

Pulsating Punjab

The Land of Five Rivers



Punjab, located in the north west of India, is one of the smallest, beautiful and the most prosperous states of India and a location of one of the world's first and oldest civilisations - the Indus Valley Civilisation. Punjab is an agricultural state with its fertile soil watered by an extensive canal system.

Punjab, the land of five rivers, has land with prosperity. The plains of Punjab, with their fertile soil and abundant water supply, are naturally suited to be the bread basket for India. Punjab is a land of exciting culture. The state has achieved tremendous growth over the years due to the success of the Green Revolution in the early 70s. For a major period in the second half of the 20th century, Punjab led the other states in India to achieve self-sufficiency in crop production. The current state of Punjab was formed in 1966, the state was organised into three smaller states - Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh

The five rivers Sutlej, Beas, Ravi, Chenab and Jhelum gave it its name 'punj-ab' (the land of five rivers) and divide the state into three regions: Majha, Doaba and Malwa. The state is bordered by Pakistan on the west, the Indian states of Jammu and Kashmir on the north, Himachal Pradesh



on its northeast and Haryana and Rajasthan to its south. People of Punjab are known for its hospitality, progressive and logical approach to life. It is the birth place of a number of religious movements, such as Sikhism, Buddhism and many Sufi schools of Islam.

Punjab, with its fertile farming land, is one of India's

most prosperous states. Home to the pulsating bhangra music and the brotherhood of the Sikh religion, it has a distinctive and lively culture. Capital city Chandigarh is a modern day planned city that's different to any other in India. However, to get a real taste of Punjab, it's necessary to venture further afield to discover the simplicity and charm of rural life, amidst an ever growing urban life.

Punjab has 17 districts, namely, Amritsar, Bathinda, Faridkot, Fatehgarh Sahib, Firozpur, Gurdaspur, Hoshiarpur, Jalandhar, Kapurthala, Ludhiana, Mansa, Moga, Muktsar, Nawan Shehar, Patiala, Roop Nagar and Sangru.

The most important tourist center in the state is Amritsar with its Golden Temple. This temple is considered to be the holiest of all the pilgrimages of Sikhism and houses Akal Takht, the supreme governing body of Sikhism. The Jalianwallah Bagh is a small park in the city where the British police massacred many pilgrims in the year 1919. Wagah is the only open land point between India and Pakistan. Ludhiana is famous for its hosiery and woolen goods and products from Ludhiana are exported all over the world. For its production of hosiery, Ludhiana is also known as the 'Manchester of India'. It also boasts of the world famous Punjab Agricultural University, which organises the Kisan Mela every Year. Nearby is Killa Raipur, which is famous for its Rural Olympics. Patiala is famous for its healthy food, loving people, wonderful parandaas, exciting Patiala peg and jootis.

Chandigarh



Chandigarh, derives its name from a temple Chandi Mandir in the vicinity of the site selected for the city (deity Chandi, goddess of power), and a fort or 'garh' beyond the temple, called Chandigarh. Chandigarh, the capital of the states of the Punjab and Haryana set at

the foothills of the majestic Himalayas, was planned by the French architect Le Corbusier after India's independence and is the first planned modern city of India. The young-at-heart, fast-growing and progressive city is striking for its urban planning, impressive buildings with brise-soleil facades,

well-organised sectors and broad tree-lined avenues. It has become synonymous with a certain kind architecture, alongwith planned landscaping, not found in other cities of India, and not amenable to being strait jacketed.

Chandigarh, the city itself is also a lure to the tourists by virtue of its geometrically shaped residential areas complimented by landscaped gardens, tree lined avenues - all converging to an outstanding balance in blending of modern and traditional architecture in the city. Apart from that the beautiful Sukhna Lake, the exquisite rose garden - Zakir Gulab Bag, the fascinating Rock Garden, the sacred temple of the Goddess Chandi are truly worth a travel to Chandigarh.



Amritsar



Amritsar has been the capital of the Sikh religion since the 16th century. Located in the northwestern state of Punjab, a wealthy and prosperous region and home to the majority of India's Sikhs, Amritsar is also the unlikely site of India's most dazzling temple. A shimmering monument in marble, bronze, and gold leaf, and a vivid architectural celebration of Sikhism's devotion, the Golden Temple is both fascinating and spiritually invigorating, combining sheer physical beauty with a truly sacred atmosphere. The way in which its devotees worship is enough to hold your attention and your heart completely

captive. Amritsar partially shares borderlands between India and Pakistan at Wagah, a half hour drive from town. Amritsar Tourism enjoys a distinct place in the tourism industry of India. It is home to Harmandir Sahib, also known as the Golden Temple, the spiritual and cultural center of the Sikh religion.

Amritsar is also known for the incidents of Jallianwala Bagh Massacre in 1919 under British Rule. The main commercial activities include tourism, carpets and fabrics, farm produce, handicrafts, service trades and light engineering. The city is popular and known for its food and culture.





Patiala

Famous for 'peg', 'pagri', 'paranda' (tasselled tag for braiding hair and 'Jutti' (footwear), joyous buoyance, royal demeanor, sensuous and graceful feminine gait and Aristocracy, Patiala presents a beautiful bouquet of life-style even to a casual visitor to the city. A brilliant spectrum of Rajput, Mughal and Punjabi cultures, a fine blend of modernity and tradition and a judicious synthesis of all that is beautiful in form and bold in spirit conjure up a vision called 'Patiala'. Patiala, an erstwhile princely state, capital of PEPSU and a district headquarters of Punjab is situated in the Malwa region of Punjab. Patiala is relatively a young city, a few years more than two centuries old. With the active patronage of the erstwhile rules

of Patiala, a well established style of Hindustani music called 'the Patiala Gharana' came into existence and has held its own up to the present times. This school of music has had a number of famous musicians, many of whom came to Patiala after the disintegration of the Mughal Court at Delhi in the 18th century. The city of Patiala awaits you with its quiet splendors. Its royal mystique, its grandeur, a whole host of magnificent buildings, gardens and parks and above all an ambience all of its own invites you quietly but surely. Being the south-eastern district of Punjab and being also one of the youngest cities of the state, Patiala still holds its own when it comes to retaining the old-world charm and the many-faced delights of its rich

heritage. Patiala has something for everyone. To the lover of history and things historical, it offers a glorious chapter in the history of 18th and 19th century Punjab, in particular the history of the Malwa region of Punjab.



Ludhiana



Ludhiana or Lodiana, is called after the Lodis, which dynasty ruled at Delhi from AD 1451 to 1526. The Two Lodi Chief, Yusaf Khan and Nihang Khan, deputed by Sikandar Lodi (AD 1489-1517) to restore order in the region, fixed head-quarters on the present location of Ludhiana city, which was at the time on more than a

village called Mir Hota. Legend has it that Yusaf crossed the Satluj to check the Khokhars, who were then plundering the Jalandhar Doab, and settled at Sultanpur; Nihang Khan remained at Mir Hota as the Emperor's lieutenant and called the place Ludhiana. Ludhiana city is known as the industrial hub of Punjab, whose roots go back to the 15th century. This vivacious city has turn out to be a colourful bouquet of different cultures, thanks to its industrial status. The inventive and creative urge of the Ludhianivis noticeable itself beautifully in various industrial activities. Ludhiana has time and again been called the Manchester of



India. Industries manufacturing cycle and its parts, woolens, machine tools, sewing machines, generators, diesel engines, tyres and tubes and a host of other utilities and consumer goods dot the map of Ludhiana. The industrial products and hosiery manufactured in Ludhiana are not only used within India but they are also exported to different regions of the world.



Bathinda



Bathinda district is situated in the Southern part of Punjab state in the heart of Malwa region. According to Khalifa Muhammad Hassan, author of history of Patiala, its ancient name was Bikramgarh. According to raverty, Bathinda was known as Tabarhindh (Labbut-Twarikh). According to Ibn Batuta it was known as Batrind. It was also called Whatinda and Bitunda which finally

become known as Bhatinda. But its name was changed to Bathinda on the authority of Survey of India to conform to the phonetical expression as locally pronounced. In recent times the town was conquered by Maharaja Ala Singh (near about 1754 AD) and since then it followed the history of erstwhile princely state of Patiala. It is one of the largest cotton producing regions of India and an important



industrial centre. The town is known for a huge thermal power plant and a fertilizer factory. Bathinda has a rich religious and cultural heritage. There are a number places worth visiting in and around the city. Bathinda is nicknamed the city of Lakes and was once known as Tabar-e-Hind (or Tabarhindh), meaning the Gateway to India.



Pathankot



Pathankot is a small city of Punjab, officially declared as district on 27 July, 2011 by Government of Punjab. In past, it was a Tehsil of the district Gurdaspur. It is a meeting point of the three northern states Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir. Due to its ideal location, Pathankot serves as a travel hub for the three northernly states. It is the last city

in Punjab on the national highway that connects Jammu and Kashmir with the rest of India. Situated in the picturesque foothills of Kangra and Dalhousie, with the river Chakki flowing close by, the city is often used as a rest-stop before heading into the mountains of Jammu and Kashmir, Dalhousie, Chamba, Kangra, Dharamshala, Mcleodganj, Jwalaji, Chintpurni and deep into the Himalayas.



Mouth-watering Punjabi cuisine



Punjabis are big-time food lovers, preferring a wide variety in their menu. They are full of life and their food too reflects this liveliness. Punjabi food forms an important part of the North Indian cuisine, which appeals to the taste of many. The people in this state generally go for spicy foods and use oil and ghee to a considerably higher extent. There are no intricate marinades or exotic sauces, but an exuberant use of masalas, with a liberal addition of oil or ghee.

The people of Punjab prefer wheat to rice; though they do have rice occasionally. In roti itself, you find such a wide variety that you are left to wonder about Punjabi cuisine's versatility. Makke ki Roti (chapati made of corn) and stuffed paranthas have wide popularity. Milk and milk products are also commonly used by the people here. Curd and butter milk are important concomitants of a Punjabi meal. Lassi, made out of curd, is a popular drink of Punjab, which satisfactorily quenches the thirst in summers.

One can easily notice a disparity within Punjab, as per the choice of food. For instance, the people in Amritsar go for stuffed paranthas and milk products, whereas Malwa inhabitants prefer bajra khitchdi more. One thing that runs common throughout the Punjab is the wide use of onion, garlic, ginger and tomatoes, as the common masala for most food items. People also regularly use garam masalas such as cardamom, cinnamon, mace and bay leaf in their food preparation. Besides they usually garnish their food with finely-cut coriander leaves and juliennes of ginger.

The food items that form a part of the traditional food of Punjab are so eye-catching that you can hardly resist your temptation to taste them all.



VEGETARIAN DISHES

- Sarson ka Saag (Mustard leaves curry)
- Dal Makhani/Dal Handi (curry of pulses)
- Pindi Chanay (generally eaten with Naan)
- Panj Ratani Dal (a mixture of 5 lentils)
- Kadhai Paneer
- Shahi Paneer
- Sheer Korma

NON-VEGETARIAN DISHES

- Tandoori Chicken
- Butter Chicken
- Bhuna Ghosht (dish made of lamb)
- Kebab
- Amritsari Fish
- Tandoori Fish
- Fish tikka
- Chicken Biryani
- Lamb Biryani
- Keema Naans
- Reshmi Tikka
- Malai Tikka
- Pork Pickle

BREAD & FLOUR PREPARATIONS

- Amritsari Naan
- Tandoori Roti
- Stuffed Kulcha
- Lachha paratha
- Aloo paratha
- Mooli paratha
- Bhatoora



Punjab's new Pilgrimage Train to cover all five Takhts

When it comes to luxury trains in India, our country boasts of quite a few of them. A new train to be added to this segment is the pilgrimage train by Punjab Heritage and Tourism Promotion Board (PHTPB), which will depart on December 30, 2012. This new program is especially dedicated to the Sikh community, courtesy PHTPB, who have planned a detailed spiritual and cultural tour for the global Sikh community.



PHTPB organised a trial run for this train in 2010 wherein PHTPB felt a great demand by tourists for a budget train, which could be a little luxurious in nature. The idea of connecting the five Takhts with the added attractions of Taj Mahal and Gwalior Fort is bound to attract not just the local community, but also the NRIs. The train would be owned and operated by IRCTC while the sale of tickets and marketing will be pushed a little by PHTPB in collaboration with some private players. PHTPB will handle the ground operations and also look into the security within the state. There will be a minimum of two trips a year and the frequency will be pepped up as per the response from the public. The train will be able to carry 240 passengers - 70 in AC First Class, 30 in Third A/C and the remaining in second AC. A company called The Luxury Trains, which is a train's specialist in India that markets and operates trains in India's premier destinations, will also look into the marketing of this new train by PHTPB. The new tour program is dedicated to every community on an economical Rajdhani style tourist train. The train will take you a spiritual experience which any devotee would cherish.

Some of the highlights of this new pilgrimage train includes Sri Akal Takht Sahib, Golden Temple, Jallianwala Bagh, Wagah Border, Takht Sri Keshgarh Sahib, Takht Sri Damdama Sahib, Gurudwara Bangla Sahib, Gurudwara Sheesh Ganj Sahib, Takht Sri Patna Sahib, Takht Sachkhand Sri Hazur Sahib, Gwalior Fort, Gurudwara Data Bandi Bandi Chorh Sahib, Taj Mahal and Agra Fort.



Farm Tourism @ Punjab



Punjab tourism offers Farm Tourism for an enriching experience of rural/farm life. Here, farm owner acts as both hosts and guides to the visiting tourist. The farm houses provide a clean, hygienic environment with modern facilities for the comfort of visitors, which meet the standards defined by Punjab Heritage and Tourism Promotion Board (PHTPB). Farm stay experience introduces travellers to real 'Punjabi' hospitality, with fine 'home cooked' meals, farm activities and the opportunity to meet families from the outback and country regions of Punjab. With farm houses spread across Punjab, it becomes a convenient spot for weekend gateways.

Apart from the farm experience one will also be exposed to local community life, which includes panchayat meeting, exposure to local songs, food, dances, art and craft, festival occasions such as marriages, local fairs and village games such as wrestling, gulli danda, kite flying and rides on bullock carts, tractors, etc. Experiences such as jumping on the hay and taking a bath in the tube well could be unique feature for both adults and children from urban areas. A visit to important monuments, palaces, historical sites within close proximity through guided tours can also be organised by each farm owners. One can also be a part of their farming activities and gain knowledge on organic farming,

floriculture, horticulture, natural health management, animal breeding such as cattle, goats, poultry, horse breeding and much more. (For more information visit: www.punjabtourism.gov.in.)



FARM HOUSES

- Casba Farm House (Mohali)
- Aura Vaseela (Mohali)
- Sidhu Farm House (Mohali)
- Virsa- The Heritage Farm (Mohali)
- Mystic Meadowz (Mohali)
- Gary Farm (Patiala)
- Virasat Haveli (Amritsar)
- Green Acres Haveli (Amritsar)
- Citrus County (Hoshiarpur)
- The Kothi (Gurdaspur)
- SRAN Farm House (Gurdaspur)
- Jyani Natural Farm (Ferozepur)
- Mohindra Fruit Farm (Ferozepur)
- Mann Makhhi Farm (Bathinda)
- Deep Roots Retreat (Roop Nagar)
- Mand Farm House (Roop Nagar)
- Bharatgarh Fort (RoopNagar)
- Green Valley Farm (Nawashahar)



Festivals galore @ Punjab



LOHRI

Celebrated all over Punjab on January 13 with bonfire and bhangra, Lohri ushers in the cheerful spring season bidding adieu to the chilling winters.

MAGHI MELA/MUKTSAR FAIR

It is organised in Muktsar mid January. (A three day festival), it commemorates a battle fought in 1705-06 by Guru Gobind Singh against the Mughals.

KILA RAIPUR SPORTS FESTIVAL

It falls in February each year, when Kila Raipur, Ludhiana witnesses special breed of bullocks, camels, dogs, mules etc competing together.

PATIALA HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Organised in February by the Patiala Heritage Society, the festival offers sublime for the music and art lovers of the entire state of Punjab.

PUNJAB HERITAGE VINTAGE AND CLASSIC CAR DRIVE

PHTPB holds this drive across Punjab in mid February which

aims to promote the rich heritage sites.

HOLI

This festival of colours and eternal brotherhood is rejoiced not only in Punjab but all over India in the month of March.

HOLA MOHALLA

Celebrated in Anandpur Sahib by Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) in March, the word Hola Mohalla stands for 'the charge of an army'.

BAISAKHI

Baisakhi celebrated in April by SGPC commemorates the success of hard work put in by farmers for a good harvest.

RAUZA SHARIF 'URS'

Rauza Sharif 'Urs' is celebrated in the memory of great Sufi Saint Sheikh Ahmad Farooqui Sirhindi on May 31 every year in Sirhindi.

BABA SHEIKH FARID AAGMAN

The Baba Farid fair in September at Faridkot held by

Baba Farid Society marks the saint's arrival day with faith and fervour.

ROPAR HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Held at Ropar in October by the local district administration, the festival aims to bring Punjabi artists in the limelight and provide mixed entertainment to one and all.

DIWALI

A festival of light celebrated all over India in Oct/Nov, Diwali is enjoyed with rich decorations, illuminations and fireworks.

KAPURTHALA HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Held in Oct/Nov by Kapurthala Heritage Trust this festival unfolds a wonderful tapestry of classical music, dance and theatre at Kapurthala.

BHANGRA FESTIVAL

PHTPB holds this much loved festival in November which provides an insight of Dhol beats. Mainly known as folk dance of harvesting season, Bhangra Festival strengthens communities by bringing people together.

AMRITSAR HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Herein Amritsar showcases Bhangra, Giddha, Gatka troupes, horses and elephants along with the beautiful jhankies depicting Punjabi culture. Organised by Amritsar Heritage Society, this cultural tour falls in November.

