ₹₹

☎9417084174; Jalebiwala Chowk;

Katra Ahluwalia; 9.30am–10.30pm

Get your fingers sticky at this legendary jalebi joint, serving up the delicious dessert consisting of saffron-coloured coils of deep-fried batter dunked in sugar syrup. The place is so famous they even named the street crossing after it – Jalebiwala Chowk. The shop opens at 6.30am but you'll get the jalebis only after 9.30am.

Billa Chicken Corner

DHABA ₹₹

☎9815859126; I/s Gate Hakima;

4pm–10.30pm

This tiny kiosk serves delicious tandoori chicken. Soft, tender and roasted to perfection (and not tarnished with orange food colour), the chicken melts in the mouth. Make sure you get here early because the dish usually gets sold out early in the evening.



| Sharma Sweet Shop's gulab jamuns have a fan following of their own

Giani Tea Stall

DHABA ₹₹

☎9914444416; Cooper Rd, Maharaja

Ranjit Singh Nagar, Company Bagh;

4.30am–8pm

It opens before dawn breaks and is an ideal stop on the way to the Golden Temple. Offering buttered toast, omelettes, kachoris and piping hot masala tea, this is an ideal breakfast spot for 'teaholics'. The stall has been around since 1955 and has hosted many celebrities including Imtiaz Ali and Ranbir Kapoor.

Sharma Sweet Shop

SWEET SHOP ₹₹

☎9779380567; Lawrence Rd;

7am–10.30pm

A bit flat in shape, the mini gulab jamuns served here are so tender that you can easily put away a dozen of these. They also have the regular sized gulab jamuns and crispy jalebis.



Monu Kulcha Hut DHABA ₹

📞9803133701; Gali No 10, Loharka Rd; 9am–4pm The legendary Amritsari kulcha – layered with butter and ghee and stuffed with potato – is so tasty here that people patiently wait for their turn since the place is full most of the time. Served with channa and onion, this is one of the best places in the city to try it.

Amar Fish INDIAN ₹

Raja Sansi; close to the airport The city is famous for its Amritsari fish and this place serves a decent option. Don't expect anything fancy; this is just a small takeaway place. Squeeze a bit of lime on the dish before you take a big bite.

A-One Kulfa SWEETS ₹

📞9872101109; Queens Rd; 3–11pm At this place, they call this milky frozen dessert kulfa rather than kulfi because the dish has much more to it. Watch

Amritsari fish is a delicacy to try

as they assemble it by first placing the phirni on the plate, then the kulfi, falooda, some sweet syrup and finally a topping of creamy rabri. Save your appetite for this super heavy dessert. It usually finishes by 10–10.30pm on weekends, so arrive on time.

Bittu Meat Wala DHABA ₹

📞9855456555; 96 Ram Takai Kabari Market, Jahajgarh; 5–10.30pm The winning dish here is the mutton burra which has a smoky flavour since it is slow roasted. They also have a few chicken dishes on the menu and if you really want to experiment, try the mutton halwa. They have also opened a branch in Ranjit Avenue.

Sukhram Fruit Ice Cream & Juice Bar DESSERT ₹

📞9878420363; Lawrence Rd; 10am–11pm Light cream mixed with fruits, nuts and served chilled is a delicious combination that these people have been getting right for

years. The dish is not overly sweet. In summer, they serve mango cream which is a delight for mango lovers.

Wah Ji Wah INDIAN ₹

Lawrence Rd Extension; near Nayar Hospital This super creamy and soft soya chaap can be momentarily confused for chicken as it just melts in the mouth. The chaap is made of flour and soya, marinated in spices and grilled over charcoal.

Brijwasi Chaat Bhandar INDIAN ₹

📞183 2210895; www.brijwasichat.com; Crystal Chowk; 10.30am–8.30pm Want to have the Amritsari version of a hot dog? It is an aloo tikki stuffed in a hot dog bun that is slathered with chutney and shallow fried. This place is also a favourite among locals for chaat. The papri chaat is quite delicious. The owners come from Mathura, so they do not use onion or garlic in their dishes.

Modern Bakery BAKERY ₹

Circular Rd; 6am–10pm The cream rolls here are legendary and go perfectly with a cup of tea. They are baked in a traditional clay oven and are crisp while the cream is light and not too sweet. Also try their almond biscuits.

Shopping**Raunak Jutti** FOOTWEAR

Shop 16, 17, Outside Hall Gate, Hathi Gate, Katra Ahluwalia For the most comfortable juttis in town, head to this



Creamy sweet lassi is a favourite summer drink in Punjab

store that has practically become a city landmark. Spread over two floors, they have designs for all occasions ranging from basic to colourful to heavily embellished.

J Roshan Lal Ram Prakash PHULKARI

📞183 5034474; Bazaar Pashamwala, opp Arya Samaj School, Katra Jaimal Singh This place sells a wide variety of phulkari dupattas and suits. There are machine-made ones that are cheaper and more expensive than painstakingly handmade ones from villages around the city in a range of vibrant colours.

Old & Famous Amritsar Papad and Warian FOOD

Lawrence Rd, opp Arya Samaj Mandir These two items are Amritsari specialities – the thin papad made with urad dal and sprinkled with pepper is a popular snack while wari,



♥ *If You Like: Aam papad*

If you ask anyone in Amritsar where to get aam papad (tangy strips made with mango and sugar syrup), chances are they will send you to Ram Lubhaya & Sons, an institution reputed for their aam papad since 1972. They have a huge variety of flavours and also make an unusual aam papad chaat in which they cut seven varieties into small pieces, sprinkle it with a special salt made up of 12 spices and add a dash of lime. It's sweet, tangy and spicy.



also prepared with urad dal, is used in a curry popular in Punjabi homes. This store has a huge variety ranging from plain to spicy and also sells a special cooking masala.

Booklovers Retreat BOOK SHOP

Hall Bazaar; 9am–8pm This old-school store is laden with interesting

tomes spanning diverse genres, including the latest Indian and international English bestsellers.

Kathian Bazaar MARKET

From the main entrance of the Golden

A range of colourful phulkari dupattas can be found in Amritsar's shops



Temple, stroll northwest (to your left if you have your back to the shrine) to the end of the temple compound and duck into the atmospheric Kathian Bazaar for blankets, stationery, tin pots, red-and-silver wedding bangles and much more.

Katra Jaimal Singh Bazaar CLOTHES MARKET

The frenetic Katra Jaimal Singh Bazaar is crammed with tailors and fashion stores selling saris, suits or salwar kameez and garments for both men and women. Raja Exclusive, Gullu Exclusive, Siddharth Exclusive, and Singh Sarees and Suits are good places to pick up a phulkari.

Hall Bazaar MARKET

This busy shopping street is close to the railway station and sells a variety of items – from clothing, shawls and

Halt at the bazaars for crunchy papad in Amritsar

woollens to books and handicrafts. It is home to many dhabas including the famous Bharawan Da Dhaba near the Town Hall.

Guru Bazaar MARKET

One of the oldest markets in the city, it is popular for jewellery and trousseau shopping. Some of the shops here have been selling traditional wedding jewellery and bangles including the traditional red 'chooda' (worn by Punjabi brides) for generations.

Tahali Sahib Bazaar MARKET

Tahali Sahib Bazaar is piled high with glittering juttis and satin dupattas. It's one of the main markets in Amritsar's old city selling garments, textiles, colourful accessories and much more.



Expert Recommendation

Eat like the locals in Punjab

Celebrity chef, restaurateur, cookbook author and TV show host, **Kunal Kapur** lists his favourite dishes across the state of Punjab.

KADA PRASAD

It's simple, substantial and spiritual. Believed to be a recipe from the revered Guru Gobind Singh himself, this halwa is made of atta or wheat flour sweetened with gur or jaggery with lavish dollops of desi ghee. Don't miss this holy offering that is made in all gurudwaras as prasad.

AAM PAPAD

A pick-me-up snack that is seasonal and bursting with fresh flavour, these chewy candies are made of the season's haul of mangoes pulped and sweetened with sugar. The best part is that these are made without preservatives.

PAPAD & WARIAN

Punjab has a culture of homemade papad or crisps. Once the preserve of grannies and elder matrons, these were slow dried under the summer sun on terraces of homes. The urad warian and papad can be picked up from a crowded shop in Amritsar near the Golden Temple.

CREAM CHICKEN

In Ludhiana, Chawla's restaurant is legendary and is credited with the lip-

smacking cream chicken that is best accompanied by a warm tandoori roti with a salad of fresh onions on the side.

KEBABS AT SARHAD

This iconic post on the Attari-Wagah border showcases Punjabi food that teases the Indian and Pakistani taste buds. The succulent kebabs are good to go with rumali rotis.

AMRITSARI CUISINE

This city ladles out a variety of iconic dishes from roasted chicken, awesome mutton curry and fish preparations. Punjabis take their roti seriously as seen by the freshness and leavened lightness of the bread. The chhole puri and the sweet and spicy aloo subzi at Kanha Sweets are worth a bite.

PICKLES

Lehsun ke achar and kali nimbu ke achar are unique to Punjab and make for good food gifts to take back home.

▮ Punjabi cuisine offers a variety of veg & non-veg dishes



Gurdaspur & Pathankot

Why Go?

A landscape as pretty as a picture with vast green fields and tall trees, Gurdaspur is a predominantly rural border district in the north of the state. It lies between the rivers Ravi and Beas. The town of Pathankot, known for its caves, makes for a good stopover on the way to the hill stations of Himachal Pradesh or Kashmir.

Getting There & Away

Air: Sri Guru Ram Dass Jee International Airport in Amritsar is 85km away from Gurdaspur and 125km away from Pathankot. Flights from Pathankot Airport connect to New Delhi.

Train: From Pathankot Junction, there are twelve daily trains to Amritsar and ten daily trains to New Delhi. Gurdaspur Railway Station also has regular trains to Amritsar, Delhi and other parts of Punjab.

Road: It takes about one and a half hours to reach Amritsar from Gurdaspur and about two and a half hours from Pathankot. Both have regular buses to Amritsar.

■ A rural idyll in Gurdaspur's picturesque landscape



Gurdaspur & Pathankot

In the vicinity of both Gurdaspur and Pathankot lie many places of historical and religious importance. The historical town of Dera Baba Nanak in Gurdaspur is associated with the founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak Dev. In addition, it was in Gurdaspur that the 13-year-old Akbar was crowned Mughal emperor, a little-known fact often overlooked in the pages of history. This district is also home to Qadian town, which is an important pilgrimage site for Muslims of the Ahmadiyya sect. Visit these and other sites while you unwind for a few days at a farm stay. In Pathankot, explore caves that date back to thousands of years.

GURDASPUR

1 DERA BABA NANAK

This historic town is on the banks of the River Ravi. It is located very close to the border with Kartarpur (in Pakistan), where Guru Nanak Dev spent the last years of his life. Dera Baba Nanak is now home to two significant gurudwaras that draw many pilgrims. Gurudwara Darbar Sahib is in the heart of the town and was built to commemorate Guru Nanak Dev, who came here to visit his family after one of his preaching tours. The gurudwara was embellished by Maharaja Ranjit Singh who financed the addition of a spectacular golden dome atop the structure. According to popular belief, Guru Nanak Dev meditated by a well located here. Many pilgrims take back water from this well for its perceived healing powers. The town's other shrine is Gurudwara Chola Sahib, which is famous for its main exhibit – a chola or cloak reportedly presented to Guru Nanak Dev

by a devotee. The cloak on display is covered with Arabic writings embroidered on it.

36km from Gurdaspur

2 TAKHT-I-AKBARI

This is the unlikely site where the Mughal emperor Akbar was proclaimed king when he was just 13 years old. The young boy was camping here with his guardian Bairam Khan when his father

Humayun died in Delhi in 1556. To thwart the possibility of royal intrigues, a double-tiered unadorned platform of stone was hastily built to serve as a temporary throne for Akbar's coronation. Surrounded by the green fields of the village, these stone slabs on the fenced-off site show their age. The site is located in Kalanaur. If you're on your way to Amritsar, this is a detour from the highway.

25km from Gurdaspur

3 SHAMSHER KHAN TOMB, BATALA

Set amid green gardens, this 16th-century tomb from the Mughal era is built in the characteristic architectural style of that time. It is locally known as Hazira. Standing on a raised platform, the octagonal structure crowned with a low dome is embellished with floral, geometrical and calligraphic designs. Those on the interior walls and arches are in much better condition. Akbar had granted Batala to his foster brother, Shamsher Khan as a jagir and he beautified the place.

33km from Gurdaspur

Sikh history and faith are entwined in Gurdaspur

Highlights

Gurdaspur

- 1 Dera Baba Nanak
- 2 Takht-i-Akbari
- 3 Shamsher Khan Tomb, Batala
- 4 Aqsa Mosque, Qadian

Pathankot

- 1 Mukteshwar Mahadev Temple & Pandava Caves





The Aqsa Mosque at Qadian was built in the 19th century

3 AQSA MOSQUE, QADIAN

This striking mosque in Qadian town, adorned with numerous arches and crowned by domes, is an interesting mix of local and traditional Islamic styles. It was built in the 19th century by the father of the founder of the Ahmadiyya sect, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, who was born in Qadian. This is a site of great significance for the followers of this sect. The tall

white minaret that towers above the mosque and the town is a majestic sight and is regarded as a symbol of the sect. A night visit when the mosque and the minaret are bathed in moonlight rewards you with a striking sight.

30km from Gurdaspur

PATHANKOT

1 MUKTESHWAR MAHADEV TEMPLE & PANDAVA CAVES

Muktेशwar Mahadev Temple is a shrine to Lord Shiva by the Ravi river in Doong village. A white marble Shivalinga is surrounded by idols of Brahma, Vishnu, Parvati, Hanuman and Ganesh. Some people immerse ashes of the dead in the River Ravi near the temple, and so this spot is also known as 'mini-Haridwar'.

Snapshot: Chhota Ghallughara

Chhota Ghallughara, a 15km drive south from Gurdaspur, is an important spot in Sikh history marked by bloody battles and martyrdom. In 1746, a large force led by Lakhpat Rai, the chief revenue officer of the governor of Lahore attacked the Khalsa in order to avenge the death of his brother. Caught in the deadly swamps of Kahnuwan, 7000 Sikh soldiers died in the ensuing bloodbath, and 3000 prisoners were executed at Shahid Ganj in Lahore. This massacre is referred to as the Chhota Ghallughara or minor holocaust. A memorial tower at the spot serves as a reminder of this chapter in Sikh history.

Go down the steps carved into a hillside to access the ancient Pandava caves hewn into a rock face. It is believed that the caves go back to the days of the *Mahabharata* epic. The legend goes that Arjuna created these underground shelters with his bow and the Pandavas spent some time here during their years in exile. The setting is picturesque with the waters of the River Ravi gurgling past. On holidays and weekends, this spot is often crowded with devotees and visitors.

20km from Pathankot

♥ If You Like: Keshopur Wetlands

This natural wetland, spread over 850 acres, has been declared a community reserve under the Wildlife Protection Act. Keshopur Community Reserve, formed on the panchayat lands of five villages, has a distinction of being the first notified community reserve in India. The marshy land is habitat to a wide range of migratory birds that fly in from Central Asia and Siberia to escape the harsh winter season. The black ibis, painted stork, common teal, pintail and wigeon have been sighted here among many other bird varieties.

The Keshopur Community Reserve has roped in the local village panchayats in their conservation effort, which is a first of its kind initiative in India.

5km from Gurdaspur city




Accommodation

In Gurdaspur, your best option is a farm stay. The hotels here are very basic.

PATHANKOT

Hotel Woodland HOTEL ₹

 9878941413; www.thewoodlandhotel.com; Dhangu Rd;

r from ₹1975 This is a decent option to stay and provides all the necessities you would want from a hotel – clean and basic rooms and an in-house restaurant for meals and snacks. It is good for an overnight halt.

Green Hotel

HOTEL ₹

 186 2220639; www.hotelgreenpathankot.com; Railway Rd; d from ₹2200

Apart from having an excellent restaurant on site, this hotel has 20 well-furnished rooms. It is just 6km from the airport, making it an ideal stop for an overnight stay on your way to Himachal Pradesh.

Sample rajma chawal while in Punjab



Eating


GURDASPUR

Annapurna MULTI-CUISINE ₹

 1874 223362; www.annapurnagurdaspur.com; Civil Lines

Chowk Rd; 8.30am–10.30pm This is one of the best vegetarian restaurants in the area. There is a range of dishes on offer, including delicious paranthas, dosas, burgers, and a selection of pizzas as well as Chinese cuisine.

Balbir Di Hatti SWEET SHOP ₹

 9988184184; near LIC Office,

GT Rd; 6.30am–9pm This is a good place to snack on Indian sweets and savouries especially at breakfast time. They dish out piping hot samosas, jalebis, gulab jamuns and other quick bites.

PATHANKOT

Pind Balluchi INDIAN ₹₹

 9646840307; www.pindballuchi.com; Pathankot Dalhousie Highway;

11am–11pm This restaurant has many branches and offers a good selection of Mughlai and Punjabi dishes. Do try the dal makhani here.

Basil & Thyme MULTI-CUISINE ₹₹

 186 2220639; www.hotelgreenpathankot.com; Railway Rd; 11am–11pm


One of the best fine-dining restaurants in the town, it offers a huge variety of dishes. If you're craving Lebanese or Chinese, you'll get it here. The restaurant is located in the Green Hotel, which one can even consider staying at.

TOP CHOICE

Farm stays in Gurdaspur



PUNJABIYAT

 9818705508; www.itmenaanlodges.com; Saidowal–

Gunopur Village, close to Gurudwara Ghallughara Sahib; d ₹8200 (incl breakfast) Wake up to the sound of birds chirping and sip your tea in the verandah that hugs the blooming fields of Punjab. Each of Punjabiya's charming four mud and brick cottages comes with a verandah and a rooftop terrace. The cottages have high ceilings, four poster beds, photos of farmers, and a charpai (traditional cot) in the verandah. Traditional Punjabi food is served. Dinner is usually in the lounge and there's a barbecue on winter evenings. The breakfast table, set next to the fields, offers paranthas, puri aloo or chhole bhature.

The library and the machan on a height are ideal spots to enjoy the sunset and view the countryside. There is a small plunge pool filled with water from a tubewell. Hop on a tractor and

Punjabiyat's mud and brick cottages add to the rustic charm

visit the nearby gurudwara or a dairy farm where you even get to milk a cow. The friendly staff go out of their way to make your stay comfortable. This is rural idyll at its very best.

THE KOTHI

 9417604624; **Nawanpind Sardaran Village; Gurdaspur–Kahnuwan Rd; d from ₹5500 (incl breakfast)** Located in a village called Nawanpind Sardaran, this charming pastoral getaway lies in the ancestral red-brick home of Mrs Satwant Kaur. Most of the rooms are on the first floor and overlook huge gardens. The courtyard is a good spot to unwind over food or relax with a book, lounging on a charpai. The food is typically Punjabi staples. Go on tractor rides, cycling, and visits to a dairy farm for a close-up of rural life.



Expert Recommendation

Farm holidays with the family

A marketing executive, part-time author and full-time mother of three, **Yashodhara Lal** is the author of *How I Became a Farmer's Wife*. Here are her insights into why farm holidays are a great experience, especially for the kids and offer fun times for the family as a whole.

Most of us these days are living frenetic, hyper-connected lives. That's why a simple, wholesome farm stay can be the perfect getaway for you and your family. Here are the top reasons to opt for a farm stay for your next holiday.

• **A huge contrast from city life:**

We're talking clear skies, lush green fields, cows, horses, chickens; where do you get that in the city? It is a fabulous and unusual experience for your kids, and one they'll remember for ages.

• **Connect with the things that matter:**

A farm stay encourages you to disconnect from the multiple devices that seem to have taken over modern urban life. Instead, you can spend some time in the fresh air and sun, doing the simple things we've all forgotten, like sitting around and having a steaming cup of tea while the kids play in green surrounds.

• **Incredibly low-maintenance:**

There is no need to plan activities on a farm holiday. There's always something to do at the farm. Get the kids to milk the cows, feed the chickens, ride a bullock cart, make

dung cakes and climb trees. It'll toughen them up too.

• **Great exposure and learning:** It is important for kids to learn where their food actually comes from. They'll get to partake in activities such as picking veggies and get a taste of the hard work and various steps that go into putting a meal on the table. They will also get an opportunity to interact with farm folk and learn about lives so different from their own.

If you are thinking about a farm holiday in Punjab, try Punjabiyaat in Gurdaspur where you can have farm fresh food and get the kids to mess around in the cowshed; Citrus County in Hoshiarpur for the sweet smelling fruity groves of kinnow; Anand@TheSatluj in Anandpur Sahib for luxury-tented cottages; The Kothi in Gurdaspur for its sprawling gardens; and Gary Farms in Patiala for its friendly animals.

Get the kids to see how their food travels from farm to table





Anandpur Sahib & Around

Why Go?

The aura of devotion is ever present in the city of Anandpur Sahib, which literally means 'a place of bliss'. This is the place where the tenth Sikh guru, Guru Gobind Singh, founded the Khalsa Panth, and where one of the five principal takhts (temporal seats) of the Sikh faith lies. Liberally dotted with gurudwaras, Anandpur Sahib, a city nestled in the foothills of the Shivaliks, has earned the name 'White City'. Sikh devotees pour into the holy heartland on important religious days and the town is witness to many pilgrims during festivals like Hola Mohalla and Baisakhi.

Getting There & Away

Air: Chandigarh airport is 87km away, and it is around two hours by road. The airport is connected via daily flights to the metros and other parts of the country.

Train: Anandpur Sahib railway station offers connections to the rest of the country. Una Jan Shatabdi Express and Himachal Express connect the city to New Delhi and Gurumukhi SF Express connects it to Kolkata and Amritsar.

Road: It is 85km away from Chandigarh and the driving time is around two hours on the smooth highway. It takes about four hours to cover the 185km distance from Amritsar. State tourism buses and private Volvos ply between the two cities and Anandpur Sahib.

■ Anandpur Sahib is the holy heartland of the Sikh faith

Anandpur Sahib

The history of Anandpur Sahib is closely linked with the ninth and tenth Sikh gurus. The town bears testimony to a unique phenomenon of Sikhism where the gurus were hailed as founders of towns as they came to represent not just religious roles, but also social and political ones. The ninth guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur, established his religious headquarters in Anandpur Sahib. He resided in the Guru-ka-Mahal and preached sermons from there. But the city's key importance to Sikhism is the founding of the Khalsa Panth (Sikh nation) by the tenth guru, Guru Gobind Singh. While the Takht Sri Keshgarh Sahib, the town's main shrine, is the key focus here, the grand Virasat-e-Khalsa Museum is equally impressive.

Highlights

- 1 Takht Sri Keshgarh Sahib
- 2 Virasat-e-Khalsa Museum
- 3 Anandgarh Sahib Fort
- 4 Gurudwara Sri Qila Taragarh Sahib
- 5 Gurudwara Akal Bunga Sahib
- 6 Gurudwara Bhora Sahib
- 7 Kiratpur Sahib
- 8 Nangal Wetlands

as revered as the Golden Temple in Amritsar, attracting a steady stream of devotees. A dagger and several other weapons belonging to Guru Gobind Singh are kept inside the sanctum sanctorum. Climb up to the terrace to see the city spread out before you and the hills in the distance.

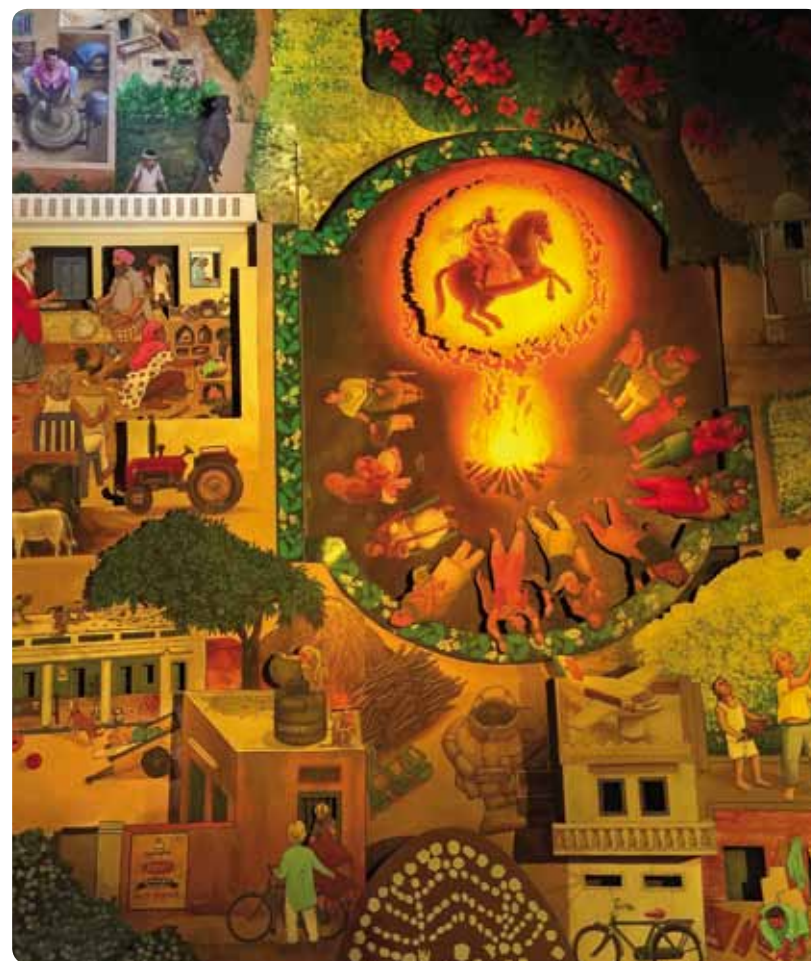
Chandigarh–Una Highway, NH21

2 VIRASAT-E-KHALSA MUSEUM

This complex designed by Israeli architect Moshe Safdie is a striking tribute to the proud history and heritage of Sikhism and Punjab. From a distance, the museum looks like a lotus flower with five petals. Replete with monumental arches, bridges, colonnaded walkways, tranquil pools and gardens, this complex sprawls over 100 acres. The galleries depict the evolution of the Sikh faith in an interactive way with sophisticated multimedia exhibits and artefacts, murals and galleries.

1 TAKHT SRI KESHGARH SAHIB

Standing on a slightly elevated spot, this gleaming white gurudwara occupies a significant place in the history of Sikhism. It is at this historic place, once ringed by forts that Guru Gobind Singh established the Khalsa Panth in 1699 on Baisakhi Day and five men came forward to offer themselves in sacrifice. These were anointed as the 'panj pyare' or the beloved five who upheld the values of the Sikh faith. The gurudwara was rebuilt in the 20th century into this impressive shrine and it is



As soon as you enter the complex, a stunning mural on a three-storey-high curved wall showcases the vibrancy of everyday life in Punjab, depicting street scenes, festivals and Punjab's scenery. This is called Panj Pani. Another gallery depicts Punjab in the 15th century and explains the Sikh concept of one god through 'Ik Onkar'. The next few galleries are about the Sikh Gurus (p93) and the years after that. Textiles of the Punjab region, marble inlay sculptures, paper craft, leather puppets and other exhibits relay the rich craft traditions and the history of the state and its faith.

A mural on Punjabi pastoral life at the Virasat-e-Khalsa Museum

TOP CHOICE *Hola Mohalla*


Anandpur Sahib is at its vibrant best during the festival of Hola Mohalla, a celebration that begins a day after the spring festival of Holi. The tradition of Hola Mohalla goes back more than 300 years to the time when Guru Gobind Singh founded the Khalsa, the Sikh's unique army.

It is a proud display of Sikh martial prowess as participants, armed

with swords and daggers, engage in mock combat in front of cheering audiences. The atmosphere turns electric as contests are held for heritage sports such as sword-fighting, bareback horse-riding, wrestling and many more. This display blends in with kirtans, poetry and music recitations. Colourful bazaars spring up and thousands of volunteers turn up to organise free langar at many places on the roads leading to Anandpur Sahib. People camp on tractors and trolleys as the town flows over with excited people.

Audio guides, recorded in the voices of celebrities Kabir Bedi, Divya Dutta and Surjit Patar, are available in three languages. The complex has a cafe, auditorium and an amphitheatre. Keep at least three hours in hand to explore the museum in proper detail. Note that photography is prohibited inside the galleries.

📞 887232592; www.virasat-e-khalsa.net; Khalsa Heritage Memorial Complex, near Qila Anandgarh; 10am–6pm, last entry at 5pm, Mon closed

3 ANANDGARH SAHIB FORT

The gleaming red brick structure and the gurudwara you see perched on a height are relatively new and stand on the site where Anandpur Sahib's first fort was built in 1689. This strategically placed fort once kept the city safe from attacks, and the arms and ammunitions of the Khalsa army

were stored here. Guru Gobind Singh spent many years here and it is believed that when he moved away from Anandpur Sahib, he left from this very place. A step-well with 135 steep marbled steps is located here. People with knee problems should definitely avoid attempting to navigate these steps. You get great views of the White City from here, but beware of monkeys. Across the road from the parking lot there is a pedestrian bridge connecting to the Virasat-e-Khalsa. This is an ideal spot to take photographs of the grand museum.

Nai Abadi Rd

4 GURUDWARA SRI QILA TARAGARH SAHIB

A beautiful drive from Anandpur Sahib through the low-lying Shivalik hills takes you to this fort and gurudwara. The fort, built on an elevation, was one of the five forts built to protect Anandpur Sahib from the invading armies of hill rulers and the Mughals. From the terrace of the gurudwara, you can see a green expanse all around as well as the Naina Devi Temple hill. If you peer through binoculars, you can see the Virasat-e-Khalsa from here.

5km away from the city

5 GURUDWARA AKAL BUNGA SAHIB

A pedestal here marks the spot where Guru Gobind Singh, then just nine years old, delivered a sermon to the followers

The Anandgarh Sahib Fort was built in the 17th century



of the Sikh faith after the cremation of Guru Tegh Bahadur who had been beheaded by Aurangzeb. It was also here that Guru Gobind Singh called on the Sikhs to prepare to fight for their freedom.

200m from Sri Takht Keshgarh Sahib

6 GURUDWARA BHORA SAHIB

Located right opposite Sisganj Sahib, this gurudwara has lovely marble inlay work and marks the place where Guru Tegh Bahadur used to meditate. Even now, people meditate in the basement that has a calm and peaceful atmosphere.

7 KIRATPUR SAHIB

Located 9km away from Anandpur Sahib, on the banks of the Sutlej, Kiratpur Sahib is home to a number of historic gurudwaras. Founded by Guru Hargobind, the sixth Guru, this scenic and holy place is where many Sikhs come to immerse the ashes of their beloved ones in the waters flowing by Gurudwara Patalpuri Sahib. A scene from the film *Veer Zaara* (2004) was filmed here.

8 NANGAL WETLANDS

A half hour's drive from the city brings you to this massive green-blue lake created by the Nangal dam. There are several points from which you can view this beautiful sight. The first is the Satluj Park from where you are quite close to the vast expanse of water. The second is as you start climbing

the Shivalik ranges at a slight rise which the locals call Lover's Point. The third (and by far the best) view is from Gurudwara Bhabour Sahib from where the sweep of sparkling blue waters for miles around presents a really spectacular sight. In winter, you can even spot a few migratory birds here.

26km to Satluj Park and 5km from there to Gurudwara Bhabour Sahib

A display of
embellished
sacred
daggers



Snapshot: The Sikh Gurus

The history of the ten Sikh Gurus spans about 250 years.

It begins with **Guru Nanak Dev**, who gave his first sermon in 1499. He introduced the concept of one god at a time when society was divided by caste and creed, and soon gathered many followers. He travelled to many places to spread his teachings. The nine Gurus after him developed the Sikh faith and community.

Guru Angad Dev, was chosen by Guru Nanak Dev as the second Guru before his death and preached the faith in the first half of the 16th century. Under him, the practice of langar or eating together in a community kitchen introduced by the first Guru, began gaining popularity. It arose from the core belief of always sharing with others. This practice went on to become a hallmark of the Sikh faith.

His senior disciple, **Guru Amar Das**, became the third Sikh Guru. He emphasised the belief in 'One Guru, one word and one interpretation'. His writings as well as those of the first two Gurus were recorded and later became the basis of the *Adi Granth* compiled by the fifth Guru.

Guru Ram Das, the fourth Sikh Guru, obtained the site on which the holy city of Amritsar now stands. The site went on to become the spiritual and political heart of the Sikh faith.

Sikhism was well-established in Punjab by the time of **Guru Arjan**, the fifth Guru. He began the construction of the Harmandir Sahib (later known as the Golden Temple) in Amritsar, and compiled the first authorised book of



The Sikh Gurus established Sikhism over 250 years ago

Sikh scripture, the *Adi Granth*.

He was succeeded by his son **Guru Hargobind**. He felt the Sikhs needed to be militarised to withstand the Mughal empire. The sixth Guru was followed by his grandson **Guru Har Rai**, who became the head of the Sikhs when he was just fourteen years old. He in turn was succeeded by his five-year-old grandson, **Guru Harkrishan**.

The ninth guru, **Guru Tegh Bahadur**, faced the ire of the Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb, who had him beheaded.

The last in line was his son, **Guru Gobind Singh**, who organised the Sikhs as a spiritual-military collective called the Khalsa to defend their faith. This started what would become a long line of brave warriors.

Detour: Hoshiarpur



Hoshiarpur is predominantly a busy market town

This market town with several factories in its vicinity harks back to the *Mahabharata*, and archaeological excavations in the district date it to the Indus Valley Civilisation. Today it's a

The Sheesh Mahal, dotted with sculptures, was built in 1911

manufacturing and trade centre with several fruit farms around.

- **Bajwara Fort:** Little is known of its origin and today the fort is crumbling and lies mostly in ruins. Yet whatever remains of the structure stands in evidence of the vast spread of history in Punjab beyond its better-known towns and cities.

- **Sheesh Mahal:** As you wander through the old bazaar, you will come across a building whose exterior is embellished with all kinds of intricately sculpted figures and statues including those of gods and goddesses. This is the Sheesh Mahal that was built by Lala Hans Raj Jain in 1911. Though it is closed for visitors, one can stop to take pictures and admire the figures on the exterior.



Hoshiarpur is famous for its wood inlay craftwork

- **Archaeological Museum:** The displays in the inner gallery include manuscripts, tools and sculptures excavated from around the Dholbaha area, which has thrown up a wealth of archaeological treasures. The museum has a 10th-century head of Vishnu and a 9th-century idol of Mahavira. The museum is located in the premises of the Vishveshvaranand Vishva Bandhu Institute of Sanskrit and Indological Studies (10am–5pm).

- **Dabbi Bazaar:** Dabbi Bazaar in Hoshiarpur has exquisite wood inlay products. This craft, which originated some 300 years ago, is special to this area and involves embellishing intricate patterns into the wood, usually with acrylic, camel bone and shell. They make a range of products

from trays, boxes, showpieces such as vases and figures to furniture such as tables and chairs. You can request one of the shops to let you see an artisan at work to understand the value of this painstaking art.

- **Astrology:** For those who believe in astrology, Hoshiarpur has special significance. Pieces of the *Bhrigu Samhita*, believed to be the final word in astrology compiled some 5000 years ago, were reportedly recovered here nearly 100 years ago. A family called 'Bhrigus' now claims custody over these parched, brittle bits of paper. Thousands, from regular folks to top hats, journey from across the country to visit them.

The town is 82km away from Anandpur Sahib

Accommodation

Anand @ LUXURY
The Satluj FARM STAY ₹₹₹

☎124 4908617; www.anandatthesatluj.com; **Lodhipur; d from ₹10,000** (incl breakfast & dinner) The charm of this beautiful farm stay is enhanced by the gurubani that emanates all day long from the speakers. True to its name, it lends the entire place a peaceful atmosphere. In fact, as you enter the gate and go past the poplar-lined driveway, it seems as if you have entered a different world.

The luxury tented cottages, furnished with comfy four-poster beds, blend in harmoniously with the landscape. For those who love sunsets and sunrises, you get the best view by the River Sutlej. The organic and fresh food from their farm deserves a special mention. All meals are served buffet-style at the huge Gallery Dining Hall, which

▮ Anand @ The Satluj offers luxury cottages

has a lovely collection of paintings and photos. The Polo Lounge is where you can play a game of pool or carrom. The evenings are livened with performances of gatka (traditional martial arts) and bhangra and gidda dances. Choose from activities such as tractor and bullock cart rides, amateur fishing at the river and visits to the nearby village. The farm stay usually gets booked one year in advance for Hola Mohalla.

Kisan Haveli HOTEL ₹

☎9872628500; **Dashmesh Academy Rd; d ₹1100** Located a little distance away from the main town, this sprawling white hotel can almost be mistaken for a palace. Apart from the spacious rooms, it has gorgeous views of the city ringed by the Shivalik hills. From one end of the garden at the back of the hotel, you can even see the Charan Ganga Stadium. The restaurant serves good food.

Hotel Paramount Residency Haveli HOTEL ₹

☎1887 233619; **Dashmesh Academy Rd; r from ₹1050** Situated above the road linking Keshgarh Sahib to the fort, Hotel Paramount Residency has simple and basic rooms. Its convenient location, close to Virasat-e-Khalsa, make it a worthwhile option for staying.

Hotel Holy City Paradise HOTEL ₹

☎9815135800; **Dashmesh Academy Rd; r from ₹1800** This small but well-run place has clean and comfy rooms, a restaurant serving good local food and an excellent location in the heart of the town.

White City HOTEL ₹

☎9815373530, 7696263337; www.hotelwhitecity.com; **Panj Piara Park Str; r from ₹1499** Located right next to the entry gate of Virasat-e-Khalsa, this hotel has 20 well-furnished rooms and is a decent option in the heart of the city. The restaurant here serves many different types of cuisine but the Indian fare is the best. A mini cafe serves tea, coffee and snacks through the day.

Hotel Palace Plaza HOTEL ₹

☎9417589370; www.palaceplaza.in; **Nangal-Anandpur Rd; r from ₹1500** Located on the Nangal Road, this hotel is not too far from the main sights of Anandpur Sahib. It has 13 rooms. Ignore the rather garish pink walls in the rooms and restaurant and concentrate on the good food.



▮ Kadha prasad is a sacred offering

The Crown HOTEL ₹

☎1887 233779; **Nangal-Anandpur Rd; r from ₹2000** Located on the same road as Hotel Palace Plaza, The Crown is a good option and just a few minutes drive from the Virasat-e-Khalsa museum. It is a well-regarded hotel that offers seven clean AC rooms fitted with TVs. An in-house restaurant has decent food options.

Eating

Anandpur Sahib does not have any stand-alone restaurants. There are a few dhabas but your best bet is to have a meal at the hotel where you are staying, or partake of the nearest langar.

Shopping


If you choose to walk from Keshgarh Sahib towards Bhora Sahib, you will go past a bustling old market that sells all kinds of Sikh souvenirs, such as traditional karas (bangles), daggers, spiritual music and artefacts.



If You Like: Unique stay options



• **Kikar Lodge:**  9478964982, 1887 251001; www.thekikarlodge.com; Kangar Village, Nurpur Bedi, Ropar, 19km from Anandpur Sahib; r from ₹5500 Although clubbed under farm stays, Kikar Lodge is different. Located inside a private forest reserve, Kikar Lodge gives you a unique kind of getaway: the property lies on 1800 acres of sprawling woodlands, mostly of kikar, as the name suggests. It is a good place for true nature-lovers, who can enjoy long walks along forest trails, spot an occasional animal or spend time lounging and reading a book. There are activities like quad-biking and rappelling to pep up the stay. The property features a multi-cuisine restaurant, a bar, two swimming pools, and a spa if a rejuvenating massage is what you need.

• **Fort Bharatgarh:**  9417411938; www.bharatgarhfort.com; v.p.o

bharatgarh; 20km from Anandpur Sahib; r from ₹7000 (incl breakfast) Set amid the Shivalik ranges, this is the only fort in Punjab still to be occupied by the descendants of the original owners – the Singhpuria Misl, one of the independent states of the Sikh confederacy. Maintained well despite its age, a portion of this over 220-year-old fort was converted into a heritage homestay in 2011 by Deepinder Singh Virk and his wife, and it makes for a comfy stay option.

The exterior is grand and craggy, but the rooms are warm and cosy, furnished with vintage furniture. The arched niches and old artefacts add to the old-world ambience. The aroma at mealtimes wafts from homely Punjabi flavours based on passed-down recipes and the use of ingredients from their own fields and dairies. Stand on the

patios to enjoy a bird's eye view of the Shivalik hills and listen to the serene sounds of gurubani floating in from a nearby gurudwara.

• **Citrus County:**  9815077880, 9815477880; Chhauni Farms, Ram Colony Camp, Hoshiarpur; d ₹14,000 (incl meals) This gorgeous farm stay, lined with lemon and poplar trees and kinnow orchards, offers nine luxury tents sprawled around a huge manicured garden. Each tent comes with air-conditioning, comfortable beds and a writing desk and a huge verandah where you can sip coffee or tea and listen to the birds chirping in the morning. The owners, Harkirat Ahluwalia and his wife Jasveen, share interesting stories over delicious home-cooked meals served at the lounge and cafe. Treks to the quiet and peaceful Nara dam, picnics in the orchard, or a visit to the dairy farm can be arranged. To round off the day, indulge in slow-cooked food next to a crackling bonfire as you sip your



favourite spirit and gaze at the stars. In the harvesting season (Mar–Apr) when the trees are laden with fruit, Citrus County can take you through the experience of a working farm. Learn to distinguish a tangerine from a kinnow in the orchard, visit the processing plant nearby, and (of course) drink vast quantities of freshly squeezed juice. They even have a swimming pool if you fancy a dip.





Jalandhar & Ludhiana

Why Go?

Both Jalandhar and Ludhiana represent the thriving industrial face of Punjab. A flourishing sports goods and leather industry has turned Jalandhar into one of Punjab's most prosperous cities, while Ludhiana has emerged as one of northern India's busy manufacturing and textile hubs. Industrialisation has changed the face of these cities: glitzy hotels, fast food chains and malls now dot the bustling streets of these two cities.

Getting There & Away

Air: Adampur Airport in Jalandhar has a daily flight to Delhi; Amritsar's Sri Guru Ram Dass Jee International Airport, 94km away from Jalandhar, has daily flights to major cities. Chandigarh airport (118km) is the closest to Ludhiana with good connections to other cities. Sahnewal Airport is the local airport in Ludhiana.

Train: Both Jalandhar and Ludhiana are important rail junctions. Major trains like the Golden Temple Mail and Paschim Express to Mumbai and the Amritsar Shatabdi to Delhi halt at both Jalandhar and Ludhiana.

Road: Jalandhar and Ludhiana are connected to major cities in Punjab and the rest of the country via a number of daily buses.

■ Festivals in Punjab are all about music, dance and colourful costumes

Jalandhar & Ludhiana

Named after Danava Jalandhar, a powerful demon in Indian mythology, Jalandhar is among the state's oldest cities. For a few years after Independence, it even served as the capital of Punjab. The temple complex of Devi Talab Mandir and a Science City close by are of interest to visitors.

Several historic spots lie around Ludhiana, and an interesting museum preserves the heritage of rural Punjab. An annual sports festival called the Rural Olympics is held in one of the villages here and is becoming increasingly popular. Ludhiana is also known as a major hub for textiles which are an important component of Punjab's industrial production.

JALANDHAR

1 DEVI TALAB MANDIR

This temple complex is about 200 years old and has remained in good condition thanks to regular renovations. The main shrine is dedicated to the goddess Durga. A pond located beside an old Kali temple is considered sacred by devotees. A popular draw here is a likeness of the Amarnath Cave Temple in Jammu and Kashmir that has been constructed for pilgrims.

The temple is a Shakti Peetha or a place of worship for goddess Shakti. According to the legend, her body parts fell at different spots across the country and marked these sites as sacred. Jalandhar is the spot where one of her breasts fell and is also called the Tripurmalini Shakti Peetha. An annual classical music festival, the Harivallabh Sangeet Sammelan, is held near the temple in December, a tradition dating back to 1875.

www.devitalabmandir.com; Tanda Rd


2 WONDERLAND THEME PARK

This theme park is a hit with kids and adults alike. The water rides are one of

Snapshot: Sansarpur's hockey heroes

Sansarpur village, about 12km from Jalandhar, has produced many hockey heroes who have played on the world stage not just for India, but also for Kenya and Canada. Its heyday came in 1968 when seven players from this village (five in the Indian team and two in the Kenyan team) participated in the Mexico Olympic Games. More recently, Jasjit Singh Kular, another player from the village, made it to the national team.

the main draws, especially during the hot summer months. The water park remains closed during the winter but the other rides and activities remain open. There are a number of thrilling and kid-friendly rides to choose from.

 181 2791420; www.wonderlandthemapark.com; Nakodar Rd; water park adult/child (below 3ft) ₹900/300, dry park adult/child ₹700/250

3 PUSHPA GUJRAL SCIENCE CITY

This educational-cum-entertainment complex is a worthwhile halt especially for those travelling with kids. Set in a 72-acre campus on the Jalandhar-Kapurthala Road, it features flight and earthquake simulators, robotics, a virtual reality gallery, a dinosaur park, 3D cinemas, a specially

The Devi Talab Mandir is a Shakti Peetha

Highlights

Jalandhar

- 1 Devi Talab Mandir
- 2 Wonderland Theme Park
- 3 Pushpa Gujral Science City
- 4 Jang-e-Azadi Museum
- 5 Nikku Park

Ludhiana

- 1 Rural Museum
- 2 Maharaja Ranjit Singh War Museum
- 3 Maharaja Ranjit Singh Fort, Phillaur
- 4 Mughal Sarai, Doraha



📷 Snapshot: Bhagat Singh in Khatkar Kalan



Bhagat Singh is an icon in Punjab. Visit the Shaheed-e-Azam Sardar Bhagat Singh Museum in Khatkar Kalan. This village outside Banga town in Shahid Bhagat Singh Nagar is a 50km drive from Jalandhar. The memorabilia here includes the martyr's half-burnt bones, blood-stained stones from the place where he was hanged, his handwritten notes and a copy of the *Bhagavad Gita* with his signature. www.punjabmuseums.gov.in/museum9.php; **entry free; 10am–5pm; closed on Mon and gazetted holidays**

designed Fun Science Centre, a Climate Change Gallery and much more. Designed to stir a healthy curiosity and interest in science, the complex even features a Health Gallery where you can walk through a giant heart model.

📞1822 501962; www.pgsciencecity.org; Jalandhar–Kapurthala Rd; daily 9am–6pm; adult/child ₹100/50, digital camera ₹50, video camera different ticket packages available; package 1 adult/child ₹300/210 incl digital planetarium show, laser show, virtual 3D show, climate change theatre, Science City galleries and exhibits; package 2 adult/child ₹370/250 incl whatever package 1 offers plus planetarium/large format show, flight simulator and earthquake simulator

4 JANG-E-AZADI MUSEUM

This grand memorial and museum is dedicated to those who lost their lives in the independence struggle. Enter through a circular dome-shaped enclosure and then branch out into galleries that showcase various signposts of the freedom movement such as the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. Currently six of the nine galleries are open, each dedicated to a separate phase of the independence struggle. The museum is designed

in an interactive way with touchscreen panels, audio and video displays, life-size figures and sculptures. A movie theatre here screens a film about the freedom struggle and a laser show takes place each evening.

23km from Jalandhar on the Grand Trunk Rd, Kartarpur; adult/child (age 3–18) ₹50/20; Apr–Oct 10am–7pm, Nov–Mar 10am–5.30pm; movie show Mon–Fri noon & 3.30pm, Sat & Sun 11am, 12.45pm & 3.30pm; laser show Apr–Oct 7.30pm, Nov–Mar 6.45pm

5 NIKKU PARK

With its walking paths and neat green spaces, this park is popular for a stroll and a much sought-after spot for picnics in the winter months. It also has a small amusement section for children.

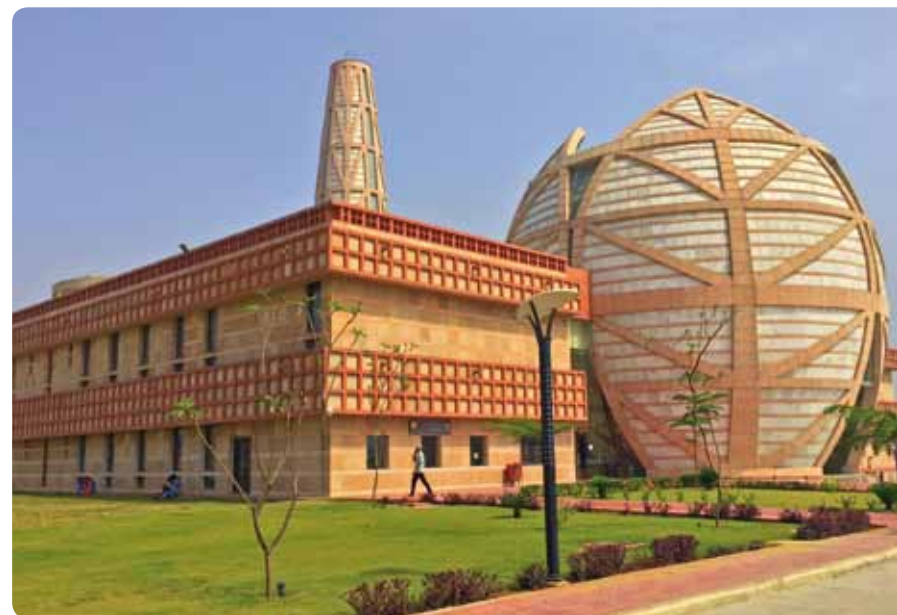
Model Town

LUDHIANA

1 RURAL MUSEUM

Located on the city's outskirts within the huge premises of the Punjab Agriculture University, this is a worthwhile

The Jang-e-Azadi Museum has modern interactive displays-





A painting of Maharaja Ranjit Singh

stop for a glimpse into rural Punjab. A two-storey building designed like an imposing rural mansion displays a variety of items that were commonplace in rural homes such as farming tools and equipment, household items like bronze utensils and the traditional earthen chulha (stove). There are interesting exhibits of life-sized mannequins depicting rural activities like grinding grain. Some displays date back to the Indus Valley Civilisation, whose archaeological remains have been found in Punjab. You might bump into a movie team filming song sequences against this authentic rural backdrop.

Punjab Agricultural University; entry ₹10; 10am–5pm, Mon–Fri, Sat & Sun closed

2 MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH WAR MUSEUM

A giant statue of Maharaja Ranjit Singh seated on a throne greets the visitor approaching the museum that pays tribute to the gallant soldiers of Punjab and the martial history of the state. Its several galleries include a War Heroes Gallery showcasing portraits of the brave hearts decorated with awards. Portraits of generals, admirals and air chief marshals from Punjab also adorn the walls, while a Kargil Gallery

✓ *Top Tip: Visit Sarai Lashkari Khan*

This was built in the 17th century during Aurangzeb's rule as a resting place for trading caravans that used to traverse the Grand Trunk Road which cut through the state. It attracts many tourists, especially after Aamir Khan shot a sequence for his film *Rang De Basanti* here and is now popularly called the 'RDB Fort'. Although a bit dilapidated, two gateways are still intact and, standing against the backdrop of green fields, it is an impressive sight. It is about 30 km from Ludhiana near Doraha on GT Road.

TOP CHOICE *Rural Olympics*

During the annual Rural Olympics at Kila Raipur, villagers test and demonstrate unbelievable feats of strength in various events. Participants drag vehicles with their hair, balance bicycles on their teeth, and lift cars and tractors with their bare hands. There are also a range of conventional contests based on rural themes, like tractor racing, horse racing, tug-of-war, wrestling and acrobatics. Started in 1933 by philanthropist Inder Singh Grewal as a forum to give local farmers the opportunity to showcase their strength and stamina, it has since grown in scale and size and draws huge crowds. The event is usually held during the first weekend in February.

21km from Ludhiana



depicts the history of India's most recent conflict.

Grand Trunk Rd; 9am–5.30pm; entry ₹40

3 MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH FORT, PHILLAUR

This impressive red brick fort was built by Maharaja Ranjit Singh on the site where a 17th-century sarai once stood on what was then the Grand Trunk Road. The fort is now the Punjab Police Training Academy, but it also houses a museum displaying a collection of firearms including some used by freedom fighters like Bhagat Singh. The mausoleum of saint Pir Baba Abdullah Shah Bayabani is inside the museum.

20km from Ludhiana

4 MUGHAL SARAI, DORAHA

Built in the early 17th century during the Mughal emperor Jehangir's rule, much of it is in a state of disrepair, but you can still see some imposing gateways, remnants of floral designs and faded carvings on the ceilings.

Detour: Sultanpur Lodhi & Around



Wall paintings at Bebe Nanki's house tell the story of Guru Nanak's life

Located strategically on the trade route between Delhi and Lahore, the ancient town of Sarwmanpur was destroyed by invading armies. It was renamed Sultanpur Lodhi in the 12th century when the Delhi emperor's generals reestablished the city. Sultanpur Lodhi has a special place as a pilgrim centre as it's the place where Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism had lived for over a decade and gurudwaras and monuments and local lore pay testimony to that.

GURUDWARA BER SAHIB

A gleaming, three-storey gurudwara in Sultanpur Lodhi stands beside an ancient ber tree under which Guru Nanak Dev is believed to have meditated for more than 14 years. The gurudwara has a marble-floored hall

and an archway, decorated with floral designs in stucco, that leads to the inner sanctum.

45km from Jalandhar

BEBE NANKI'S HOUSE

This old house where Guru Nanak Dev's older sister Bebe Nanki resided is in Sultanpur Lodhi. Its significance is that Guru Nanak Dev stayed here for some years. Beautiful paintings adorn the walls, along with written details about Guru Nanak's life.

45km from Jalandhar

MOHAMMAD MOMIN & HAJI JAMAL'S TOMBS

Stunning architecture marks the 17th century tomb (maqbara) of musician Mohammad Momin in Nakodar. Constructed in 1612, its design is reminiscent of the tomb of Emperor Humayun in Delhi. In the characteristic

design of Mughal-era tombs, it stands on a platform with arches and has dome-shaped pavilions. What catches the eye is the delicate tile work on the tomb's facade in colours such as yellow, blue and green. Momin was a musician in the service of Abdul Rahim Khan-i-Khana, one of the nine important ministers or Navratnas at Emperor Akbar's court. The second tomb of Haji Jamal, a student of Momin, was constructed nearly half a century later, and is not quite as ornate.

34km from Sultanpur Lodhi

NUR MAHAL SARAI

The sandstone sarai, which stands in the middle of a busy market, has all the hallmarks of great Mughal architecture. It was commissioned by Empress Nur Jahan, wife of Emperor Jehangir – and was thus named after her. The highlight is the western gateway that

is embellished with majestic arches, filigree work and tiles decorated with intricate patterns. It is topped by four minarets, and a well and a mosque are located inside the sarai complex.

The sarai saw the footfalls of both invaders and rulers who traversed this once-strategically located town. Now, under the Archaeological Survey of India, it is well-preserved.

An inscription here gives an insight into the customs and rules of the time. It forbade the act of collecting payments from the weary travellers who came to rest here.

The song *Butterfly* in the movie *Jab Harry Met Sejal* was filmed here in front of the sarai and in the wheat fields.

18km from Nakodar

The Momin tomb stands in regal splendour in Nakodar



Accommodation

JALANDHAR

Radisson Hotel

HOTEL ₹₹₹

 181 4671234; www.radisson.com;

BMC Chowk, GT Rd; d from ₹7900

(incl breakfast) Located 2km away from the railway station and 1km from the bus stand, this hotel offers 62 well-furnished rooms. Its three dining options include the fine-dining Indian restaurant, The Great Kebab Factory, which serves the juiciest kebabs. Radisson also has a sports bar, a pool and a play area for kids. Given its

Ludhiana's Hyatt Regency is a posh place to stay in



location and amenities, it is a good choice for staying.

Ramada Jalandhar City Centre

HOTEL ₹₹

 181 4390000; www.ramadajalandhar.com;

Namdev Chowk; GT Rd; d from ₹5750 (incl breakfast)

This hotel has 81 well-appointed rooms in four categories, as well as a fitness centre. Aside from two in-house restaurants (pan Asian and Indian) and a bar, the hotel offers 24-hour in-room dining.

Hotel Shangrila

HOTEL ₹

 181 2221234; www.hotelshangrilajalandhar.com;

507 New Jawahar Nagar; d from ₹2299

This 15-room hotel has some of the biggest rooms and suites in the city. They come with all the modern amenities such as a flat screen TV, mini-bar and tea and coffee maker. The Maharaja Suite has two seating areas. There is a cafe (Chatter Box), a bar (Car O Bar) and a dessert parlour (Hug!) – so go indulge when those hunger pangs strike.

LUDHIANA

Hyatt Regency Ludhiana

HOTEL ₹₹₹

 161 4071234; <https://ludhiana.regency.hyatt.com>;

Site No 4, Ferozepur Rd; d from ₹5800 (incl breakfast)

Enjoy high-end facilities at one of the poshest addresses in town. The rooms are fully carpeted and have huge picture windows. The rooftop swimming pool and the fitness centre offer great views of the city. Kitchen at

95, the multi-cuisine restaurant, has a live kitchen while the Gallery Bar offers a range of cocktails.

City Heart Sarovar Portico

HOTEL ₹₹

 161 2740240; www.sarovarhotels.com;

Badhor House, near Clock Tower; d from ₹5000 (incl breakfast)

What really works for this hotel is its location – just 200m from the railway station. A spacious reception hall welcomes you to the property which has well-appointed rooms and a good in-house restaurant, a bar and a gym.

Eating

JALANDHAR

Chatter Box

CAFE ₹₹

 8725065253; www.chatterboxhub.com;

507 New Jawahar Nagar;

8am–midnight This was one of the first cafes in Jalandhar and they have a wide range of cuisines on offer, so choose from Mexican, Lebanese, American, Italian, Chinese and Thai dishes. Apart from artisanal coffees and smoothies, they also offer interesting cocktails, wines and beer. This 40-seater restaurant has outdoor seating as well.

Lovely Sweets

SWEET SHOP ₹₹

 9876477777; www.lovelysweets.com;

Nakodar Rd; 9am–9pm They started in 1962 by selling motichoor ladoos and now this legendary shop sells all kinds of sweets from across the country. Their speciality still remains the desi ghee motichoor



Dessert parlours like Hug offer a variety of flavoured milkshakes

ladoo – but that too comes in many varieties. The ground floor is reserved mainly for sweets with a small section for savoury snacks.

Hug!

DESSERTS ₹₹

 8725065251; www.ifancyahug.com;

507 New Jawahar Nagar;

11am–midnight This dessert parlour offers a range of ice creams, gelatos, frozen yoghurt and waffles. Take your pick from a range of flavours and don't feel guilty as you indulge because the yoghurt is 97% fat-free. This outlet has branches in Ludhiana, Chandigarh, Amritsar and Delhi.

Haveli

INDIAN ₹₹

 98145 99000; <https://haveli.co/>;

Phagwara, GT Rd; open 24 hours This restaurant recreates the feel of rustic



The butter chicken at Baba's in Ludhiana is lip-smacking

Punjab. A tractor and a charpai (cot) are placed at the outdoor seating area where there is also a well to complete the rural ambience. Alongside is a courtyard which has stalls selling chaat, gol gappa, lassi and similar dishes. There is a truck in the indoor seating section. Do try the Haveli Special Thali that comes with dal, paneer, a vegetable, dessert, rice and roti. Just next door is Rangla Punjab, where you can enjoy various activities such as bhangra and gidda dance performances, puppetry and pottery.

Jawali Di Hatti INDIAN ₹
Sadar Bazaar; Jalandhar Cantt;
9.30am–8.30pm Find the best moong dal pakoras in town at one of the oldest shops in the area – they've been here since 1852! Piping hot pakoras are served with a spicy chutney.

Car O Bar BAR ₹
 ☎9653948558507; www.chatterboxhub.com; 507 New Jawahar Nagar; noon–midnight

True to its name, this bar has a car at the entrance and is an ideal place to unwind with a drink, whether it is over an exciting sports match or just when the weather is good. The property has both indoor and outdoor seating, and DJ nights and live bands push up the music quotient. They have a wide selection of cocktails including five different kinds of Long Island ice tea. Those who don't want a drink can try the Bunta mocktail. The food menu is also quite large.

LUDHIANA
Baba's INDIAN ₹
 ☎9888966000; www.babachicken.com; near Ishmeet Chowk, Model Town; 11am–11pm This place is like a mecca for butter chicken lovers. Their popular dish overflows with butter and cream giving it a creamy yellow colour.

They have a range of other dishes as well, but this is by far the best and goes perfectly with a hot naan.

Aman Chicken INDIAN ₹
 ☎161 2452835; near Shastrri Nagar, Railway Crossing, Pakhowal Rd, Jagjit Nagar; 11am–11.30pm They offer a range of chicken dishes and there is an ongoing debate among foodies about whose butter chicken is better – Baba's or Aman's. Our suggestion – eat at both and decide for yourself.

Chawla's 2 INDIAN ₹
 ☎161 5052274; <http://chawlas2.com>; opp Railway Station; 11am–11pm They are famous for their cream chicken which comes in a rich gravy made with cream, milk and has a flavour of black pepper and cardamom. The dish is served with bread, but you can try it with a roti instead. Vegetarians should not miss the cream paneer.

Punnu de Pakode STREET FOOD ₹
 ☎161 2536233; 580/2 New Cycle Market, Gill Rd, 8am–10pm The crisp pakoras with a soft paneer filling that you get here are delicious. The shop has been around for a long time. It opens in the morning and does out pakoras while the batter lasts.

Shopping

JALANDHAR
Rainak Bazaar MARKET
 This old bazaar is lined with shops

If You Like: Sports goods factory visit

Those big runs scored during cricket matches have a deep connection to Jalandhar, a sports goods manufacturing hub that supplies many of the bats used by cricketers. The city got its due when, in August 2016, India's famous cricket captain released the trailer of the film based on his life – *MS Dhoni: The Untold Story* – in a college in Jalandhar and acknowledged the central role the city has played in the game of cricket. (Email genadmin@fcsspport.com for a factory visit with kids; FC Sondhi & Co. India Pvt. Ltd., Grand Trunk Rd; ☎181 5006700; 10am–6pm)

selling a variety of items – from clothes, jewellery, footwear to kitchenware and much more. Haggle for the best prices.

Model Town Market MARKET

This is one of the hippest markets in the city and is home to several shops and restaurants. It has designer boutiques where you can pick up traditional Punjabi clothing with a modern twist.

LUDHIANA Chaura Bazaar MARKET

This is one of the oldest markets in the city and it is famous for a range of items such as clothes, food and books. The bazaar is home to some famous shops such as Khushi Ram Sweet Shop and Lyall Book Depot.



Expert Recommendation

Punjab's textile legacy

JJ Valaya, India's leading designer and founder of the label *House of Valaya* talks about Punjab's sartorial contributions and its textile heritage.

Punjab has a long and rich textile heritage, and its influence on Indian crafts is as popular as its cuisine, music and culture. Punjabi folk music is replete with references to the charkha or spinning wheel, which shows how deep-rooted the state's hand weaving crafts and textile traditions are in its culture. Its varied styles, patterns and costumes are infused with the true Punjabi spirit of living large.

PATIALA SALWAR

The ubiquitous salwar kameez, worn by both king and commoner, is popular throughout the country today. The classic motif from Punjab is the Patiala salwar, characterised by its myriad folds and layers, and worn with a kurta. The popularity of the salwar kameez across the length and breadth of the country is testimony to its comfort and the sheer versatility of this garment for women across India's many states.

PHULKARI

The ornate and beautiful Phulkari embroidery is a long-standing tradition that was originally carried out by women in their homes. These beautiful silk thread patterns on colourful shawls and dupattas mark traditional ceremonies and

festive occasions. They are hand embroidered in bright colours and give a touch of the traditional during weddings and festive occasions for women. Buying a Phulkari shawl or stole is like taking home a piece of Punjab back with you.

TURBANS

An important element of Sikh identity, the pagri or turban is worn in different styles and colours which signify sects and also certain occasions. The Patiala shahi pagri is a turban with distinct folds and pleats associated with the royals.

JUTTIS OR MOJARIS

If there's a footwear that you should take home from Punjab, it's the jutti. A slip-on shoe with flat soles, the jutti comes in a rounded tip for women and pointed tip curving upwards for men. Made of camel leather, the juttis are usually embellished with exquisite embroidery.

DURRIES

These light cotton rugs can be thrown on the floor and also used as bedsheets. Available in colourful and eye-catching patterns, they can brighten any room.

▮ Rahul Dev models Valaya's designs that invoke Punjab's royal sartorial style





Kapurthala

Why Go?

The rich architectural legacy that lives on in this former princely state makes you wonder why it is often overlooked on the tourist map. A palace which is now a school and a mosque with beautifully designed gardens bear the stamp of a king whose extensive travels and fascination with all things French resulted in a grandiose blend of European, Indo-Saracenic and Sikh styles of architecture. It is a charming, well-planned city with neatly laid-out roads that were definitely ahead of their time.

Getting There & Away

Air: Sri Guru Ram Dass Jee International Airport in Amritsar is the closest airport to Kapurthala. It is 80km away and takes about two hours to reach. The airport has daily flights to the major Indian cities.

Train: Some of the important trains are Jat Bti Express to Jammu, Amritsar, Jalandhar and Bathinda; Jat Adi Express to Ahmedabad; and Adi Jat to Jammu. There is no direct train to New Delhi.

Road: Both private and government buses operate from the town connecting it to major cities through a wide network of highways.

■ French influences mark the former Jagatjit Palace that is now the Sainik School

Kapurthala

Kapurthala derives its name from Rana Kapur of Jaisalmer who founded the city in the 11th century. It attained prominence in later years when it became one of Punjab's foremost princely states in the hands of the rulers and warriors of the Ahluwalia dynasty who extended its frontiers further.

The city's surviving architectural legacy is largely the work of Maharaja Jagatjit Singh who began his rule in 1890 and toured the globe, travelling through European countries in the West to China and Japan in the East. Jagatjit Palace and the Moorish Mosque are prime testaments to his legacy for lavish and rich architecture. With a heavy European influence in its buildings, and an orderly development of the city, Kapurthala stands apart from other cities in Punjab.

Around it are many places of significance such as **Sultanpur Lodhi**, **Nakodar** and **Nur Mahal**, which are worth a visit. Sultanpur Lodhi is a significant spiritual site because this is where the first Sikh guru spent more than 14 years of his life. A little farther ahead is Nakodar where the visitor can note the footprints of Mughal history in the two historic tombs that hark back to Emperor Jehangir's reign. About 12 kilometres away from Nakodar, is the tiny town of Nur Mahal, named after Empress Nur Jahan. The entire circuit can be covered in one day from Kapurthala as well as Jalandhar.

Highlights

- 1 Jagatjit Palace
- 2 Moorish Mosque
- 3 Durbar Hall
- 4 Panj Mandir

1 JAGATJIT PALACE

This former residence of Maharaja Jagatjit Singh best illustrates his fascination for French architecture. Set over 200 acres, it has an impressive outer facade, a magnificent Durbar Hall, gilt-edged ceilings, lapis lazuli pillars, wood-panelled halls, intricate fireplaces and a collection of courtly portraits. Designed in the early 20th century by a French architect, it is also referred to as a miniature Versailles and is set against green lawns with a fountain decorated with animal figures. Its once royal ambience has given way to the chatter of children – it is now home to the Sainik School. This palace also houses the maharaja's fabulous collection of artefacts from all over Europe. Unfortunately, they are mostly kept behind closed doors but bear the hallmark of yet another princely state of Punjab that was once ruled by larger-than-

Detour: Kanjli Wetland

This manmade wetland was created in the 19th century across River Bein. It is spread across an area of over thousand acres and nestles by the Kanjli Lake. The area boasts of a rich biodiversity including aquatic animals and birds and varied flora and fauna. The Villa is a retreat built by the Kapurthala royals and the lake has boating facilities. Melas or local fairs during the occasion of Deepavali are an attraction in this area.

Kanjli is about 5km from Kapurthala by road

life royals. Permission from the school authorities is needed to visit the palace.

Kapurthala–Jalandhar Rd

2 MOORISH MOSQUE

You will be struck by this majestic pink stone mosque, inspired by the Grand Mosque in Marrakesh, Morocco. A tree-laden charbagh-style garden in front ushers you to the entrance of the mosque. Step inside and walk along hushed marble-floored corridors, pass under high arches and reach a rectangular courtyard. Further ahead, note the walls adorned with intricate frescoes done by the artists of Lahore's Mayo School of Art. Built in 1930, the mosque's historic value lies not just in its splendid architecture, but also in the fact that it was commissioned by a secular-minded king in a region that

The Moorish Mosque has Moroccan design features





The Panj Mandir complex has five temples

was dominated by Muslims during the pre-Partition days. It is counted among the best mosques in Southeast Asia.

Circular Rd

3 DURBAR HALL

Another notable building in Kapurthala is the Durbar Hall, where Maharaja Jagatjit Singh used to hold court at least twice a year to host his birthday celebrations or other state rituals. Post-Independence, it became the venue for city courts. Built in the Indo-Saracenic style, it is under renovation to restore its grandeur. The hall has beautifully embellished walls and a high ceiling.

4 PANJ MANDIR

The white complex is home to five temples with the main shrine


in the middle and four smaller ones on different corners surrounding it. The central temple is dedicated to Lord Krishna while the others are dedicated to goddess Durga and the gods Surya, Shani and Shiva. It was constructed in the 18th century by Sardar Fateh Singh Ahluwalia. Each temple has a conical dome and it looks grand on a full moon night. There is a huge clock tower just opposite the temple, which has an interesting anecdote behind it. To take photographs, climb up to the first floor of the temple, as the views of the clock tower opposite and the street below are striking.

Snapshot: Big Ben in Kapurthala

The clock tower in Kapurthala, known as Ghanta Ghar, was built by Benson London, the same company that designed the Big Ben in London. Maharaja Jagatjit Singh ordered it in 1893 and it was installed in 1901. Today a government school is located on the ground floor of the clock tower.

Accommodation

Ramneek Hotel HOTEL ₹

 9781322478; Sultanpur Rd; d

from ₹1650 Hotel Ramneek ranks a few notches above Kapurthala's other budget hotels. It has clean and comfortable rooms, along with a good restaurant and beer bar. It is located close to the Jagatjit Palace.

London Hotel HOTEL ₹

 1822 230146; Sultanpur Rd,

near Civil Hospital; d from ₹2300 A no-frills accommodation, this hotel offers a good budget stay with simple but clean rooms. It has a decent restaurant that offers a variety in its menu and is a favourite among locals.

Eating

Darshan Dhaba INDIAN ₹₹

Near Durbar Hall; noon–4pm;

6–9.30pm The most famous dhaba in Kapurthala proudly counts celebrities such as Imtiaz Ali and Alia Bhatt among its customers. It has a basic menu – mutton curry, chicken curry and bheja fry in the non-vegetarian category and dal, paneer and a seasonal vegetable in the vegetarian category. The fresh hot tandoori rotis here deserve a special mention.

Platoon Pizza ITALIAN ₹₹

 8690000029; Jalandhar Rd, Amar

Complex; noon–10pm This fast-food joint serves a range of pizzas and a few pasta dishes, so if you are craving some Italian cuisine instead of Indian food, this is a good choice.



Dal and seasonal options are available at Darshan Dhaba

Basant MULTI-CUISINE ₹₹

 9914293000; Bsnl Rd, Kapurthala


Rd, near District Courts, BSNL Exchange Colony; 10am–11pm Take your pick from a range of cuisines here, from Punjabi and South Indian to Chinese and Italian.

Bhola Sweets INDIAN SWEETS ₹₹

 1822 238540; Sadar Bazaar;

8.30am–9pm Nothing beats the taste of the creamy lassi at Bhola Sweets. And if you want something to accompany this, go for the dahi bhalla with pakoris, which is another speciality.

Oberoi Special INDIAN ₹₹

 1822 508502; Shop No. 10, Mall

Rd; 9:30am–6:30pm If you're craving chhole bhature, do visit this place for breakfast. The chhole is flavourful and not too spicy. Sample the freshly made lassi too.

📷 *Snapshot: Bollywood calling in Punjab*

From actors, filmmakers, producers, singers and musicians, mainstream Bollywood has been led by Punjabi talent. It has rightly showcased Punjab and its culture in many movies. Here are a few of them.

Dilwale Dulhaniyan Le Jayenge (1995)

The iconic sarson da saga had Shah Rukh Khan clasping his lady love and wooing his future father-in-law with equal ardour against the backdrop of Punjab's mustard fields.

Gadar – Ek Prem Katha (2001) The period drama about a love story during Partition was filmed in Amritsar and Pathankot.

Veer Zara (2004) The saga of cross-border love between a Pakistani girl and an Indian Air Force officer starring Preity Zinta and Shah Rukh Khan was filmed in Kiratpur, Attari-Wagah border, Chandigarh and neighbouring villages of Punjab. Singer Gurdas Maan performed the bhangra in the song *Aisa desh hai mera*. Amitabh Bachchan and Hema Malini danced to a Lohri song as well.

Rang De Basanti (2006) Aamir Khan and friends visit the Golden Temple while Harshdeep Kaur's melodious *Ik Onkar Satnam* plays on. Sarai Lashkari Khan, near Ludhiana, is now known as the 'RDB Fort' after the song *Tu bin bataye* was filmed here.

Jab We Met (2007) Kareena Kapoor plays Geet from Bathinda and the film's locations included Nabha near Patiala.

Rab Ne Bana di Jodi (2008) The

movie was filmed at various locations in Amritsar including the Golden Temple and Khalsa College.

Dil Bole Hadippa (2009): Rani Mukherjee and Shahid Kapoor dance among the yellow mustard fields to the tune of *Ishq hi hai rab* in Kotla in Fatehgarh Sahib.

Bodyguard (2011) This action movie starring Salman Khan and Kareena Kapoor was shot in Patiala.

Luv Shuv Tey Chicken Khurana (2012) A quirky ode to Punjabi cuisine and household recipes.

Bhaag Milkha Bhaag (2013) A biopic about India's iconic athlete Milkha Singh in which certain sequences of the film were shot at the YPS Stadium in Patiala.

Highway (2014) The Alia Bhatt-Randeep Hooda starrer was filmed in Ferozepur, Faridkot and Nur Mahal.

Jab Harry Met Sejal (2017) Shah Rukh Khan hails from Nur Mahal in Punjab in the film. The song *Butterfly* was shot at this location.

Phillauri (2017) Headlined by Anushka Sharma and Diljit Dosanjh, the filming took place in Baradari Palace in Patiala.

Raazi (2018) Locales of Pakistan of 1971 were recreated by shooting in Malerkotla, Nabha and Patiala in this Alia Bhatt spy saga.

■ Farhan Akhtar plays the role of the Flying Sikh in *Bhaag Milkha Bhaag*



Faridkot & Ferozepur

Why Go?

Faridkot is a thriving agricultural town that gets its name from Baba Farid, a 12th-century Sufi mystic. In later centuries, Faridkot became a princely state ruled by a succession of kings. Ferozepur, 33km from Faridkot, sits on the Indo-Pakistan border and has witnessed many conflicts in the past owing to its strategic location. The city evokes memories of India's freedom struggle with an impressive martyrs' memorial.

Getting There & Away

Air: Amritsar's Sri Guru Ram Dass Jee International Airport is the closest option from both Ferozepur (112km) and Faridkot (143km).

Train: SvdK Adi Express to Ahmedabad, Punjab Mail to New Delhi and Mumbai and Bti Jat Express to Jammu are some of the important trains that run from both Ferozepur Cantonment and Faridkot.

Road: Frequent buses run from Faridkot and Ferozepur to Amritsar, Bathinda, Chandigarh and Patiala.

■ Faridkot has a robust farming community



Faridkot & Ferozepur

Faridkot was named after the Sufi saint, Baba Farid, whose miracles touched the king in the 12th century. The town's most popular attraction is the shrine of Baba Farid which draws visitors throughout the year and especially during the Baba Sheikh Farid Aagman festival. The main landmarks here are Qila Mubarak and the 19th-century palace Raj Mahal. An Anglo-Sikh War Memorial marks the wars fought by the Sikhs against the British. In Ferozepur, you can witness a daily border ceremony similar to the one at the Attari Border and pay your respects to three famous martyrs of the independence struggle at a striking memorial.

FARIDKOT

1 QILA MUBARAK

Dating back to the 13th century, Qila Mubarak is one of Punjab's oldest forts. Located in the heart of Faridkot town, it stretches over 10 acres. While construction started in the 13th century, it was later used as the residence of the maharajas of Faridkot. Inside, there is a beautiful Sheesh Mahal (mirror palace) spread across its first floor and a Durbar Hall. It is presently closed to the public due to litigation over its ownership.

Nahikhana

2 TILLA BABA FARID SHRINE

The shrine, approached through a narrow, pedestrian-only lane, commemorates Baba Farid, a 12th-century Sufi saint. He is said to have meditated here for 40 days when he was on his way to Pakpattan, which is in Pakistan. Some of his belongings are kept at the shrine; a piece of wood on which he is believed to have wiped his hands clean is preserved in a room fully embellished with mirror-work. There is a small gurudwara in the enclosure where some verses from the *Guru Granth Sahib* that include Farid's poetry are chanted. This monument is located close to Qila Mubarak and gets crowded on Thursdays when devotees

usually visit. Every September, a festival called Baba Sheikh Farid Aagman is held here.

Near Qila Mubarak

FEROEZPUR

1 SARAGARHI MEMORIAL

This gurudwara is dedicated to the 21 soldiers who lost their lives defending the fort at Saragarhi in the Anglo-Afghan war of 1897, considered one of the toughest battles in the world. Canons are placed in front of this gurudwara and in the garden around it. This memorial in white has unusual touches of red.

Ferozepur Cantonment

2 NATIONAL MARTYRS MEMORIAL, HUSSAINIWALA

This grand memorial marks the spot where freedom fighters Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev were cremated. After they were hanged in Lahore, their bodies were brought to this site. This is also where the battle of Hussainiwala was fought in 1956.

Standing in the midst of a huge well-maintained park, the edifice is in red sandstone. Visitors must remove their shoes before entering the rectangular-shaped memorial as a mark of respect. At one end stand life-size statues of the three

The National Martyrs Memorial honours Punjab's brave sons

Itineraries

Faridkot

- 1 Qila Mubarak
- 2 Tilla Baba Farid Shrine

Ferozepur

- 1 Saragarhi Memorial
- 2 National Martyrs Memorial, Hussainiwala
- 3 Hussainiwala Border Ceremony
- 4 Anglo-Sikh War Memorial, Ferozshah



martyrs in black granite in a pose reminiscent of 'inqlab zindabad' – the famous slogan that fired up the freedom fighters.

A description of each martyr's life is written below the respective statues. In the middle of the memorial there is a flame, 'Shaheed Jyoti' that burns continuously with the words 'Inqlab Zindabad' inscribed on the side. At another end there is a panel embossed with the faces of the three heroes in gold plating.

entry free; 6am–10pm; 10km from Ferozepur

3 HUSSAINIWALA BORDER CEREMONY

Not many know that Hussainiwala also has a daily border ceremony similar to the one that takes place at the Attari Border near Amritsar. Every evening at sunset, the flag-lowering ceremony (retreat) is held amid some drama as Indian jawans, resplendent in fancy red headgear, and their Pakistani counterparts are cheered by people on both sides of the border. Before you watch the ceremony, halt at a small museum to learn more about the town, the border and the ceremony. The museum also has a few weapons on display including Bhagat Singh's pistol.

5.30pm Apr–Oct, 4.30pm Nov–Mar

4 ANGLO-SIKH WAR MEMORIAL, FEROZSHAH

This memorial is dedicated to the wars that the Sikh empire fought against the British empire after Maharaja

Ranjit Singh's death. The battles of Chillianwala, Mudki, Sabraon and Ferozshah fought between 1845–1846 and 1848–1849 cost many Sikh lives. The memorial displays armaments and paintings depicting various battles.

entry ₹10; 10am–5pm; 20km from Ferozepur

The Hussainiwala Border has a daily flag-lowering ceremony



Accommodation

The hotels in the district are very basic. Better accommodation is available in cities like Bathinda (100km), Amritsar (120km), Ludhiana (123km) and Jalandhar (120km). If you have your own vehicle, it is a good idea to leave after the Hussainiwala Border Ceremony. The highways are in good condition and the major cities can be reached within three hours.

Eating

FARIDKOT

Eatos CAFE ₹₹

📍163 9505599; Sadiq Rd, opp GGS Medical College; 11am–11pm

This cheerful cafe with its charming decor has a huge menu that includes paranthas and omelettes for breakfast, and sandwiches, burgers, Indian street food and some Continental fare for starters. The main course features Chinese and Indian cuisine options.

Faridkot's restaurants offer a range of global cuisine options

Cafe Bites CAFE ₹₹

📍1639 252565; Shop no 23–24 Nehru Shopping Centre; 11am–10pm

When you're craving a pizza, burger, fries, milkshake or cold coffee, this is the place to visit.

FEROZEPUR

The Chocolate Room CAFE ₹₹

📍163 2503333; Udhham Singh Chowk; 10am–10pm This cafe, which has branches globally, is a good spot for coffee and some munchies like brownies, pizzas, nachos, sandwiches and more.

Chawla's 2 INDIAN ₹₹

📍7696111000; GT Rd; 11am–11pm Popular across Punjab, this is a great option when you want good old Indian food. Try their famous cream chicken or paneer. The menu is quite exhaustive. A TV screen plays popular Bollywood songs in the background.



Expert Recommendation

Hidden heritage gems of Punjab

Punjab is rich in heritage structures in the form of monuments, forts and more. **Shivdular Singh Dhillon**, is ex-CEO of Punjab Heritage & Tourism Promotion Board and ex-director Tourism Punjab. He lists some of the more unique heritage sites in Punjab.

PUL MORAN, AMRITSAR

This pul (bridge) is a historical spot that comes with an interesting tale. Legend has it that Maharaja Ranjit Singh's favourite dancer and companion, Moran, had lost her precious sandals while crossing a canal and so, the magnanimous king immediately ordered a bridge to be built at the spot. There is a Shiv temple with beautiful frescoes and a water tank here.

DURBAR HALL, KAPURTHALA

Kapurthala is scattered with unique monuments and palaces that sprung up from the fertile imagination of Maharaja Jagatjit Singh, a royal with Francophile tastes. One of the treasured architectural gems is the 127-year-old Durbar Hall where the king once held court. The majestic exterior in Indo-Saracenic style is marked with Byzantine styled domes and cupolas and intricate lattice work

in stone. Inside, the first floor gallery and embellished walls are a sight to behold.

SARAIS OF PUNJAB

Punjab has many stunning sarais (resting places for caravans of yore). Sarai Lashkari Khan on GT Road has become popular as the 'RDB Fort' of the film, *Rang De Basanti*. Sarai Nur Mahal, near Jalandhar, is a stunning edifice built by Empress Nur Jahan. For elegant calligraphy, there is the remarkable Mughal-era monument Sarai Amanat Khan in Amritsar. Shambu Sarai or Mughal Sarai, near Rajpura is an arresting monument and marks the entry point to Punjab.

QILA MUBARAK, PATIALA

This 18th-century fort is a unique monument that speaks of religious

amity and the brotherhood of man. A flame brought here from the Jwalamukhi Temple in Himachal Pradesh has been kept burning continuously for over 250 years. The fort showcases Sikh, Mughal and Gothic architectural features.

SHEESH MAHAL MEDALS GALLERY, PATIALA

On display in this gallery are 3200 rare medals and decorations from across the world. This unusual museum has one of the richest such collections in the world.

| Sarai Lashkari Khan is called the Rang de Basanti Fort after the film





Bathinda

Why Go?

The footprints of history are scattered throughout Bathinda, often referred to as Punjab's oldest city. Bathinda derives its name from Bala Rao Bhatti, a Rajput king who established the city 1200 years ago. This thriving industrial town has been dubbed a 'City of Lakes' owing to the presence of three manmade lakes.

Getting There & Away

Air: Amritsar's Sri Guru Ram Dass Jee International Airport (200km away) has daily flights to major cities. It takes around 3.5 hours to reach the airport by road from Bathinda. Bathinda Airport offers flights to New Delhi.

Train: It is situated on the Ambala–Bathinda line of the Northern Railways. There is a regular train service from New Delhi as well as from other states to the city.

Road: Besides regular state and private bus services, there are options of taxis, car rentals and private vans.

■ A miniature painting of Guru Gobind Singh who visited Bathinda in the 18th century

Bathinda

Bathinda is part of the belt in Punjab where excavations have revealed evidence of the Indus Valley Civilisation. Located in the south of the state, it has felt the impact of invaders and kings such as Mahmud of Gazni, Prithviraj Chauhan, Iltutmish, Razia Sultana, and the Mughals. It was last under the control of the princely state of Patiala. A visit to this city includes uncovering history in an ancient fort and gazing at pretty lakes and gardens. Baisakhi is celebrated with fervour here.

Highlights

- 1 Qila Mubarak/Razia Sultana Fort
- 2 Bathinda Lake View Park
- 3 Rose Garden
- 4 Baba Haji Ratan Mazar & Gurudwara
- 5 Bir Talab Zoo & Deer Park
- 6 Mai Sar Khana Mandir
- 7 Takht Sri Damdama Sahib, Talwandi Sabo

1 QILA MUBARAK/RAZIA SULTANA FORT

This fort is quite imposing – a massive semi-circular bastion made up of small bricks, giving it a bulky look. One of the oldest forts in the state, it goes back to the reign of the Kushan dynasty in AD 90–110. Famously known as Razia Sultana Fort, this is where the legendary empress was held as a prisoner by Malik Altunia whom she had appointed as the governor of Bathinda.

In the year 1705, Guru Gobind Singh

visited the fort, and a gurudwara was built here to mark his presence. Parts of the fort are under renovation but you can see the cannons placed in one section. These days, the fort is also referred to as the Bathinda Fort.

Qila Rd, Old City

2 BATHINDA LAKE VIEW PARK

Bathinda is home to three lakes that are close to the Guru Nanak Dev Thermal Plant, the icon of this city. All kinds of boating options are available at the Bathinda Lake View Park – from pedal boats, shikaras, electric boats and speedboats to water scooters. Adventure enthusiasts can try parasailing. If you enjoy photography, come in during the brilliant sunset hour. It is an ideal place to unwind while walking on the promenade and soaking in the beautiful surroundings. A small cafe at the premises offers basic street food. There are many eateries located nearby.

Goniana Rd; pedal boat ₹100 per person, shikara/jalpari/electric boat ₹200 per person, leisure boat ₹225 per person, water scooter/speed boat ₹400 per person; parasailing ₹2000, jet ski ₹800, wave speed ride parasailing ₹450; videography & photography ₹1000; 10am–8pm

3 ROSE GARDEN

A rose garden is a delight anywhere, but the sheer variety of roses at this garden makes for quite a sight. If you are here in the winter months, stop to admire some unusual ones such as the yellow roses with orange highlights or the June Bride which gets its name from its blend of pink and white petals. The garden sprawls over ten acres and is a popular spot with the locals. It has a small cafe and is worth a visit.

Rose Garden Rd

✓ Top Tip: Photo gallery at Bathinda's railway station

A photo gallery at the Bathinda Railway Station has striking black and white photos of old railway stations and train engines. Among these are photographs of a timetable for Punjab Mail that used to run from Delhi to Lahore, of the steam trains of Saharanpur, and of Mahatma Gandhi being welcomed at a railway station. Head to the station early to catch your train and spend 10 minutes admiring these images.

The Lake View Park's brilliant sunsets offer photo ops



Snapshot: Thandi Sarak Road

For the locals, the name Thandi Sarak in Bathinda evokes memories of the era of British rule. When the Britishers would take an evening walk, the entire road would be cooled by sprinkling water on it. The water would be poured from matkas (earthen pots) that had holes in them. A red-coloured Methodist Church on the road makes for a good photo op.

4 BABA HAJI RATAN MAZAR & GURUDWARA

Don't be surprised if you see people from all faiths gathered at the mausoleum in this complex. According to popular belief, the powerful Muslim saint Pir Baba Haji Ratan answers the prayers of anyone who seeks his blessings here, so this place draws believers of all faiths. In the same complex stands a tall gurudwara – this is where Guru Gobind Singh is believed to have camped for a night.

Civil Lines

5 BIR TALAB ZOO & DEER PARK

While the mini zoo is home to plenty of animals and birds, including two tigers, the deer park is the main attraction. Located in a separate section of the zoo, one has to go around in a battery-operated vehicle to see the deer roaming freely. You can spot various kinds of deer such as the spotted deer, hog deer, black buck and sambar. Keep your cameras ready and don't make too much noise as these are shy animals. It is a great place to visit with children.

8km from Bathinda; adult/child ₹20/10

6 MAI SAR KHANA MANDIR

The temple in Mai Sar Khana is dedicated to the goddess Durga. According to legend, a devotee, unable to undertake the long trek to the Jwala Devi temple in Himachal Pradesh, underwent a long penance to invoke Goddess Durga's blessings here. Pleased with the piety, the goddess granted the devotee a darshan (viewing) twice a year in this spot now held sacred. To commemorate the event, two grand melas (fairs) are held here every year. The temple is well-kept and clean.

Bathinda–Mansa Rd; 29km from Bathinda



7 TAKHT SRI DAMDAMA SAHIB, TALWANDI SABO

This gleaming white gurudwara is significant as one of the five principal takhts (seats of temporal authority) of Sikhism. Guru Gobind Singh rested in this place for a year and a number of his belongings are stored here including a sword, seal and a sacred mirror. Gurudwaras dedicated to the Guru's mother and his wife are also located in this complex. If you can climb onto the rooftop of the building opposite the gurudwara, it is a great spot for photography – the entire landscape, dotted with several gurudwaras, sprawls in front of you. About 10 minutes away from the gurudwara is Daleh di Kothi where some weapons and garments of Guru Gobind Singh are displayed.

30km from Bathinda

Takht Sri Damdama Sahib is one of the five principal takhts of Sikhism



Detour: Mukatsar

This quiet town was the battleground for a bloody conflict between the Sikhs and the Mughals in 1705. Several gurudwaras here commemorate the event, and the main shrine is Gurudwara Tuti Gandhi Sahib. Every year on 13 January, the town hosts a colourful Maghi Mela in memory of the 40 Sikh warriors who died fighting for Guru Gobind Singh. It is 55km from Bathinda.

Accommodation

Stella

HOTEL ₹₹

164 5015000; www.hotelstella.in; Barnala Bypass Rd, Hazura Kapura Colony, Guru Gobind Singh Nagar; d from ₹3900 (incl breakfast) This contemporary four-star hotel has 44 spacious rooms and bathrooms that are larger than usual, especially the ones with a bathtub. The rooftop swimming pool has sweeping views of the city. Infinity, the al fresco dining area near the pool, is open only for dinner. It also has a multi-cuisine restaurant, Masala Kraft, and a bar.

Country Inn &

Suites by Radisson

HOTEL ₹₹

164 5200200; www.countryinns.com; HBN Sunrise City, Mansa Rd; d from ₹4500 (incl breakfast) This

Get a caffeine boost at the coffee house in Hotel Stella

hotel with a colourful facade is slightly away from the city, but it is one of the better options. It has lavish rooms with modern fittings, a swimming pool, a fitness centre and a spa as well. The in-house restaurant, Mosaic, is open 24 hours and serves a variety of cuisines.

Hotel Bahia Fort

HOTEL ₹₹

164 2250019; www.hotelbahiafort.com; d from ₹3500 (incl breakfast) There is an interesting history behind this hotel. It was the official family residence of Patiala's armed forces in the 1930s and was later converted to a hotel. Located close to the railway station, it has 43 rooms that have ornate balconies and there are two restaurants.

Comfort Inn Tulip Heights

HOTEL ₹₹

164 2235390; www.comfortinntulipheights.in; Mittal's City Mall, Guniana Rd; d from ₹3800



Sharing the same building as a mall, this is an option if you are not looking for anything fancy. The rooms are clean and well-furnished and come with the usual amenities like a mini bar, TV, tea/coffee-maker and wi-fi. The in-house restaurant, Daffodils, offers buffet and a la carte meals, and a bar called Tulips is quite popular.

Eating

Pizzano Fast Food

MULTI-CUISINE ₹₹

164 2250322; Mall Rd; 10.30am–11pm Quite popular with the locals, this self-service fastfood restaurant serves good Italian, Continental, Chinese and Indian food. They have a bakery section as well where the cakes are quite good.

Manoj Sweets

MULTI-CUISINE ₹₹

164 2235790; www.manojsweets.com; 4540/1 Dhobi Bazaar; 8am–10pm This is the most popular sweet shop in the city and offers all kinds of

Manoj Sweets serves a variety of samosas

Indian sweets that you can think of including sugar-free ones. They also have chaat and street food like dhokla, bhel puri and a variety of samosas. If you are in the mood to experiment, try the noodle samosa.

Sagar Ratna

SOUTH INDIAN ₹₹

9316532351; GT Rd; 11am–11pm For a pleasant departure from local Punjabi flavours, try one of the many dosas at this authentic South Indian restaurant. Finish the meal of choice with a cup of good South Indian coffee.

Bhagwan

Chaat Corner

STREET FOOD ₹

Shop No 83 Gandhi Market; 8am–10pm This is a place that locals swear by for its finger-licking specialities. The menu is limited and includes dishes like aloo tikki, paneer tikki chhole, dahi tikki, bhalla papdi mixed



Shop for colourful hair braids called parandis while in Punjab

chaat, golgappa, papdi chaat and lassi. Whatever you pick, rest assured it will taste delicious.

Maple Ice Cream Studio DESSERTS ₹

📞164 2251051; Z1/11423; Mall Rd, Hanuman Chowk; 11am–11pm This ice cream parlour has a huge variety of flavours including some really interesting ones such as red wine, pina colada, Jamaica rum, cookies-and-cream and many more. They have a variety of sundaes and ice cream rolls as well as pizzas or sandwiches.

Bedi Jalebi Wala DESSERTS ₹

📞9855376334; opp the Rly Sta; 4–9pm This legendary jalebiwala has been around for many years. These fritters coated in sugar syrup are thin and crisp. Make sure you reach this

place well in time as the jalebis finish by nightfall.

🛍 Shopping

Mall Road GARMENTS

This road is lined with showrooms of major brands, whether it is clothes, shoes or other accessories.

Mittal City Mall

Vishal Nagar; 10am–10.30pm Whet your appetite for shopping at this huge mall. It has many branded stores, restaurants and a multiplex as well.

Dhobi Bazaar

Near Mall Rd; 10am–8pm Take a cue from the locals and carry your shopping wish list to Dhobi Bazaar, a fascinating market crammed with shops, both big and small. Scour the stores for cotton fabrics, accessories and local handicrafts. Take a cab here

📍 Detour: Food trip to Kotkapura

This town, about 50km away, is famous for its atta chicken and the sweet, dhoda.

• **Royal Atta Chicken:** Kanwarjit Singh has been doling out this juicy dish for decades now at his dhaba, Manmeet Chicken. The full chicken is first marinated in spices and covered with a thin muslin cloth. A layer of thick dough (atta) is wrapped around the muslin and the whole chicken is cooked in a clay oven (tandoor) for at least three hours. Before serving, the covering of atta and muslin is peeled away to reveal the tender and juicy chicken inside. The popularity of the chicken dish has become so widespread that visitors carry it back with them. It keeps for about a fortnight if refrigerated in the winter. You have to place your order in advance as the dish takes about three to four hours to prepare.

📞9888020962; Jaito Rd, Pheruman Chowk; 10am–11.30pm

• **Royal Dhodha House:** The traditional Punjabi sweet was the brainchild of Lala Hans Raj Vig, a wrestler who wanted to make a tasty energy food. In 1912, he began selling dhodha, a brown-coloured rich concoction of milk, sugar and nuts which attracted hordes to his shop in his village (now in Pakistan). After Partition, he moved to Kotkapura where the popularity of dhodha further grew. This sweet shop is now so famous that they have a chowk named after it.

📞9814014828; www.dhodhahouse.com; Dhodha Chowk, Railway Rd





Patiala & Around

Why Go?

Patiala epitomises Punjab's brush with royalty. This erstwhile princely state boasts of lavish palaces, a majestic fort, palatial buildings and opulent royal lifestyles. Its charm has not faded – the atmospheric old city, which was once ringed by 10 historic gates, has a rich architectural heritage. A sprawling sports institute housed in a former palace, and the city's educational institutions stand in proud testimony to the rich traditions in art, culture, sport and couture bequeathed by Patiala's rulers.

Getting There & Away

Air: Chandigarh airport is 60km from Patiala. It has direct flights to many cities in the country.

Train: The railway station has trains to Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai and other major towns of North India and Punjab. Amritsar Express connects to Amritsar and Mumbai and Fazilka Delhi Express is the fastest train to New Delhi.

Road: Chandigarh is 70km away and takes about one and a half hours to reach via NH7. Ludhiana is 91km away and Amritsar is 235km away. All the cities are connected to Patiala with regular buses.

Patiala & Around

Founded in 1763, the city sprawls around Qila Mubarak, and the architecture represents a fusion of Rajput, Mughal and Punjabi styles of the past. Maharaja Narinder Singh who ruled Patiala in the mid-19th century was a patron of art and architecture and he also fortified the city.

Patiala refers to Pati (strip of land) and Ala (referring to the person who founded this city, Baba Ala Singh). A buzzing trade centre, the city's old bazaars hum with a lively air, offering some specialities such as the parandi or coloured hair braid worn by women.

The past is ever-present here – you will be regaled with fascinating stories of its most flamboyant sovereign, Maharaja Bhupinder Singh, who was a sports enthusiast and an avid fan of cricket and polo. Handed down over generations, the stories have become part of Patiala's folklore.

The Patiala gharana or school of Hindustani classical music originated in this city as did two of the gharana's most famous exponents, Ustad Ali Baksh and Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan.

Highlights

- 1 Qila Mubarak
- 2 Old Moti Bagh Palace (NIS)
- 3 Sheesh Mahal
- 4 Kali Temple
- 5 Gurudwara Dukh Niwaran Sahib
- 6 Baradari Gardens
- 7 Bahadurgarh Fort
- 8 Shahi Samadhi (Royal Mausoleum)

car here and tour the fort complex, sprawling over 10 acres and designed around a series of courtyards.

Although time has taken its inevitable toll, the Qila Mubarak still bears an aura of proud regality. The fort is a fusion of Mughal and Rajasthani architecture. The highlights are the Qila Androon (royal chambers) and the elaborately frescoed Sheesh Mahal. The high-ceiling Durbar Hall (under renovation) was the royal court until 1947, and is today a museum where glittering chandeliers and impressive weapons tell eloquent tales of the opulent past of the Patiala kings. Among the many royal treasures on display are a solid silver state carriage, a sword that belonged to the

1 QILA MUBARAK

This 18th-century fort stands in the heart of the city. It was the ancestral home of the royal family until 1862. Patiala's founding ruler, Baba Ala Singh started the construction and his grandson Maharaja Amar Singh completed it.

Enter the fort through a huge gateway from the bustling Adalat Bazaar and reach the complex known as Qila Androon Chowk. Park your

i Quick Facts: Flame of Qila Mubarak

The diya (flame) in Qila Mubarak has been kept burning continuously for more than 250 years. It was brought by Baba Ala Singh from Jwalamukhi Temple in Kangra. According to popular belief, if this flame were ever to be extinguished, Patiala would be destroyed in a flood as it lies in a flood-prone area.

Persian emperor Nadir Shah and a beautiful jade dagger carried by Guru Gobind Singh. The two tree-like Bohemian glass chandeliers will catch your eye, but the main attention-grabber is the four-wheeled silver chariot used by Maharaja Bhupinder Singh. Built in Kolkata in 1909, it was drawn by six horses and brought out on ceremonial occasions.

The frescoes and the detailed stucco-work in some parts of the fort are noteworthy. Parts of the fort are currently undergoing restoration work, but other sections are open to visitors.

10am–5pm, Mon closed

The Qila Mubarak is a fusion of Mughal and Rajasthani architecture





Moti Bagh Palace was the seat of the Patiala royals

2 OLD MOTI BAGH PALACE (NIS)

This imposing palace, with a Rajasthani style facade of jharokhas, is set in an elegant 400 acre terraced Mughal garden. It was the principal seat of the Patiala royal family for nearly 100 years, but following Independence, was handed over by Maharaja Yadavindra Singh for the promotion of sports and is now home to the Netaji Subhash National Institute of Sports (NIS). In keeping with the predisposition of the Patiala kings for extravagant lifestyles, this Indo-Saracenic structure with 1000 rooms was reputed to be one of the largest royal residences of the 19th century. A museum of sports, which is presently closed for renovation, has displays such as the spikes of the Flying Sikh, Milkha Singh, India's first sprinter and sporting icon, and Maharaja Bhupinder Singh's silver bat. There's a train carriage in the garden which has an interesting story behind it.

3 SHEESH MAHAL

Standing beside a dried-up tank, this onion-pink, three-storey edifice, built in 1847 was an intrinsic part of the

Old Moti Bagh Palace. As its name suggests, Sheesh Mahal had galleries decorated entirely with mirrors while other chambers were adorned with paintings in Rajasthani style. It was commissioned by Maharaja Narinder Singh to provide a beautiful backdrop for the artists and scholars he patronised in his court. The grounds are dotted with several marble statues including an imposing one of Queen Victoria. Slung across the now dry lake is a suspension bridge, modelled on Rishikesh's Lakshman Jhula. It links the Sheesh Mahal with an exhibition hall called Banasar Ghar. Today, it is a museum where the main attraction is an exhibit of over 3000 medals, orders and decorations from around the world, all collected by Maharaja Bhupinder Singh. It is undergoing renovation and the medals gallery is closed to public.

4 KALI TEMPLE

Built by Maharaja Bhupinder Singh, the temple has been declared a national monument. Devotees throng the temple particularly on Saturdays and during the Navratri festival. It is also home to a collection of manuscript leaves, believed to have been written by the rishi Ved Vyas of *Mahabharata* fame

The Kali Devi Mandir is lit up for Navratri celebrations



Snapshot: Train carriage won in a bet

In the lawns of the Old Moti Bagh Palace, you will see an old, green train carriage that was won in a bet between Maharaja Bhupinder Singh and an English officer. They had to race each other to reach Rajpura from Patiala (29km apart). The maharaja was on horseback and the officer on a train. The maharaja beat the officer to it and became the proud owner of this carriage.

and sourced by Maharaja Narinder Singh from the Badri Narayan Temple in Kinnaur.

The Baradari Gardens came up in the 19th century

5 GURUDWARA DUKH NIWARAN SAHIB

The unusual name of this gurudwara – Dukh Niwaran (or eradication of suffering) – originated because this is where the ninth Sikh guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur, is believed to have sat under a banyan tree to cure a mysterious illness afflicting



the residents of Lehal village. The gleaming white marble gurudwara was built at the spot to mark this miracle. The association with healing remains; hundreds of devotees stream in on days of religious importance as they believe in the healing properties of the sarovar. The crowds are especially large on Basant Panchami, an auspicious day when the guru is said to have healed the sick. One can take a dip in the sarovar. Try to visit at sunset as it looks gorgeous in the muted orange streaks of the setting sun.

6 BARADARI GARDENS

This Mughal-style garden in the northern part of the city was commissioned by Maharaja Rajinder Singh in 1876. Its name is derived from the 12 entrances that this garden once had – bara means 12 and dari means doors. Pathways cut through shady trees, a variety of plants and a rock garden adds to its charm. Being a nature lover, the king had brought in rare species of plants and trees from different places to the garden here. As a tribute to its creator, there is a marble statue of Maharaja Rajinder Singh



Portrait of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala

If You Like: Drives

To soak in the full flavour of the rich architectural heritage of Patiala, which is an amalgamation of Mughal, Rajput and Sikh influences, just drive past some of Patiala's iconic buildings. Some are now home to government offices, educational institutions and even movie theatres. Start with the Punjab State Electricity Board and the Art Deco cinema halls Malwa and Phul along the Lower Mall. Go past Fountain Chowk and the Polo Ground and turn right to reach Yadavindra Public School – hallowed as the post-partition Indian counterpart of the prestigious Aitcheson College of Lahore. The school stadium featured in the movie *Bhaag Milkha Bhaag*. After that, turn around and head past the New Moti Bagh Palace towards the twin-towered Mohindra College; built in 1870, it is one of the earliest colleges of the region.



The Shahi Samadhi is the memorial of the Patiala royal family

here. The garden stands adjacent to a palace, which is now a sprawling heritage hotel. It is popular with morning walkers and joggers.

5am–midnight

7 BAHADURGARH FORT

Built in the 17th century when the Mughals were ruling, this fort lies on the outskirts of Patiala. It is believed to have

♥ *If You Like: Patiala heritage walk*

For a quick introduction to Patiala, take the roughly one and a half hour Patiala walk that winds its way past historic spots and buzzing bazaars. Organised by the Tourism Department each weekend, it acquaints you with some of the most popular sites in this city. Start at the Shahi Samadhi and stop at Pammi Puriwala for a breakfast of chhole bhature and petha (pumpkin) sabzi to get a tasty sampling of Patiala's culinary tradition. Then, make your way through the lanes of old heritage neighbourhoods such as Haveliwala Mohalla, and see how 18th-century bazaars such as the Bartan Bazaar still do brisk business. Pass through Darshini Deori, the ceremonial gateway from which commoners once watched royal processions and end the walk at the city's most iconic monument, the sprawling Qila Mubarak. Walking down the city's memory lanes not just introduces you to its architectural heritage and culture, it prepares the ground for a deeper understanding of the historic legacy of Patiala.

Contact: 9417728821 (Sarabjit Singh); 8am Apr–Oct; 9am Nov–Mar; Fri–Sun



been originally called Saifabad, but the name was changed in honour of Guru Tegh Bahadur Singh, the ninth Sikh guru, who stayed here for a while. The fort has a grand structure and there is a 19th-century gurudwara within the premises. Access to the fort is limited as the Punjab Police Commando Training School is located here.

6km away from Patiala on the Chandigarh–Patiala highway

8 SHAHI SAMADHI (ROYAL MAUSOLEUM)

This white marble pavilion is the memorial of the royal family of Patiala. The main building, inlaid with intricate motifs, houses a beautiful memorial of Baba Ala Singh, the first ruling chief of Patiala who waged many battles. White marble cenotaphs commemorating other members of the royal family are also placed here. The heritage walk organised by Punjab Tourism starts from here, providing an apt introduction to the story of this erstwhile princely state.



Expert Recommendation

Sirhind & Fatehgarh highlights

An inveterate adventure traveller, actor **Gul Panag** shares the historic and festive highlights of Fatehgarh Sahib and Sirhind for the traveller.



The Jor Mela at the Fatehgarh Sahib is held annually

Our family farmhouse is located near the ruins of Sirhind, barely a kilometre east of the high ground where once stood its impregnable fort originally built by Feroz Shah Tughlaq in 1360. The town is one of both historical and holy significance.

• **Gurudwara Fatehgarh Sahib**

This site is deemed holy and the 18th-century tombs here mark the shaheedi or martyrdom of Guru Gobind Singh's two younger sons. Fatehgarh means the 'Fort of Victory' and refers to the battle to avenge the martyrdom of the Guru's sons. Two

gurudwaras are located inside the complex and the annual Jor Mela is held here.

• **Sirhind** Some 4km from Fatehgarh Sahib is the prehistoric site of Sirhind. It was under Mughal rule and witness to many battles. Eventually it was reduced to ruins. It holds historical significance for the people here.

• **Aam Khas Bagh** Built under Akbar and then Shah Jahan, the beautiful garden with exotic plants included a common (aam) or public viewing section and an exclusive (khas) section for the royals and aristocracy. During the Jor Mela, a Sound and Light show is organised here.

• **Jor Mela** The famous annual three-day festival began as a religious congregation in the olden times to commemorate the martyrs. One of the largest in Punjab, the fair or mela features traditional martial art performances, processions and conferences. The entire mela brings the community together with free langars cropping up around the place, feeding the locals and visitors with the famed Punjabi hospitality.

Fatehgarh-Sirhind is about 35km from Patiala, which makes it an hour's drive away.

Detour: Sangrur

Sangrur harks back to prehistoric times with some settlements dating to the Harappan Civilisation. The city was founded by Sanghu, a prominent Jat of the region some 400 years ago. Studded with gurudwaras, it wears a festive air during **Lohri** and **Baisakhi**. It has a couple of no-frills hotels, but it is best to halt here en route to Bathinda.

• **Gurudwara Shri Akoi Sahib:** This gurudwara in Akoi village was visited by Guru Hargobind Sahib in the 17th century. A karir tree to which the Guru's mount is believed to have been tied, is considered holy.

• **Banasar Bagh:** This garden is a popular picnic spot with the residents of Sangrur. A marble baradari (12-door pavilion) rises from the midst of a pond that has dried out over the years, but there still exists a three-tier marble fountain in blue and white. Close by lies a museum that formerly used to be the Diwan Khana and was used by visiting kings to host meetings. Attention is more likely to fall on the

beautifully painted ceiling than the displays here.

• **Marble Baradari:** The white stone, embellished with intricate carvings, is an arresting sight. A replica of the 12-door pavilion in Lahore that was built by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and over two centuries old, this structure is particularly striking at night when it is illuminated.

• **Gurudwara Nanakiana Sahib:** This gurudwara holds special significance in the Sikh faith because the first guru, Guru Nanak Dev, delivered a sermon here to his followers. The present building is a fortress-like haveli and according to a copper plate preserved in the gurudwara, it was constructed in 1886 by Raja Raghuraj Singh. Preserved here as a sacred relic is a weapon called gurzitabar with the numbers 1724 inscribed on it in Persian numerals.

Sangrur is 54km from Patiala and is a worthwhile stop on the way to Bathinda

The Guru Granth Sahib is written in Gurmukhi script




Accommodation

HERITAGE

The Baradari Palace

HOTEL ₹₹₹

 175 2304433; www.neemranahotels.com; Baradari

Gardens; d ₹7000–10,000 (incl breakfast)

The former residence of Maharaja Rajinder Singh of Patiala, this heritage hotel has a definite regal touch. The colonial building is centred round a Mughal-style baradari, which literally means a pavilion with 12 arches. Its 17 rooms and suites invoke the atmosphere of a bygone era with four-poster beds, fireplaces, historic portraits and terraces. Each room is named after a member of the royal family. Some rooms have a view of the adjoining Baradari Gardens. The restaurant offers international cuisines such as Chinese and Italian but the

 The beautiful Baradari Palace is the former residence of Maharaja Rajinder Singh

Indian cuisine is the best here. While you wait for your meal, ask a staff member to recount one of the many stories of the royal family.

Gary Farms

FARM STAY ₹₹


 9814602562; Nanoki Rd, Bhadson;

d from ₹4000

This farm is 34km away from the city and is a good getaway. It offers much of what you would expect from such a property—green fields, a tractor which you can ride, horses, cows and clucking hens, boating in a small lake within the farm and a dry well to complete the rustic experience. The rooms are comfortable and clean. Besides offering a good weekend break, it has also shot up on the popularity charts as a selfie spot and as a backdrop for pre-wedding shoots.

Eqbal Inn

BOUTIQUE HOTEL ₹₹

 175 5050700; www.hoteleqbal.com;


SST Nagar, Rajpura Rd; d from



₹4250 (incl breakfast) This 50-room hotel is located a little outside the main city area, but is nevertheless a good option especially if you have a vehicle at your disposal. It has well-furnished rooms outfitted with modern amenities, clean en suite bathrooms, a gym and spa.

Clarion Inn Amps

HOTEL ₹₹


 175 5086001; www.clarioninnpatiala.com;

Sirhind Rd, Green Park Colony; d from ₹4750

Located just a little outside the city, this hotel has a rooftop pool, and from the terrace, you can see Patiala spread out before you. The rooms are compact and come with all the necessities. The restaurant offers a good selection of dishes and so does the bar.

The Shaurya

HOTEL ₹₹

 175 2351000; www.theshauryahotels.com;

 The pool at the Clarion Inn Amps offers a cooling option to beat the heat

theshauryahotels.com; PUDA Devigarh Division Complex SCO 6–12, Mini Secretariat Rd; d from

₹4000 One of the best hotels in the city, it is located close to the city centre. The 36 rooms and suites here are well-furnished and have a luxurious touch. A multi-cuisine restaurant, The Kitchen, offers a range of dishes, and there is a small cafe too.

Hotel TNG

HOTEL ₹₹

 175 5001111; www.hoteltnng.com;

Bhupinder Nagar Rd; d from ₹3600

The location of this hotel is its most attractive feature as it is surrounded by the big branded stores and restaurants of Bhupinder Nagar. The rooms are furnished well and have comfortable beds. The hotel's in-house restaurant has a live kitchen. Two microbreweries are within walking distance.



Sauce and Barrel Cafe offers fusion cuisine

Hotel Mohan Continental HOTEL ₹

📞175 5005543; opp Head Post Office, near Leela Bhawan Market; d from ₹2195 (incl breakfast) A five-minute walk from Gurudwara Dukh Niwaran Sahib, this hotel offers basic rooms and is suitable for those who want to stay in the heart of the city. The spacious restaurant serves decent Indian food.

Garden Resort HOTEL ₹

📞175 2215107; Rajbaha Rd; d from ₹2100 This residence-turned-hotel has limited rooms and amenities, but its location works for it. Consider this if you are likely to be out most of the day; only to return for the delicious Indian meals that have earned them quite a reputation.

Eating

No Objection Cafe (NOC) CAFE ₹₹₹

📞175 2220005; 26 Kaintal Building, Bhupindra Rd; 11am–11pm This cafe with colourful chairs and quirky wall decor has an interesting menu – think chocolate and Nutella pizzas and butter chicken hot dogs. Do try the waffles for breakfast. The cafe also serves beer.

Sauce and Barrel Cafe CAFE ₹₹₹

📞175 5001111; Bhupinder Nagar Rd; 11am–11pm This cafe offers unusual dishes such as the classic cheese kurkuri, meat keema kaleji, leg & peg and the delish gur ka parantha.

Coffee Bar CAFE ₹₹

📞9855560017; 26 Bhupindra Rd; 11am–11pm A sign on the door, "I'm going to tell you the story of how I met your mother" sets the tone for this cafe obsessed with English and American TV shows – posters from many of these are plastered on their walls. The obsession extends to the names of the drinks too! Sherlock's Mystery is caramel cold coffee with whipped cream, Small Wonder is hazelnut cold coffee, while Baywatch is a strawberry smoothie. The pizzas here are quite good.

Deepa Mutton and Chicken Corner DHABA ₹₹

📞9888312123; Behara Rd, near Anardana Chowk; 1–10pm Go to this dhaba for just one thing – the tandoori mutton. While they offer many other dishes, this one is their speciality. The

TOP CHOICE Local treats

Patiala boasts of some of the best shops for Indian sweets and desserts.

- **Arjan Sweets:** In close proximity to Qila Mubarak is Arjan Sweets, longstanding conjurers of the crunchy reori-gajjak, a traditional winter sweet prepared from molasses.
- **Gopal's:** A tiny hole-in-the-wall place that was selling samosas and jalebis a couple of decades ago. Gopal's is now a multi-cuisine brand offering all manner of quality sweets, namkeen and fast food.
- **Jaggi's:** Located in the bustling Adalat Bazaar, this sweet shop has been around for a long time and sells about 90 varieties of desserts. While they stock all the regular sweets, they also get a bit experimental with flavours.



Sample the piping hot jalebis at Gopal's

mutton is juicy and tender and served with lime and onions.

Dumpling Hood CAFE ₹₹

📞175 5004422; Shop No 5, Bhupindra Rd, 11am–11pm The whole wheat dumplings, or 'aata momos' as locals fondly call them, are famous not just in Patiala but other cities of Punjab as well. Chicken and mutton are good options but if you want to be experimental, try the chicken makhani or Nutella dumplings. Wash these down with one of their detox juices or smoothies.

Sahani Dhaba DHABA ₹

📞9872563330; Car Parking, AC Market, near Anardana Chowk; 10am–10pm Try the delicious mutton rara here, and chat with the owner who will tell you how this dhaba became a rage after Rocky and Mayur, hosts of the TV show *Highway on my Plate*, visited them. The air-conditioned dhaba can seat up to 150 people. It is the only dhaba in Patiala to have separate veg and non-veg kitchens and menus. Do sample the kulfi.

Ambala Chaat House CHAAT ₹

📞9988136614; Darsh Nagar, Maharaja Yadvindra Enclave, Prem

Nagar; 4.30–10pm This place has been doling out delicious satrangi golgappas to a steady stream of customers for about 24 years. It serves this popular chaat in seven types of water – jeera, pudina, kali mirch, hing, meetha, chutney and the final one comes with dahi-stuffed golgappas. It is a meal by itself.

Amritsari Kulcha Haveli DHABA ₹

☎ **8284858976; Anardana Chowk; 9am–3pm** While they offer a huge range of Punjab's most popular dish, it's the chur chur kulcha that stands out. It is crushed and has an extra dollop of butter so that it completely melts in the mouth. Pair the meal with a lassi. Sundays have a limited menu with just three kinds of kulchas – aloo pyaz, paneer and chur chur – being served.

▮ Punjab is famous for a wide variety of pickles

Kumar Chicken Soup SOUP ₹

☎ **9463050154; No 22 Flyover, Bhupindra Rd; 5.30–10.30pm** The menu features only five items but the chicken soup is the pick of the lot. It's light, lemony and has small shreds of chicken with a few veggies sprinkled on it. There is nothing better than this soup on a winter evening but it sells like hot cakes even in summer.

Nagpal INDIAN ₹₹

☎ **9876977167; Lower Mall Rd, Phawara Chowk; 9.30am–10.30pm** With an extensive selection of paneer dishes, this simple vegetarian restaurant has got its basics right and has been popular with the locals for a long time. They have a daily special as well.

Pammi Purian Wala DHABA ₹

☎ **9814537933; Dal Dalia Chowk, 6am–10pm** In 1983, two brothers, Pammi and Parminder, decided



to start a breakfast joint which is legendary today. People line up for the puri chhole and pethe ki sabzi here. The creamy lassi goes best with the meal.

Sadhu Ram Kachori INDIAN ₹

☎ **9216666683; Kacha Chowk; 8am–7pm** Visit this place when you are craving a plate of piping hot aloo puri. They do the best in town. While the kachoris are also good, nothing can beat the fluffy puri made fresh in front of you and the savoury aloo.

Patiala Shahi Lassi LASSI ₹

☎ **9872629660; Sherawali Gate; 8.30am–9pm** They have many varieties of lassi and a neat air-conditioned place where you can sit back and sip comfortably. Punjab-style, the lassi is thick and comes with a dollop of cream. A few Indian sweets such as kulfi and barfi are also on offer here. Some people like to dunk a barfi in their lassi to add to the flavour and richness.

▮ Beer Street is a lively place to enjoy an evening drink

Malhotra Sweets Corner SWEET SHOP ₹

☎ **175 2227217; Anardana Chowk; 9.30am–8.30pm** Don't be surprised to see people waiting in a queue as all kinds of pakoras sprinkled with spicy chaat masala are doled out here. This sweet shop does a huge variety of sweets but it's the paneer pakora that steals the show. If you're craving something sweet, don't miss the gulab jamun.

Nightlife

Beer Street MICROBREWERY ₹₹₹

☎ **7710555200; 26 Kaintal Building, Bhupindra Rd; 11am–11pm** This is one of the two microbreweries in Patiala. It taps into Patiala's penchant for a stiff drink with its strong and dark beer named Patiala Dark Night. Those who don't have a taste for it can try the lighter Good Luck Pilsner. They have live music on certain nights and happy hours from 11am to 6pm every



Adalat Bazaar is popular for shopping for wedding bangles or 'chura'

day. Regular bar nibbles like platters, pizzas and nachos and other pub food are available and make good accompaniments to your drink.

The Brew Estate MICROBREWERY **₹₹₹**

9888788887; www.brewestate.in; Bhupindra Rd; 11am–11pm After its major success in Chandigarh, this bar opened its doors in Patiala last year. While they serve German and Belgian beers, if you want to be adventurous try their innovative, cocktails like the Aam Papad Caprioska, Hubba Bubba (bubble gum martini), or Liquid Paan (white rum muddled with homemade paan). They boast of a menu "as wide as the Earth itself". While that may be an exaggeration, they do offer a wide selection of food.

Shopping

Omaxe Mall

MALL

1800 1020064; www.omaxe.com; opp Kali Devi Temple, Mall Rd; 10am–11pm With many retail brands,

restaurants, a multiplex cinema, a food court and a children's play area, this is a one-stop shop for entertainment and shopping, especially if you're looking for branded clothing. It gets quite crowded on weekends.

Adalat Bazaar

MARKET

Old City, near Qila Mubarak Lose yourself in its several lanes and by-lanes that are known for specific products, such as the Juttianwali Gali for Patiala juttis, the Achar Wali Gali that is lined with pickle shops, and the Churi Bazaar that is famous for bangles, especially wedding bangles called 'chura' (worn by Punjabi brides), parandis, Patiala salwars, phulkari suits and dupattas and other products related to the wedding trousseau.

While here, look for another item some may want to pick up – unknown to many, this city is also famous for its silk drawstrings (naras). You certainly won't leave this market without a bag full of purchases.

Data Jutti

FOOTWEAR

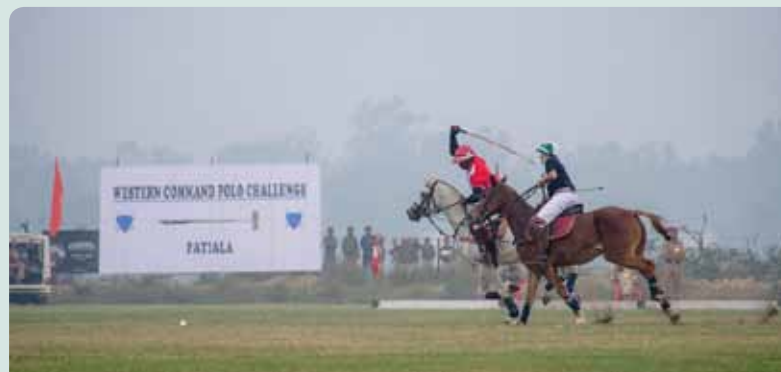
9888417954; Fort Bazaar; 11am–8pm Since 1953, this shop is known for its quality footwear and sells the most stunning juttis – from plain to colourful, embellished to embroidered. It is a famous shop in the city, so people will point you to it easily.

Quick Facts: The 'P's of Patiala

The 'P's for which the city is famous – the Patiala peg, the Patiala jutti, the Patiala salwar, pagri, parandi and polo – embody the spirit of the state where life is always lived king-sized and fashion is not to be taken lightly.

- **Patiala peg:** The story behind this stiff measure of whisky goes back to the eve of a polo match between Maharaja Bhupinder Singh's polo team and an Irish team. The king ensured that enormous drinks were served to the visitors. Naturally, the groggy Irish team lost, and afterwards complained about their drinks. The Maharaja is said to have replied, "Yes, in Patiala, our pegs are large!"
- **Patiala salwar:** The billowing, eye-catching pants of Patiala are quite a fashion statement. This salwar is worn with a short shirt known as a kameez or kurta.
- **Parandi:** According to folklore, since the women in the Patiala royal households could not show off adornments such as gold and pearl pins on their covered heads, they came up with the idea of wearing colourful, decorative parandis – tassels with ribbons and pearls – that could peep out from under their dupattas as extensions of their braids. This ingenious hair accessory gradually evolved into the parandi, made with brightly coloured threads and worn even today.
- **Patiala jutti:** The Patiala handcrafted jutti adorns the feet lending a decorative touch to the most ordinary attire. The traditional juttis were named after the places of their origin – Tilla, Lahori, Peshawari and Kasoori.
- **Patiala shahi turban:** The most flamboyant ruler of Patiala, Bhupinder Singh, was not content with turbans that did not meet his exacting royal standards. Hence the shahi version. Made with the finest of cottons available at that time, great attention was paid to the starch and the twist in tying it, which gave the turban its regal look. Adalat Bazaar has several shops that sell these.
- **Polo:** The game beloved of the royals and the aristocrats of Patiala is making a comeback in the city. The army organised a polo match in the city in 2017, the first in nearly a decade.

Polo in Patiala grew under royal patronage





Chandigarh

Why Go?

With its wide boulevards, parks and neat grid system, India's first planned city is an urban oasis. Designed by the renowned Swiss-French architect, Le Corbusier, Chandigarh is the capital of both Punjab and Haryana. A proud tribute to independent India's grand urban project, the city gives visitors an experience of orderly development. Located at the foothills of the picturesque Shivalik range, it offers all the amenities of a prosperous cosmopolitan city.

Getting There & Away

Airport: Chandigarh airport is well-connected to the rest of the country and has direct flights to Delhi, Mumbai, Jaipur, Bengaluru and Srinagar. Air India and IndiGo offer two international flights to Dubai.

Train: The Chandigarh Railway Station has good connections to the metros. It is connected to Delhi via the Kalka Shatabdi that departs twice a day. Two daily trains go to Amritsar.

Road: The Inter State Bus Terminals (ISBT) in Sector 17 and in Sector 43 have daily buses to the rest of the state. The highways are in an excellent condition.

■ The unique Rock Garden has statues made up of waste materials

Chandigarh

Laid out in self-contained sectors, Chandigarh is aptly known as ‘The City Beautiful’. It spans out from the Capitol Complex, which houses the main government buildings and the impressive Open Hand sculpture designed by the Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier as a symbol of the city’s aspirations. The heart of the city is Sector 17, marked by a piazza, where a musical fountain has become the hub for people to gather. The sprawling Rock Garden, created with waste materials, is not to be missed; and the Sukhna Lake attracts locals and tourists alike. Even as many Indian cities look skywards to cater to the pressures of growing populations, Chandigarh continues to be charmingly low-rise.

Highlights

- 1 Rock Garden
- 2 Chandigarh Architecture Museum
- 3 Sukhna Lake
- 4 Le Corbusier Centre
- 5 Capitol Complex
- 6 Leisure Valley
- 7 Government Museum & Art Gallery
- 8 Natural History Museum
- 9 International Dolls Museum
- 10 Chandigarh War Memorial
- 11 Chattbir Zoo

and dancers, monkeys, elephants and camels that adorn the sculptural garden spread over twenty acres.

Wandering around the garden, one feels like Alice in Wonderland – think tiny doors where you have to bend to pass through, high waterfalls, bridges, gardens, meandering paths, giant swings, strangely-shaped rocks, an open-air theatre and hundreds of dolls. Set aside two hours to appreciate this unique garden which is the pride of the city. Summer days can be warm, so water bottles and caps are recommended.

www.nekchand.com; Sector 1; adult/child ₹30/10; 9am–7pm Apr–Oct, 9am–6pm Nov–Mar

1 ROCK GARDEN

This enchanting garden is a revelation of how discarded junk can be turned into artefacts of stunning beauty. Here you will encounter the fantasy of Nek Chand, a local transport official, who fashioned sculptures from debris left over from the villages that were destroyed to build the city of Chandigarh.

In his hands, broken tiles, pipes, bangles, electric plug moulds, China plates and other waste material underwent a dramatic transformation. These creations include figures of queens and courtiers, school children, revellers



The Sukhna Lake is a recreational spot

2 CHANDIGARH ARCHITECTURE MUSEUM

Using photos, letters, models, newspaper reports and architectural drawings, this museum tells the story of Chandigarh’s planning and development, including the abandoned first plan for Chandigarh by Albert Mayer and Matthew Nowicki. It is one of the main buildings within Chandigarh’s museum complex.

Sector 10; entry ₹10; camera ₹5; 10am–4.30pm, Mon closed

3 SUKHNA LAKE

The artificial lake is a landmark and was a part of Le Corbusier’s urban master plan to provide leisure spots across the city for its residents.

The lake, popular for rest and recreation, is dotted with ornamental gardens, a children’s fairground, places to eat and drink and pedal boats to hire for leisure rides on the still waters of the lake. It offers photo ops at sunrise and sunset. There’s also a walking track along the periphery of the lake for residents to go on walks or jogs in the morning and evening. There are a few eateries selling basic street food, an outdoor cafe and the

Snapshot: Nek Chand’s secret garden

For years, Nek Chand created figurines out of waste.

Fifteen years after he began his project, the city authorities, with support from the community helped to install it in the rock garden in Sector 1.

Nek Chand’s vision of a garden emerged as a child when he was entranced by tales of kings and queens in a beautiful kingdom. He was conferred the Padma Shri in 1984.



Mermaid restaurant and bar which is air-conditioned and serves good food and beer. Kids can go on camel rides outside the entrance of the lake complex. It's ₹50 for a 10-minute ride.

Sector 1; shikara ₹400 for 2 adults (30 min); pedal boat 2-seater ₹200 (additional ₹200 refundable security deposit); pedal boat 4-seater ₹300 (additional ₹300 refundable security deposit); 8am–10pm

4 LE CORBUSIER CENTRE

Visit this place to understand Le Corbusier's architectural

vision for Chandigarh and the hurdles he encountered in implementing it. The displays include documents and photos, along with letters revealing the politics behind the Chandigarh project, including one from Jawaharlal Nehru to the then Punjab Chief Minister recommending Le Corbusier for the project.

There are interesting sketches, paintings and a model for a proposed Governor's House that was eventually rejected because Nehru found it too extravagant. You can also read about the Open Hand monument and why it was built after Le Corbusier's death. A shop offers books, porcelain souvenirs and other items for sale. Permission for access to the Capitol Complex can also be obtained here. Keep a sharp


Visit the government museum and art gallery

Snapshot: The story of the Open Hand

Chandigarh is rightly proud of its public art structure, the Open Hand. The stark hand, made up of metal sheets, moves with the flow of the wind like a wind vane. Ironically, the master architect of Chandigarh, Le Corbusier never actually got to see the Open Hand monument he designed. He had wanted to place it over the Bhakra Dam, but the idea did not get a nod from the Indian government and the Open Hand was made only after his death. It was finally installed in 1985, 20 years after he died. Its symbolic message is 'open to give and open to receive'. Envisioned in the period after the trauma of World War II, it also signifies peace and reconciliation – an open hand cannot hold a weapon.



lookout for the turn-off from Madhya Marg; the insignificant marking can be missed.

 172 2777077; www.chandigarhtourism.gov.in; Old Architect Building, Madhya Marg, Sec 19-B; 10am–6pm, Mon closed

5 CAPITOL COMPLEX

The complex is Le Corbusier's most significant contribution to the city's architecture and has been recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, putting Chandigarh on the international map. The three main buildings here, the Legislative Assembly, the Secretariat and the High Court, are designed in bold geometric lines and sweeps of moulded concrete.

The architect envisioned this complex, which now serves as the administrative and political heart of two states, as the 'head' of a city that he had conceptualised like a human body. One of the notable features is the Open Hand sculpture, the official emblem of the Chandigarh administration. Other monuments reflecting Chandigarh's modernist architecture are the Geometric Hill, made up of construction waste and designed to screen the assembly building from the road, and the Tower of Shadows which traces the path of the sun.

www.chandigarhtourism.gov.in; Sector 1; free walking tours at 10am, noon and 3pm in batches of not more than 30; Sat–Sun closed; permission required to visit the complex

Photo exhibits at Le Corbusier Centre on Chandigarh's history



The Capitol Complex is a World Heritage Site

6 LEISURE VALLEY

The series of themed gardens located along a 8km-long stretch are virtually the lungs of the city. The Rose Garden, touted to be Asia's largest, lies in Sector 16 and boasts of some 1600 varieties of roses. While this is a favoured spot for a stroll or picnic, the Fitness Trails in Sector 10 are popular with walkers, joggers and yoga enthusiasts. Another noteworthy garden is the Bougainvillea Garden, home to an overwhelming variety on display. It houses a memorial dedicated to soldiers killed in cross-border conflicts. Each of the gardens has a separate entrance.

7 GOVERNMENT MUSEUM & ART GALLERY

The museum is divided into various sections – it starts with the textiles section and goes on to display Gandharan sculptures, miniature paintings and contemporary Indian art among other exhibits. The standout feature is definitely the elegant Gandharan-era collection of more than 600 artefacts, which is the second largest in India. Before 1947, these relics were part of the Lahore museum. Post Partition, the collection was divided between the two countries and the relics are now part of India's collection. The natural history section is housed in the building designed by Le Corbusier. <http://203.100.69.89:81/chdmuseum/>; Sector 10; entry ₹10, free for children under 12 and senior citizens; camera ₹5;



♥ If You Like: A little bit of Paris

A replica of the Eiffel Tower is located near the parking lot outside the Government Museum and Art Gallery. The 56-feet tall replica was designed by the students of the Chandigarh College of Architecture as a tribute to the 1960s hit Bollywood film *An Evening in Paris* and installed in 2013. It's a busy photo-spot for visitors seeking selfies.

Sector 10

10am–4.30pm except Mon & public holidays; guided tours daily 11am, noon, 3pm, 4pm

8 NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

A must-visit for those travelling with children, the exhibits feature fossils, model dinosaurs, hand-embroidered displays of birds and a diorama of a caveman showcasing his cave art. Sector 10; entry ₹10; camera ₹5 (same ticket as Government Museum and Art Gallery can be used here); 10am–4.30pm

9 INTERNATIONAL DOLLS MUSEUM

The museum is not just a visual treat but also an educational experience. It includes displays from a host of countries like Denmark, the Netherlands, Germany and Russia. Some of the exhibits showcase the traditional dresses of different regions, while others depict popular storybook characters such as the Sleeping Beauty, Cinderella and Snow White. A huge collection from the

The Leisure Valley Park has many varieties of rose shrubs





The majestic White tiger can be spotted at the Chattbir Zoo

various states and tribes of the country, including dolls in their traditional bridal wear, highlights the diversity of India. **Bal Bhawan B, Udyog Path, 23B Sector; entry ₹10; camera ₹5**

10 CHANDIGARH WAR MEMORIAL

This memorial honours the soldiers from Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and the Union Territory of Chandigarh who have died defending their country since Independence. It was inaugurated by former President APJ Abdul Kalam. The 22-foot-tall sculpture in green marble symbolising the three services – Army, Navy and Air Force – is minimalist and austere. The names of the 8459 martyrs are engraved on granite in an encircling wall. The memorial is located in a serene setting in the Bougainvillea Garden.

Bougainvillea Garden, Sector 3

11 CHATTBIR ZOO

Sprawling over 202 acres of raw scrubland, the Mahendra Chaudhary Zoological Park (Chattbir Zoo), located a short distance away (15km from the railway station) on the Chandigarh–Patiala highway, provides the perfect natural setting for about 1000 animals and birds. Here you can spot animals roaming freely in vast, open enclosures. The star

Snapshot: Punjab's sporting destinations

- **Cricket** Mohali, near Chandigarh is the home of Punjab's cricket team. The Indian cricket team is studded with stars from Punjab.

- **Rural Olympics** The Kila Raipur Sports Festival showcases the exciting Rural Olympics and is held in the village of Kila Raipur near Ludhiana between the end of January and the first week of February.

- **Wrestling (Dangal)** The wrestling dangals are held in Chandigarh, Ropar, Amritsar, Jalandhar and many other cities on the day of Maghi (January 14) and Basant Panchami. The prizes range from tractors to buffaloes to ghee tins.

- **Hockey** Punjab is hailed as the "Mecca" of hockey and its pride is best showcased at hockey festivals. The ones that draw many fans are organised in Ropar and Jalandhar. Village Sansarpur in Jalandhar has the distinction of having produced the highest number of hockey Olympians for the nation.

- **Football** Night tournaments are held in Mahilpur, and the game is rapidly gaining a big following in cities and the interiors.

- **Basketball** This game has a growing following in the state and the Ludhiana Basketball Academy (LBA) is often called 'India's own NBC' as it has the distinction of sending some of its trainees to the prestigious National Basketball Association of USA.



Rupinder Pal Singh is a prominent hockey player from Punjab

attraction of the biggest zoological park in north-western India is the Royal Bengal tiger.

The zoo also conducts a lion safari where visitors are taken in a caged motor vehicle to see the Asiatic lions. It is well worth taking a detour to visit the zoo, especially if you are travelling with children. The zoo supports the conservation of endangered and rare species through captive breeding and also encourages research and awareness on wildlife. Do not litter or tease the animals here. Stroll down a 300-metre long walk-in aviary to admire the feathered creatures.

Chatt Village, District Mohali; entry ₹15, free for children under 3 years and the disabled; camera ₹60; 9am–5pm, Mon closed

Detour: Rupnagar (Ropar)

Rupnagar (Ropar) appeals to history buffs and nature-lovers alike and is worth a day trip (45km away from Chandigarh). This is the first archaeological site in India to reveal the remains of the famed Indus Valley Civilisation that flourished along the Sutlej river. The carefully excavated remains displayed in the **Archaeological Museum** (rupnagar.nic.in/html/asi_museum; Bhagat Singh Nagar, entry ₹10, 10am–5pm, Fri closed) go back to 2000 BC and span centuries, giving a fascinating insight into how earlier civilisations grew, disappeared and gave way to new ones. Here, you will find Harappan-era relics, ancient seals, grey earthenware, pottery, terracotta and coins spanning

dynasties such as the Shakyas, Kushanas and Guptas.

Located on the banks of the Sutlej, there is also a vast manmade wetland here created by the construction of a regulator on the Sutlej river. The **Ropar Wetlands**, nestled against the Shivalik Hills on one end and vast plains on the other, include stretches of forestland and marshland where many animal and bird species such as the cheetal, wild boar, purple fowl and woodpecker make their home. Ropar wetland attracts a large number of migratory birds during winters. A tourist complex in the area has a boating club and is an ideal spot for a picnic.

 Migratory birds arrive at
 Ropar Wetland in winter



Accommodation

JW Marriott Hotel HOTEL ₹₹₹

172 3955555; www.jwmarriotchandigarh.com; Plot No 6, Sector 35-B, Dakshin Marg; d from ₹8000 (incl breakfast) This five-star hotel features plush accommodation, a luxurious spa, an indoor and an outdoor rooftop pool, plus a spacious 24-hour coffee shop. Cafe@JW. Its fine-dining Indian restaurant, Saffron, is open only for dinner from 7.30–11.30pm. If you love milkshakes, do try one at the Chandigarh Baking Company, the hotel's bakery and cafe.

▮ The Lalit Chandigarh offers top-end facilities

Taj Chandigarh LUXURY HOTEL ₹₹₹

172 6613000; www.tajhotels.com; Block No 9, Sector 17-A; d from ₹7495 (incl breakfast) Located in the heart of Sector 17, its prime location is just one of the few things that the Taj has going for it. Others include the luxurious rooms with floor-to-ceiling windows, two fine-dining restaurants – Black Lotus for Chinese cuisine and Dera for Indian fare, the slick Lava Bar, a lovely pool, a spa, and a 24-hour business centre.

The Lalit Chandigarh HOTEL ₹₹₹

172 3007777; www.thelalit.com; Rajiv Gandhi IT Park, near DLF Commercial Complex; d from ₹7400 (incl breakfast) This sleek hotel has many things going for it – elegant



rooms, some of which overlook the Shivalik mountain range; a pool that can be used round the year; a spa where you can play your own music and which offers relaxing hammam therapy; and more than five dining options including two bars and a nightclub – Kitty Su.

Hotel Solitaire BUSINESS HOTEL ₹₹

172 4688500; www.hotelsolitaire.com; SCO 902–903, NAC, Housing Board Chowk, Manimajra; d from ₹3500 Located on Madhya Marg, this hotel is a stone's throw away from the railway station. The rooms are clean and well-appointed, the service is good, the staff helpful and the food palatable. Its location on the road exiting towards Shimla in Himachal Pradesh helps guests in transit to halt for a short stay and quick meal.

▮ JW Marriott, Chandigarh offers fine dining options

Hotel Aquamarine BOUTIQUE HOTEL ₹₹

172 5014000; www.hotelaquamarine.com; Sector 22-C Himalaya Marg; d from ₹4500 (incl breakfast) The hotel offers 21 well-appointed rooms. Centrally located, it is right next to Hotel Aroma which has a huge food court, so eating options are aplenty. Breakfast is served at the Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf cafe.

Hotel Aroma BOUTIQUE HOTEL ₹₹

172 4010000; www.hotelaroma.com; Sector 22-C Himalaya Marg; d from ₹3295 (incl breakfast) The Aroma was built in 1954, and was Chandigarh's first hotel, catering to celebrities such as Marshal Tito and Jawaharlal Nehru. It has elegant, well-furnished rooms, a restaurant offering buffet meals and a food court called

Eating House which has 14 eateries such as Nik Baker's, Cafe Coffee Day, Subway and McDonald's.

Hotel Mountview

HOTEL ₹₹

📞172 4671111; www.citcochandigarh.com/mount_view; Sector 10; d from ₹6000 (incl breakfast) This government-managed five-star property has an added attraction in the form of large, manicured grounds. The hotel has a pool and the rooms have a contemporary look and feel. There are two dining options here – Magic Wok, the Chinese restaurant that sets the mood with live music; and Rustles, the multi-cuisine eatery. The Lounge Bar provides an option to hang out in the evenings.

Hotel Shivalikview

HOTEL ₹₹

📞172 4672222; www.shivalikviewchandigarh.com; Sector 17-E; d ₹5400 (incl breakfast & dinner) The hotel has friendly staff, an outdoor pool and a gym, and the rooms are spacious and comfortable. It has three interesting dining options – Le Cafe, the 24-hour coffee shop that can satisfy your midnight cravings; Bazm which serves great buffet options; and Cloud 9 where you can pick from an array of cuisines. It's a five-minute walk from the Sector 17 commercial area too.

Hotel Icon

BOUTIQUE HOTEL ₹₹

📞9501113920; www.icon-boutique.hotelsofchandigarh.com; SCO 58–61, Madhya Marg, Sector 8-C; d from ₹5200 (incl breakfast) One of

Chandigarh's best boutique addresses, the Icon is an attractive option with wooden floors and tastefully done-up rooms. Baker's Street, the cafe, serves good coffee while Hibachi, the fine-dining restaurant, is a popular place for Japanese, Thai and Chinese fare.

AB's

BUSINESS HOTEL ₹₹

📞172 4051889; www.hotmillions.biz; SCO 196–197, Sector 17 & SCO 6, Sector 26; d from ₹3000 From the Hot Millions stable, these cosy little hotels are located above HMs2 in Sector 17 and AB's restaurant in Sector 26. Contemporary and convenient with well-furnished rooms, they're your answer to a comfortable stay while in transit.

Eating

Cafe Nomad

MEDITERRANEAN ₹₹₹

📞8437031469; SCO 178, Inner Market, Sector 7-C; 10am–11.30pm Tucked away in the less crowded part of the market, Cafe

Restaurants offer a variety of tikkas and kebabs



Sample the Malabari chicken at Swagath

Nomad is your go-to place for a quiet, refined experience. The wooden flooring, crystal chandeliers, warm lighting and soothing music are as inviting as their selection of mezzes, kebabs, stir-fries and homemade ice creams. The service is prompt, the staff is well-trained and the food is tasty.

Swagath

MULTI-CUISINE ₹₹₹

📞172 5000444; www.swagath.in; SCO 7, Madhya Marg, Sector 26; 11am–11.45pm This popular multi-cuisine restaurant has carved a niche for itself in the city. Specialising in quality Mangalorean, Chettinad and Malabari cuisine, it serves up a mean Mughlai and Chinese menu too. Call ahead on weekends or you may find yourself waiting endlessly.

Virgin Courtyard

ITALIAN ₹₹₹

📞172 5070045; SCO 1A, Sector 7; 11.30am–11.30pm This al fresco

dining address spread across an ivory-white villa and a shaded courtyard is a good place for Italian cuisine. Try the arancini served with a tangy tomato-based sauce and grated radish, or the subtly flavoured panna cotta with meringues on the side. Chilled beer is also available here.

Homemade ice creams are a speciality at Cafe Nomad



Hibachi ORIENTAL ₹₹₹

☎9501113907; SCO 58–61, Madhya

Marg, Sector 8-C; 11.30am–11.30pm

Located on the ground floor of Hotel Icon, Hibachi is the place to go if you're craving some Japanese or Southeast Asian food. You can go in for the sushi, Burmese khao suey, pad Thai, Chinese kung pao chicken with peanuts and even Malay-style laksa. There's also a well-stocked bar serving chilled beer and premium Scottish malts.

Farzi Cafe MODERN INDIAN ₹₹₹

☎7347003570; SCO 23, Madhya

Marg, Sector 26-D; noon–1am

This is fusion food at its best. You'll be tucking into dishes like dal chawal arancini, Thai curry paneer tikka, palak paneer quesadillas and Parle G cheesecake. It has opened recently and already become quite popular.

Drop in at Farzi Cafe if you fancy fusion cuisine

SWEET SHOP & Sindhi Sweets RESTAURANT ₹₹

☎172 466782/28; www.

sindhisweets.co.in; SCO 110–111,

Sector 17; 9am–10pm Popular with shoppers and office-goers, this vegetarian fast-food joint also specialises in Indian sweets. Step into the basement from the street level and order from the fast-food menu at the counter to avoid delays. Or take the lift to the upper floor for a leisurely tuck-in of a South Indian or Chinese meal.

Gopal's SWEET SHOP & RESTAURANT ₹₹

☎172 5062424; www.gopalsweets.

in; SCO 459–460, Sector 35-C;**8am–12.30pm (limited menu),**

12.30–10.30pm (full service) A dream come true for those with a sweet tooth, the street-level section is mithai heaven! Fresh and fast-moving, the ras malai and gulab jamun are definitely worth the extra calories. The upper


 **If You Like: Takeaway options in Sector 8**

Sector 8 is lined with takeaway joints. The idea is to eat in your car or just stand outside and munch away. Here are some good options to try.

- **Uncle Jack's** This take-out offers everything American – from hot dogs, burgers and fries to shakes in tall elegant glassware. A special mention for Trumps – a plate of three mini chicken burgers served with pepper fries. Don't be surprised by the orange coloured bun. The pizza fries are worth the calories.
- **Churiosity** This place has just got churros on the menu, but don't be fooled into thinking that ordering will be easy. They offer as many varieties as you can imagine – from savoury, classic, looped to sundaes. Stick to the classic; but if you want to experiment, try the Baconator.
- **Milkshake & Co.** The shakes are thick and creamy, the flavours are huge and the takeaway glasses are cute.
- **Get Desserted** The menu offers gulab jamun ice cream, sitaphal yoghurt, jamun sorbet, paan-flavoured milkshake, Ferrero Rocher waffles and sugar-free ice cream as well. You ought not to need more reasons to halt by this dessert parlour that's been winning hearts and awards for a long time now.
- **Wok Man** This eatery allows you to choose what you want in your wok box – the protein, five vegetables, rice or noodles and a sauce of your choice. The Japanese Tobajiang noodles with chilli plum sauce are quite good.
- **Master Chi** Another great option for Oriental food on the go, Master Chi offers dimsums, Bento boxes and chicken wings.

level offers a large array of Indian and Chinese fast food, snacks and chaat, as well as all sorts of beverages. Do sample their breakfast combo of puri and chhole.

Pal Dhaba INDIAN ₹₹

☎172 2650709; SCO 151–152 Sector

28 D; 11am–11pm It has been around since 1970 and their butter chicken is still the most famous dish. If you are a vegetarian, go for the channa masala, shahi paneer and dal fry. The dishes are creamy, buttery and go perfectly with a naan or tandoori roti. Non-vegetarians can try the mutton gravy and keema kaleji.

Backpackers Cafe CAFE ₹₹

☎8437041459; SCO 16, Sector 9-D,

Inner Market; 8.30am–midnight

A travel-themed European gourmet cafe, Backpackers made the all-day breakfast concept famous in Chandigarh. Healthy and wholesome, their three-egg omelettes, sandwiches and pancakes continue to be a hit, as do their signature smoothies and masala Coke. A smallish space, the cafe can get crowded quickly, so getting a table may take a while; thumbing through their travel books will make your wait interesting. Be warned – parking in this market is a nightmare during business hours.



Enjoy a cappuccino at Oven Fresh, a popular haunt for locals

Oven Fresh BAKERY ₹₹

☎9888877766; SCO 35, Madhya Marg, Sector 26; 10am–11pm

Chandigarh's original bakery chain, Oven Fresh, has signature grilled sandwiches and baked samosas on offer. They also serve some decent pasta dishes and quick bites like croissants, puffs and rolls. Warning: This can be a very noisy place some afternoons.

Indian Coffee House SOUTH INDIAN ₹₹

☎172 2702804; SCO 12, Sector 17; 9am–10pm Locals throng this restaurant and it's a great place for breakfast or lunch, with egg, toast and South Indian favourites such as idli, vada, dosa and fabulous filter coffee. You can also buy good coffee powder here.

Ghazal MUGHLAI ₹₹

☎172 2704448; SCO 189–91, Sector 17-C; 11.30am–11.30pm A Chandigarh stalwart and still going strong, Ghazal has a dignified air and a fine menu of Mughlai classics including chicken and mutton specialities, plus some well-prepared Continental and Chinese dishes. The vegetable jalfrezi is a fiery sensation. At the back of the restaurant, a suited bartender serves beverages from a long line of imported single malts and beers.

Sai Sweets SWEET SHOP ₹

☎172 4661102; SCO 1102–3, Sector 22-B; 7.30am–11pm This clean and wholesome sweet shop below Hotel Satyadeep serves tasty mithai. Also on offer are substantial snacks such as tikki chaat, pani puri and pav bhaji.

Nightlife

Lava Bar BAR ₹₹₹

☎172 6613000; Taj Chandigarh, Sector 17-A; 12.30pm–12.45am Considering it is housed inside the plush Taj hotel, this small bar is relatively laid-back, with a cosy atmosphere and live bands or a DJ playing most nights. Despite the steep prices, it's a good place for a drink, especially the champagne cocktails.

Kitty Su NIGHTCLUB ₹₹₹

☎8288033863; www.kittysu.com; The Lalit Chandigarh, Rajiv Gandhi IT Park, near DLF Commercial Complex; 8pm–1am Wed, Thu, Fri & Sat Kitty Su has climbed the popularity charts and become a favourite nightclub in the city. It has two sections, great

music and an extensive menu. If you like cocktails, you've reached the right place.

Hops n Grains MICROBREWERY ₹₹

☎8054923857; SCO 358, Sector 9, Panchkula; noon–midnight This massive microbrewery offers premium, light, wheat and dark beer. Spread over three floors, it has good bar nibbles and happy hours as well.

Great Bear MICROBREWERY ₹₹

☎172 4026566; SCO 32, Madhya Marg, Sector 26; noon–midnight Apart from a range of cocktails, great wheat beer, happy hours and delicious food, this bar has rooftop seating and an al fresco area as well.

Shopping

1469 GIFTS & SOUVENIRS

☎11 65101469; www.1469workshop.com; SCO 81, Sector 17-D; 11am–8pm Named after the birth year of Guru Nanak (the founder of the Sikh faith), this funky independent clothing store sells fabulously colourful scarves, shawls and traditional Punjabi garments, as well as modern T-shirts with an irreverent Punjabi twist. It also stocks some lovely jewellery, including the steel kara bracelets worn by Sikhs. Celebrities such as Alia Bhatt, Imtiaz Ali and Ranbir Kapoor have been spotted wearing T-shirts from the shop for certain films.

Chandigarh's microbreweries have a range of beers on offer



Khadi India CLOTHING

📍172 5262413; SCO 28, Sector 17-E; 11am–7pm This non-government operation has good value, homespun textiles and herbal beauty products of premium quality, the sale of which directly supports small community producers in rural India. There's another outlet in Sector 17-G which is a few minutes' walk away.

Phulkari ARTS & CRAFTS

📍172 2706246; SCO 27, Sector 17-E; 11am–8pm, Sun closed This official Government of Punjab emporium stocks everything from wood inlay tables and brightly embroidered phulkari textiles to dupattas and colourful juttis.

Sector 22 Market MARKET

10am–10pm This bustling street market sells a mind-boggling array of household goods and clothing, and is sprinkled with pop-up street-food stalls selling yummy local treats.

Tiny Shop ARTS & CRAFTS

📍172 2703100; Basement SCO 186–188, Sector 17-C; 11am–8pm, Sun closed This basement boutique opened in 1980 and is tucked underneath a row of shops and restaurants in the busy Sector 17 market area. It sells artistic knick-knacks and household goods that make for quirky souvenirs.

▮ The popular Sector 22 shopping area has stores selling household goods



▮ The laser and water show at Sector 17

Sector 17 MARKET

This sector is the heart of Chandigarh's commercial activity, with numerous pedestrian concourses lined with shops, branded stores, cafes and restaurants. A huge musical fountain with laser and water shows every few minutes is the main attraction of the central piazza that is buzzing with shoppers, vendors, office-goers and street artists. The place takes on a rather festive aura during the winter months, with lights, music, carnivals, and not least of all, the irresistible sales.

Shastri Market MARKET

Shastri Market is also called Rehri Market as vendors once hawked their wares from carts here. Today a bustling marketplace comprising over 300 tiny booths, it throws up a deal at each step. With everything from innerwear to ready-to-go furnishings,

denims and women's apparel, this is by far the most inexpensive shopping experience in the city.

Vanity Box ARTEFACTS

📍9855534220; SCF 7, Sector 9-D, inner market; 11am–8.30pm This multi-level store has a distinct vintage-country feel to it. Artefacts, lifestyle accessories, English prints, quirky products, stationery and furniture – you will find an inexhaustible selection here. Sourced from entrepreneurs, the wares are mostly customised and make for a unique shopping experience under one roof.

Elante Mall MALL

📍172 5005000; www.elante.com; Plot No 178, Industrial Area Phase 1, MW Area The most popular mall in the city, this is a one-stop-shop if you're looking for branded goods. It is also home to many restaurants, bars, breweries and a multiplex theatre.



Expert Recommendation

Architectural landmarks

Architectural journalist and author of *Architectural Voices of India: A Blend of Contemporary and Traditional Ethos*, **Ar. Apurva Bose Dutta** lists some of Punjab's significant landmarks.

VIRASAT-E-KHALSA, ANANDPUR SAHIB

One of the largest cultural and historical museums in the world dedicated to a single community (in this case, the Sikhs), the colossal structure celebrates the fortress cities of Rajasthan, Gwalior and Punjab. The narrative museum offers a modern and bold design where technology, art, and craft sit together. Its design manages to be intensively local and gloriously global all at once.

CAPITOL COMPLEX, CHANDIGARH

Le Corbusier's Capitol Complex is an architectural wonder. Comprising the buildings of the Secretariat, Legislative Assembly and High Court, and the monuments of the Open Hand, Martyr's Memorial, Tower of Shadows and Geometric Hill, it is renowned for its majestic scale and stark and bold use of concrete.

GOLDEN TEMPLE, AMRITSAR

Plated in gold and stunning artwork and with its deceptive appearance of floating on water, the Golden Temple is a mix of Indo-Islamic and Hindu Rajput architecture with elements including domes, bay windows and chhatris. The terraces, pavilions and fountains add to the serene aura of the pristine marble of the temple. It

also houses heritage structures such as the Akal Takht.

QILA MUBARAK, BATHINDA

One of the highest and oldest surviving forts in India, its unique design – that of a majestic ship stationed in the sand – sits well in the context of Bathinda where one finds stretches of sand. A number of palace structures and two gurudwaras adorn the complex. These structures are made up of small bricks dating back to the Kushan Period that combine to create dense exteriors, indicating strength and power. The fort provides panoramic views of the entire town.

SAINIK SCHOOL/JAGATJIT PALACE, KAPURTHALA

The exquisite Jagatjit Palace now houses the Sainik School in Kapurthala restricting visitors' accessibility. It showcases the Renaissance style and integration of French and Indian architecture. Modelled on the palaces of Versailles and Fontainebleau, it is noted for its plaster of Paris figurines, collection of artefacts and painted ceilings.

(To know more: www.apurvabose.com)

Virasat-e-Khalsa is one of the largest museums dedicated to the Sikhs



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