

Spirituality Kashmir



J&K TOURISM

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM, J&K

Kashmir

A journey of the soul through stunning landscapes



Kashmir, renowned worldwide for its beauty, holds a rich history of grandeur and cultural refinement reflected in its places of devotion. The valley is a unique place where revered ascetics have lived, leaving behind shrines and temples that resonate with spiritual significance. Beyond the boundaries of Jammu & Kashmir, these spiritually elevated souls have garnered widespread devotion. Kashmir continues to captivate with its inspiring natural splendor, serving as a muse for saints and Sufis. Adorned with numerous shrines and temples that transcend religious boundaries, the region exudes peace and tranquility, harmonizing with nature's gentle breeze. Some of these sites carry historical importance alongside their religious significance, welcoming devotees of various faiths to Shrines, Temples, Gurudwaras, and Churches.



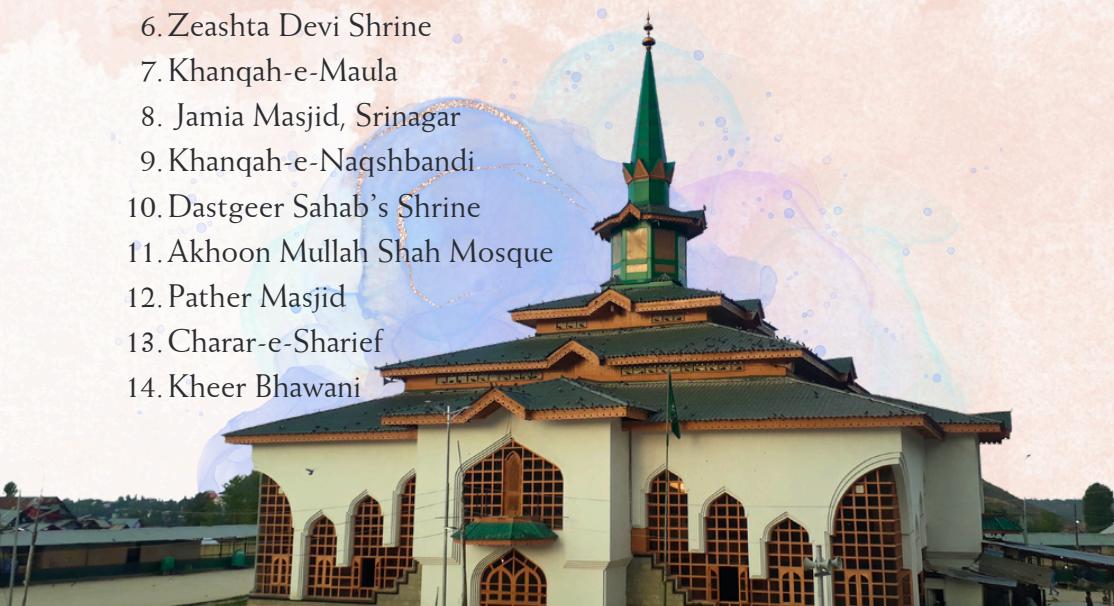
South Kashmir

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1. Martand Sun Temple, Anantnag
 2. Amarnath Cave, Anantnag
 3. Mamleshwar Temple, Anantnag
 4. Ashmuqam Shrine, Anantnag.
 5. Awantipora Temple
 6. Jamia Masjid Shopian



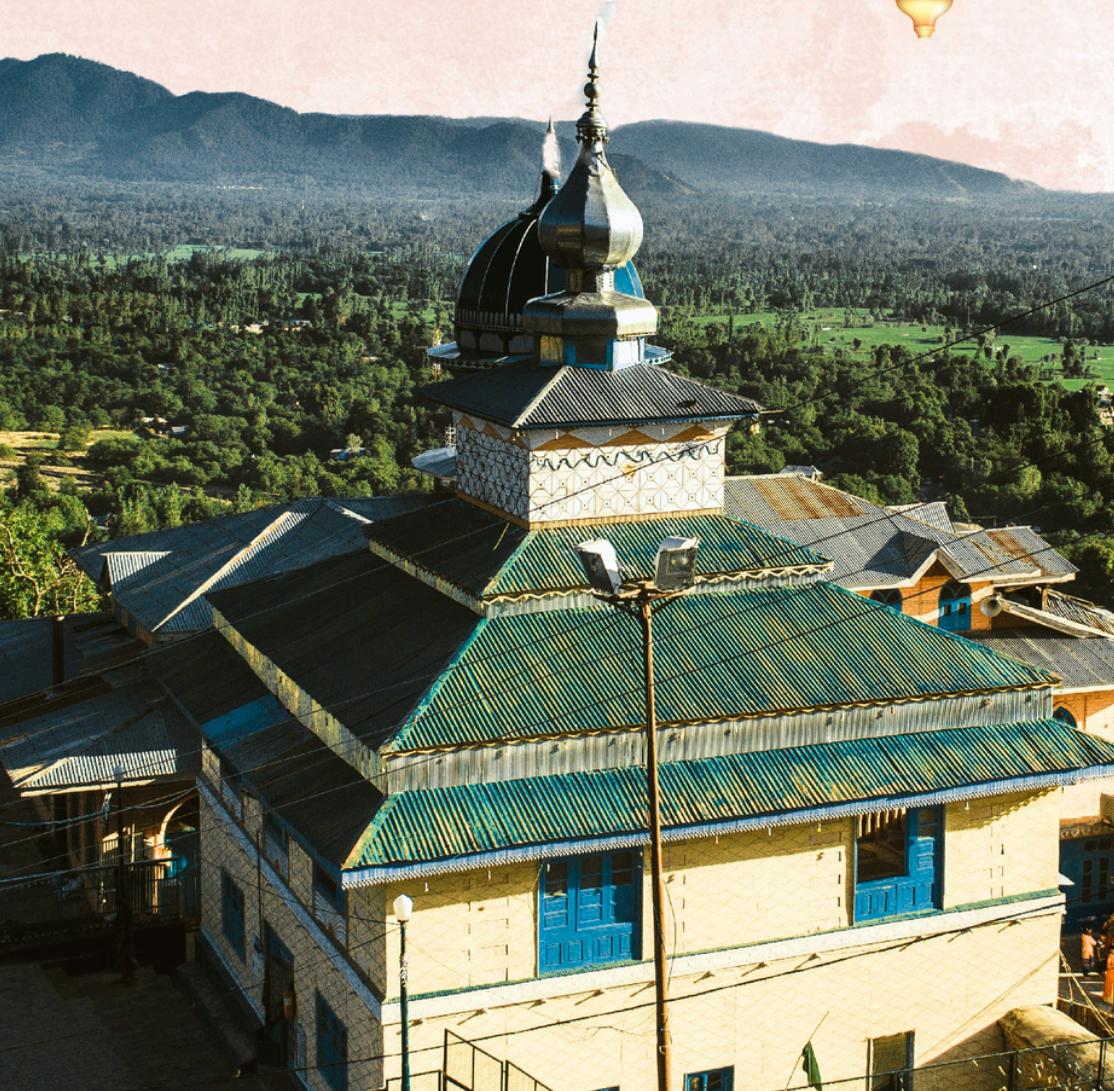
Central Kashmir

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1. Gurdwara Chatti Padshahi
 2. Makhdoom Sahib Shrine
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North Kashmir

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 2. Baba Reshi
 3. Maharani Temple, Gulmarg
 4. Sharda Peeth, Tangdaar



Martand Sun Temple

The Martand Sun Temple, situated near Anantnag, stands as the foremost Religious attraction in Kashmir. Located atop a plateau, it is built in the 8th century. This Kashmiri Hindu temple is dedicated to the sun God Surya. The government has developed it into a significant tourist site, showcasing indigenous Aryan architecture. The primary shrine, featuring a pyramidal top common in Kashmiri temples, displays wall carvings of various Gods and river Goddesses. Declared a site of national importance by the Archaeological Survey of India, it is situated five miles from Anantnag.



Āmārṇāth Cāvē

Located over 13,000 feet above sea level in Pahalgam, the Shri Amarnathji Cave is a revered site dedicated to Lord Shiva, featuring a naturally-forming ice Shivling. It is one of the oldest Himalayan pilgrimage spots, attracting thousands of Hindu devotees annually in July and August. The Shivling's size varies with the moon phases, with the most auspicious time being the full moon night in Sawan. The government and Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board ensure facilities for Yatris on the challenging trek routes via Baltal and Chandanwari. Helicopter services are available for those opting for an aerial journey. Discovered in the 19th century by a Muslim shepherd, Buta Malik, the pilgrimage symbolizes harmony between Hindu and Muslim communities.



Mamleshwar Temple

A 10-minute drive from Pahalgam town, across the Lidder River, stands the 4th-century Mamal (or Mamalaka) village temple. This modest all-grey stone structure, following Kashmiri architectural style, is internally 8ft and features a two-tiered pyramidal roof. In front of the porch, a 12ft stone basin holds clear blue-green spring waters. Legend associates the temple's name "Mamleshwar" with Lord Ganesh guarding its entrance, signifying 'don't go.' This ancient temple is believed to have origins around 400 A.D.



Ashmuqam Shrine

Ashmuqam Shrine, dedicated to the 15th-century saint Hazrat Zainuddin Wali, is perched on a hillock 20 km from Pahalgam. Celebrating his Urs on the 13th day of Basakh (April 25), the shrine overlooks the enchanting Lidder Valley. Zainuddin Wali, known for his generosity, meditated in a cave atop the hill as advised by his mentor Sheikh Nuruddin Wali. The shrine holds relics, including a bow, wooden bread, a rosary, a wooden club, and a copy of the Holy Quran. The annual Urs is a communal celebration, with active participation from all communities.



Avanti Pora Temples

Avanti Pora Temples dedicated to Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu, stand on the Jammu-Srinagar national highway in Awantipora, Pulwama. Built in the 9th century A.D. by King Avantivarman, from the Utpala dynasty, on the banks of the Jhelum River, these temples showcase the stone architecture of Kashmir's historical grandeur. Formerly a capital, the site is locally known as Pandav Lari, meaning "house of Pandavas." The Archaeological Survey of India preserves these historically significant temples.



Jāmiā Masjid, Shāpiān

Built in the 1930s by Ustab Habibullah and a Srinagar woodworker, Shopian's Jamia Masjid is India's third-largest mosque. Known for accommodating thousands of worshippers simultaneously, it features numerous pillars, one naturally placed.



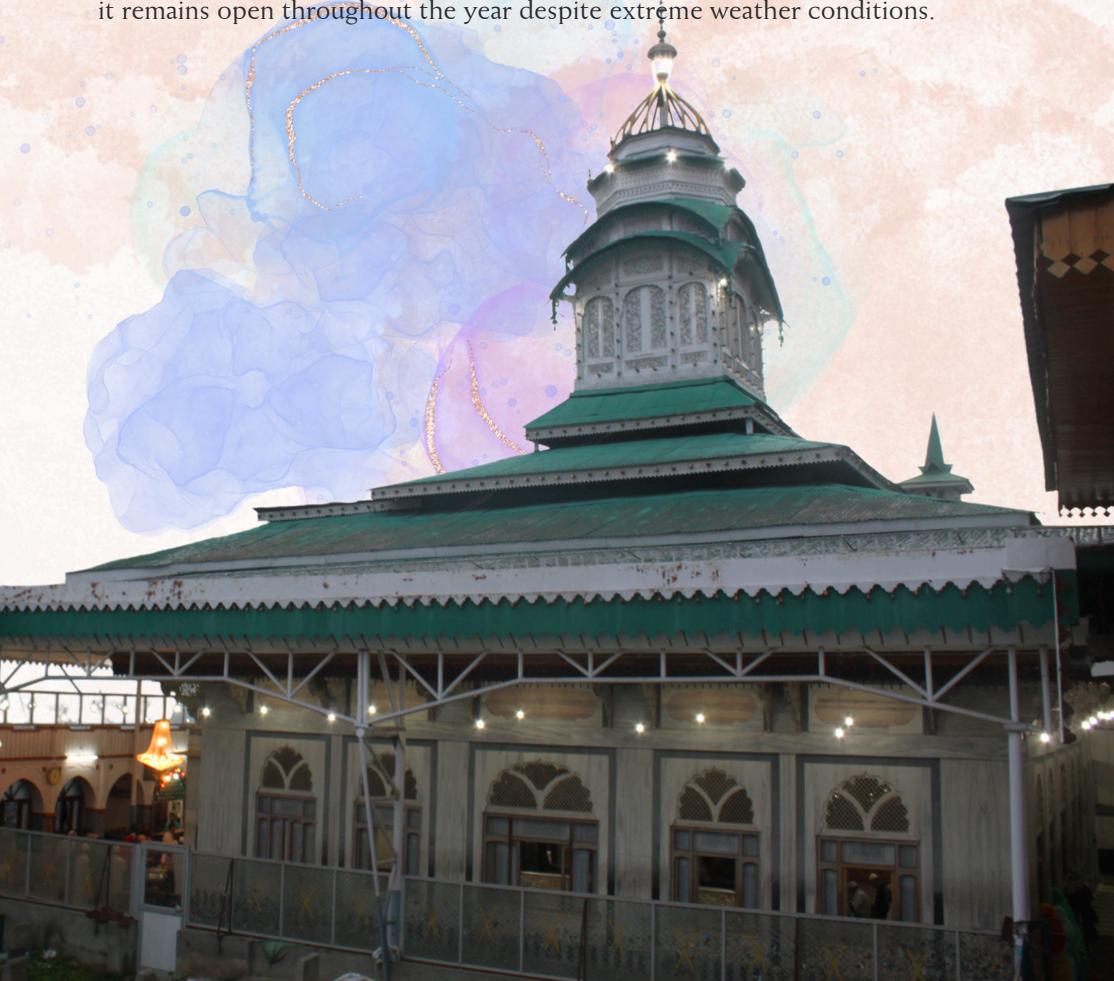
Gurudwara Chatti Pādshāhī

Gurudwara Chatti Padshahi holds great religious significance, constructed in memory of the 6th Guru, Hargobind Sahib ji (1595-1646), who stayed here in 1616 AD during his journey to Kashmir with Emperor Jahangir's Caravan. Located outside the southern gate of Hari Parbat Fort, it plays a vital role in the city's religious tourism. Pilgrims from across the nation visit this sacred site. In recent times, a larger building has been constructed, offering proper accommodation facilities for visitors. The rectangular hall of the Gurdwara features the sanctum in the middle and a spacious terrace in the front.



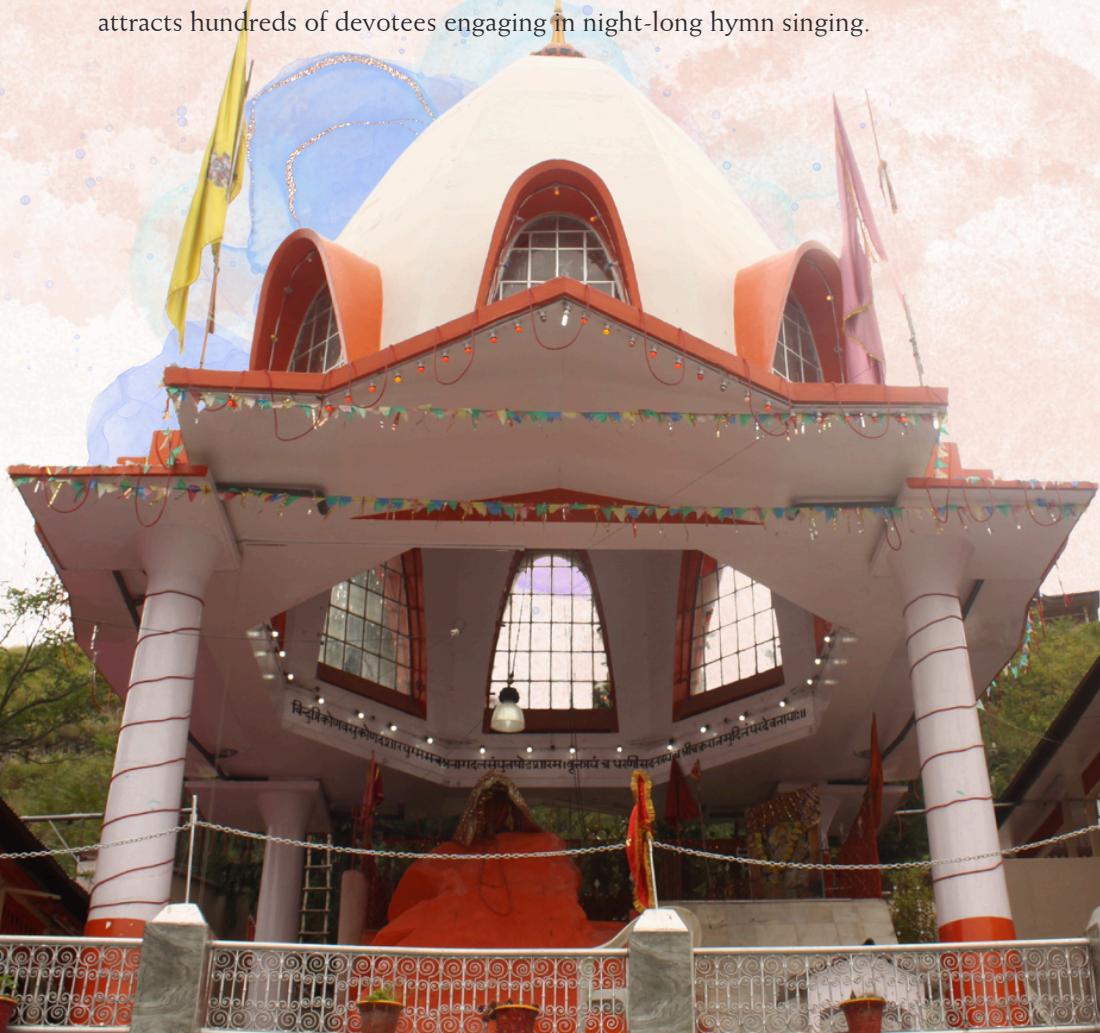
Makhdoom Sahib Shrine

Makhdoom Sahib's Shrine, on Hari Parbat's foothills, is a double-storied structure dedicated to the Sufi saint Sheikh Hamza Makhdoom, born in 1494 AD. The shrine, southeast of Hari Parbat Fort, is known for its distinct stone steps leading to it. Devotees of various faiths climb these steps to pay obeisance. A cable car ropeway connects the shrine to the study and Interpretation Center, easing the journey for devotees and tourists. The shrine's beauty, complemented by a magnificent Mughal fort atop the hill, attracts devotees of all religions. The mosque's architecture reflects Mughal design, and it remains open throughout the year despite extreme weather conditions.



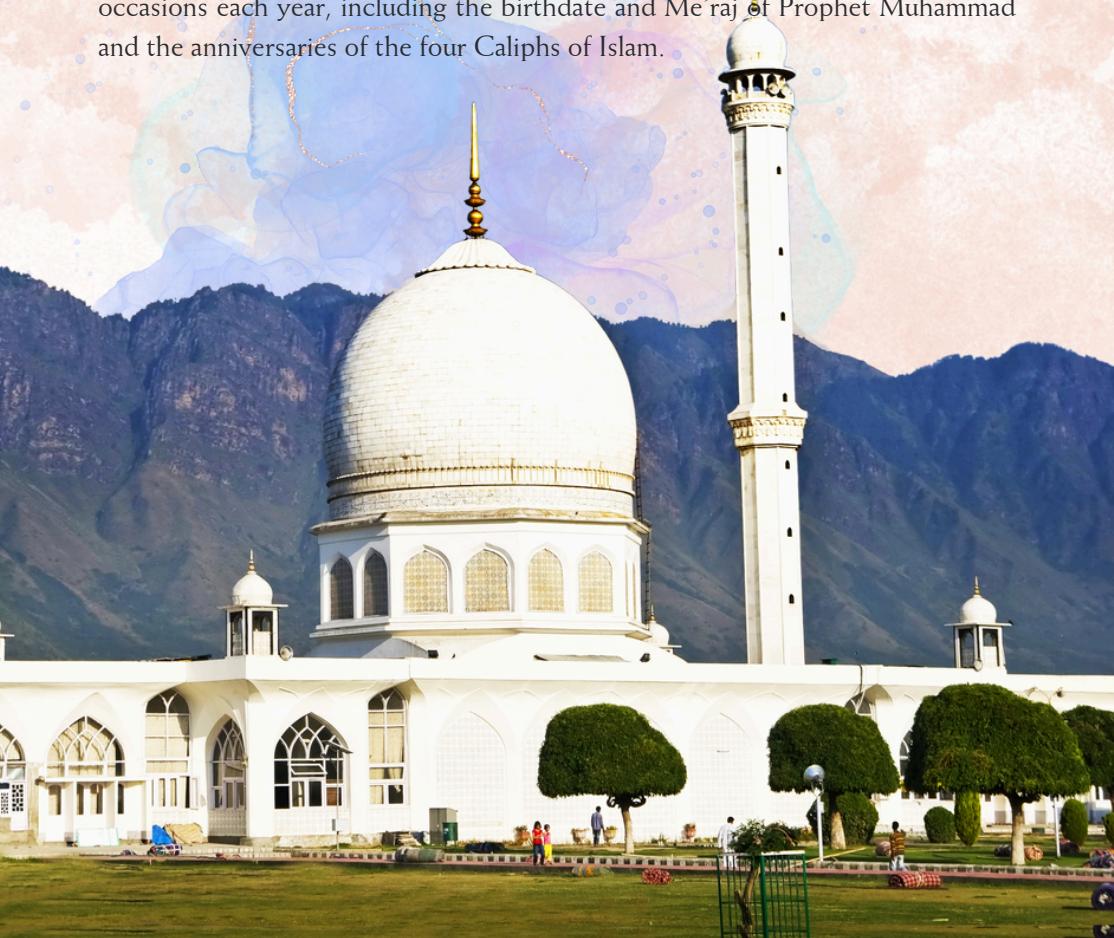
Sharika Devi Temple

To the west of Makhdoom Sahib's shrine on Hari Parbat hill lies the temple of Sharika Devi, also known as Chakreshwari or Hari Byear. This sacred shrine houses the 18-armed Goddess Sharika Devi. The name 'Hari' in Hari Parbat is believed to originate from a Mynah bird carrying a pebble in its mouth, leading to the growth of the hill. The Goddess's idol features circular mystic impressions in sandy rock and triangular patterns with a Bindu at the center. During Harnavami, Sharika Devi's birthday in mid-June to mid-July, the temple attracts hundreds of devotees engaging in night-long hymn singing.



Hazratbal Shrine

The Hazratbal, also known as the white marble-domed mosque and Dargah constructed in 1699 by the Muslim Auqaf Trust, is a revered site in Kashmir housing the holy relic of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Located on the banks of Dal Lake, 8 km from the city center, it is a focal point for prayers, especially on Fridays. The mosque's distinctive feature, the relic, is displayed on specified religious occasions, making it the most respected Dargah in Kashmir. The white marble structure, including the dome visible from across Dal Lake, is surrounded by a garden lined with Chinars. Thousands gather on Fridays to offer prayers, and the holy relic is exhibited from mini towers on ten specific occasions each year, including the birthdate and Me'raj of Prophet Muhammad and the anniversaries of the four Caliphs of Islam.



Shankaracharya Temple

To the right of Nehru Park, an uphill motorable road leads to the famous Shankaracharya Temple, named after Adi Shankaracharya and dedicated to Lord Shiva. It attracts thousands of Hindus throughout the year, standing at an altitude of 1100 feet above the city. Built around 250 BC, the temple, with its unique stone architecture, offers a breathtaking view of Dal Lake from the hilltop. Adi Shankaracharya, a philosopher, stayed here over 1000 years ago during his visit to Kashmir. Despite its narrow entrance, devotees queue up orderly to make offerings, and the temple is visible from the city center.



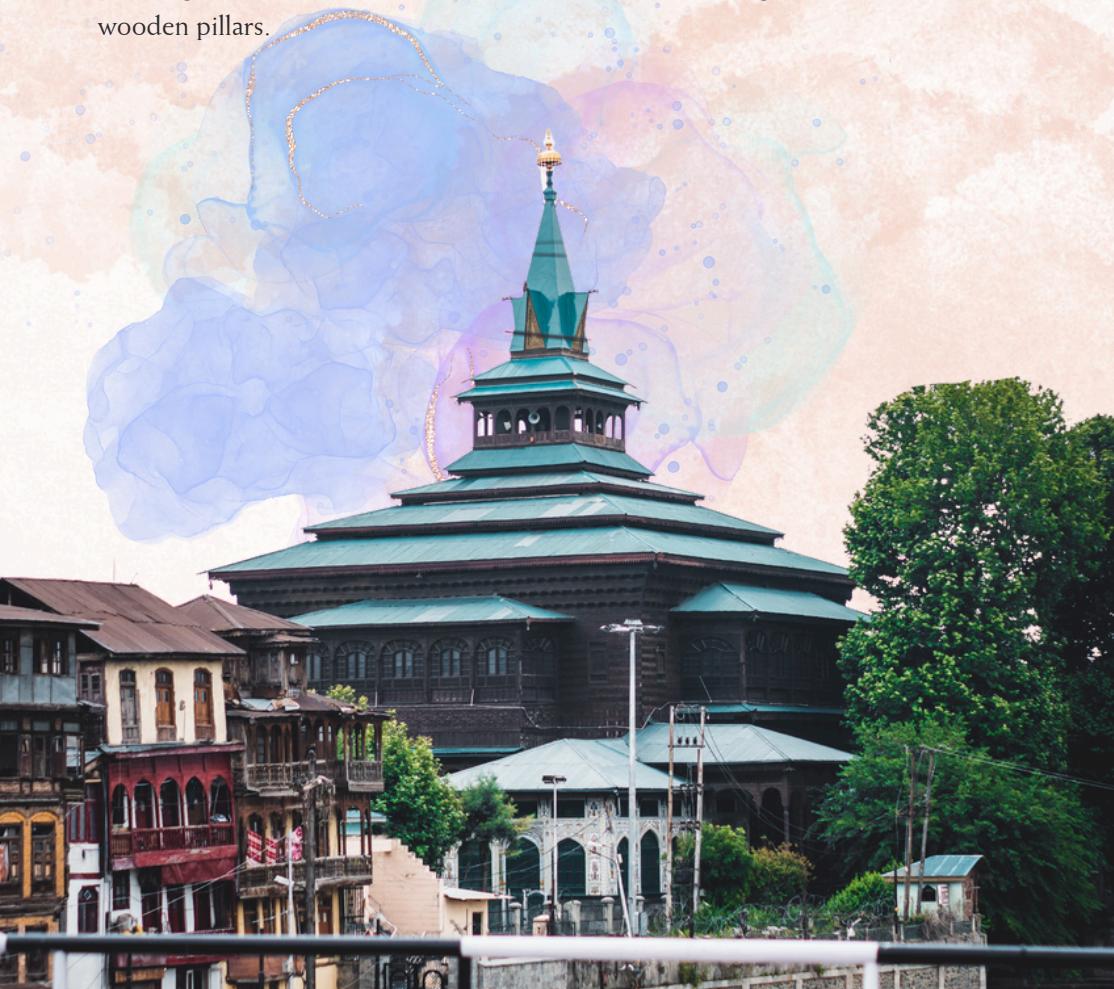
Zēashtā Dēvi Šhrīnē

Zeashta Devi Shrine, or Zeathyar, is a revered Hindu shrine in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, dedicated primarily to Jyeshta/Zeashta Devi. The temple is held in high reverence by Kashmiri Pandits since ancient times.



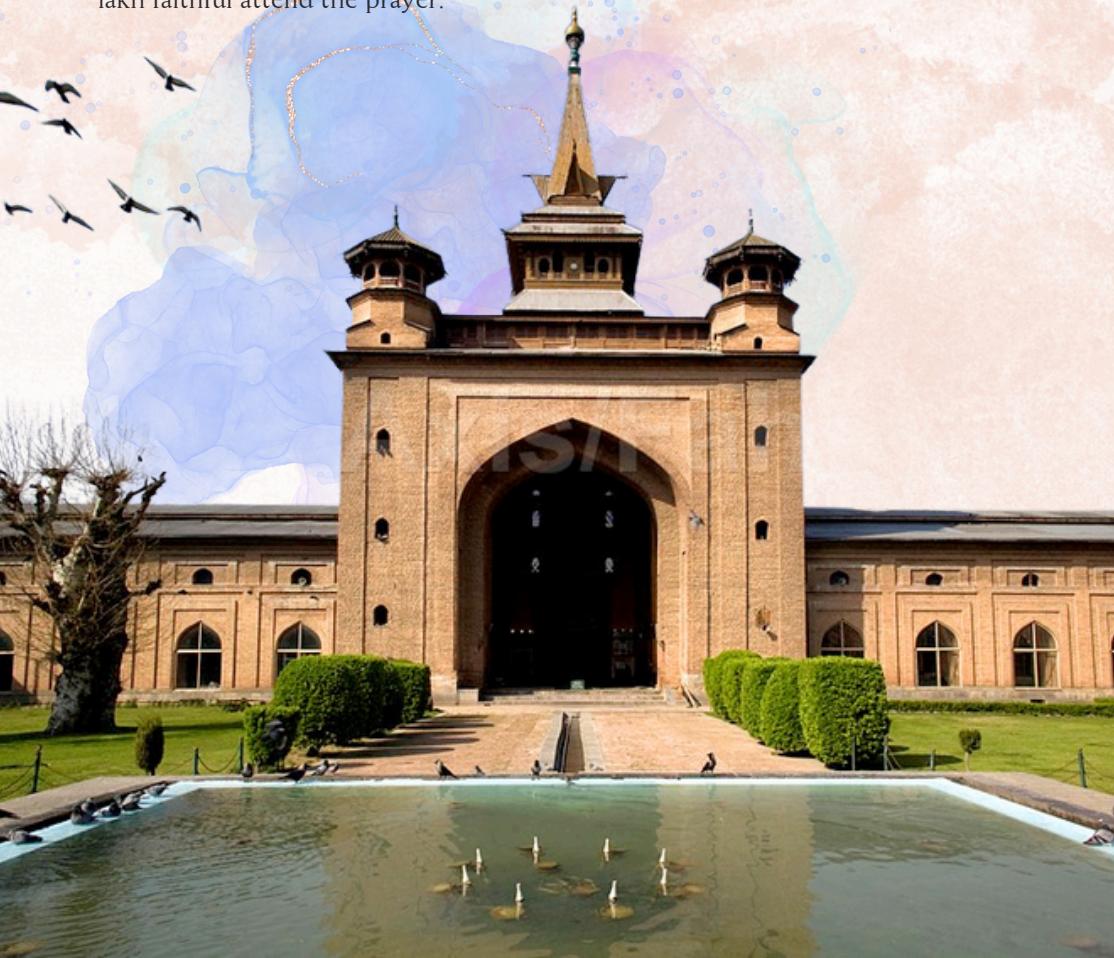
Khanqah-e-Maula

Khanqah-e-Maula, also known as Shah Hamadan Mosque, is named after Hazrat Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani, or Shah-e-Hamadan. Constructed by Sultan Sikander between 1389 and 1413 AD, this Islamic architectural masterpiece stands in harmony on the banks of River Jhelum. Originally built in 1732 AD after an accidental fire destroyed the original structure in 1731 AD, the Khanqah is crafted from deodar wood with intricate lattice work on doors and windows. The ceiling displays calligraphic verses from the holy Quran and features wood paneling called 'Khatamband,' while floral wood carving adorns the colossal wooden pillars.



Jāmia Masjid, Srinagar

Jamia Masjid, the central and largest mosque in Kashmir, is located in Old City, Nowhatta, Srinagar. Built by Sultan Sikandar Butshikan between 1398 - 1402 AD and extended by Zainul-Abidin. The mosque features Islamic architecture with a courtyard and the roof, supported by 378 deodar pillars. The mosque's limestone walls, 4 feet thick and 30 feet high, have four gates with 50-feet high chambers, pyramidal domes, and spires, with the largest dome positioned over its Mimber toward the west. The serene square garden and central fountain provide a peaceful retreat from the bustling old bazaars surrounding it. Thousands gather for Friday prayers, and on the last Friday of Ramadan, over 1 lakh faithful attend the prayer.



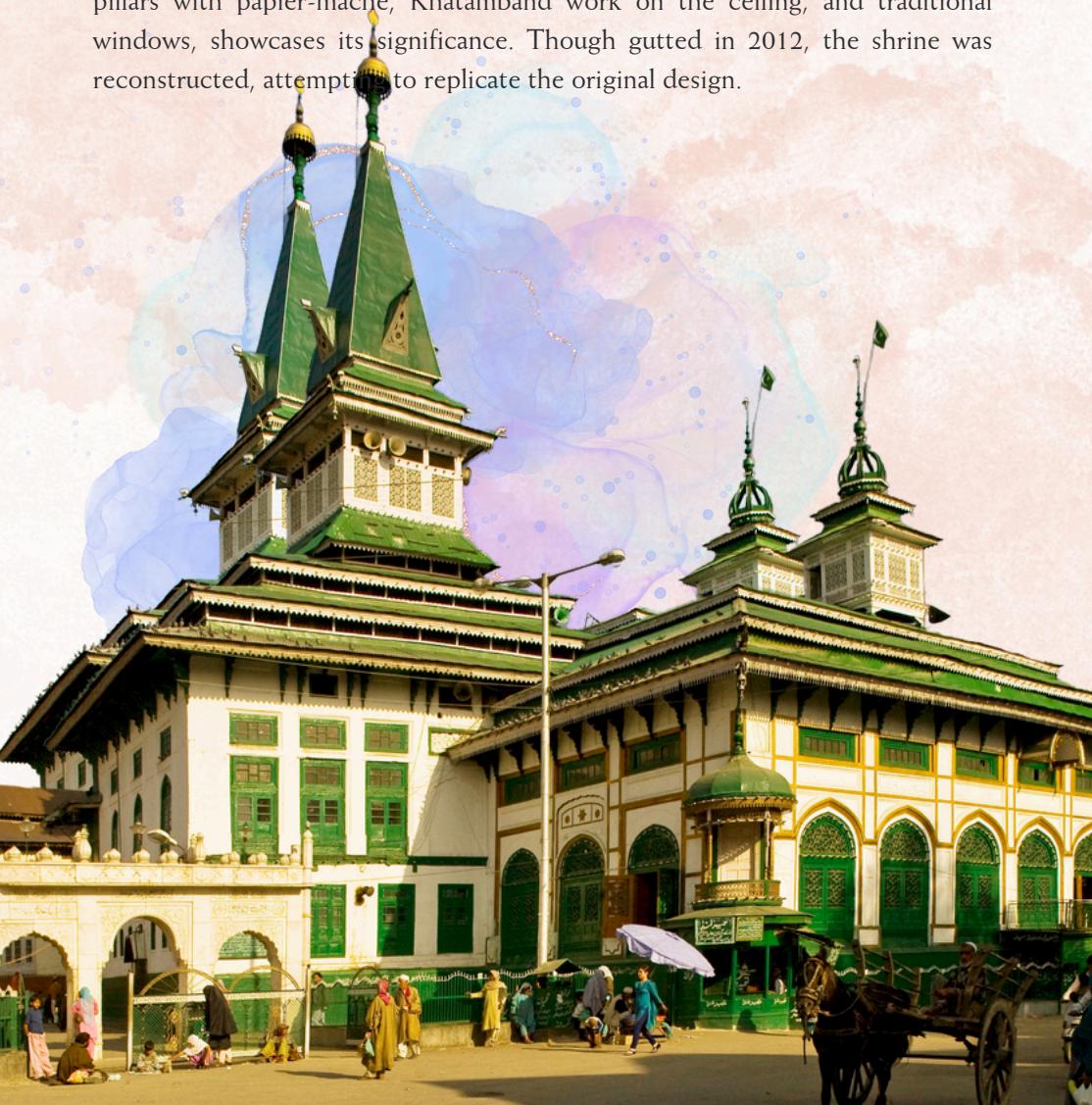
Khanqah-e-Naqshbandi

Adjacent to Jamia Masjid is Khanqah-e-Naqshbandi, the 17th-century shrine dedicated to Hazrat Khawaja Naqshband Sahab. The annual Urs on the 3rd day of Rabi-ul-Awwal sees visitors offering prayers. Known as 'Khoje Diger,' special Asr prayers are held on the saint's anniversary. Built with wood and bricks to resist earthquakes, the shrine honors the Bukhara mystic Khawaja Syed Bahauddin Naqshband. Though he never visited Kashmir, a Khanqah was established in his name. Mohiuddin, his descendant, is buried in the wooden shrine featuring Pinjrkari panels and papier-mâché work. The shrine also houses a library and is located in Nowhatta near Dastgeer Sahib and Jamia Masjid, attracting visitors to Khawaja Bazaar. During Urs, visitors enjoy freshly-prepared Parathas and lotus stem snacks.



Dastgeer Sahib's Shrine

Dastgeer Sahib's Shrine, located in Khanyar, the heart of old Srinagar city, is dedicated to the revered Sufi saint Syed Abdul Qadir Jeelani. On the 11th of Rabi Al Thani, his relics are displayed, drawing thousands of devotees. Despite the saint not visiting Kashmir himself, his descendants imparted teachings here, leading to the shrine's naming. The ancient architecture, including deodar pillars with papier-mâché, Khatamband work on the ceiling, and traditional windows, showcases its significance. Though gutted in 2012, the shrine was reconstructed, attempting to replicate the original design.



Akhāon Mullah Shah مَسْجِدِ

Situated at the base of Hari Parbat hill, the 17th-century Akhoon Mullah Shah Mosque is constructed from grey limestone. It features arched terraces on the hill slopes, concealed chambers with arcades and domes. Jewels and mirrors were fitted in the walls to illuminate the entire place in the evenings. The main building is surrounded by preaching chambers where students used to learn the Holy Quran from the tutor Mullah Akhoon Shah. The front and the top-most terraces have gardens with three huge Chinars lined up with a stone-lined pond in the center.



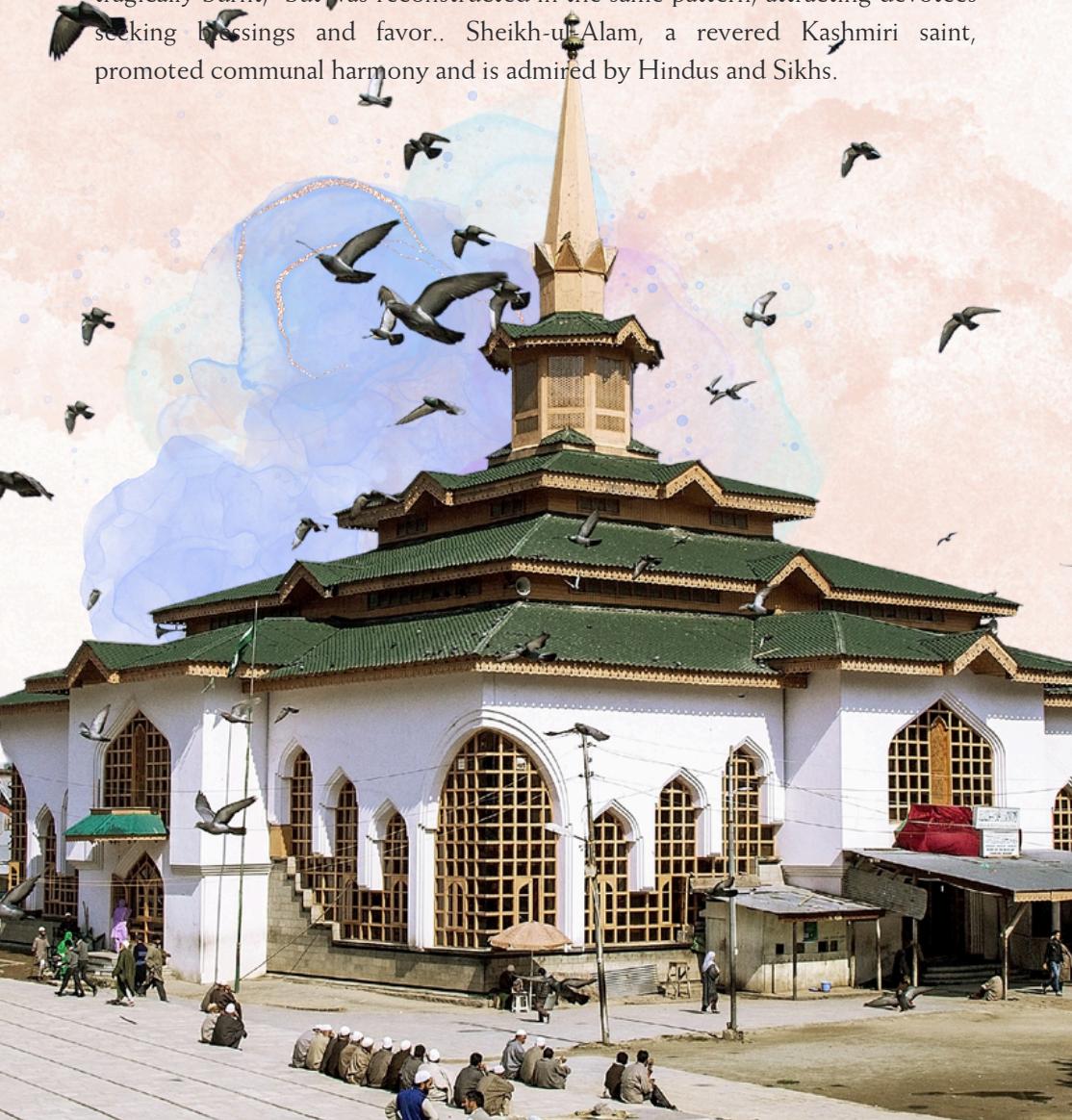
Pather Masjid

Pather Masjid, also known as the Stone Mosque, stands as another heritage structure in the vicinity. Notable for its lotus flower motifs, unusual in Islamic architecture, the mosque is constructed with local grey limestone. The facade boasts nine horizontally constructed arches. Mughal Empress Nur Jehan commissioned the mosque in 1623 AD, with renowned architect Malik Hyder Chaudhary overseeing the construction. The mosque features stones of various dimensions, and during the rule of Fazil Khan (1697-1704 AD), Hamam and Madrasa were added.



Chārār-e-Shārif

Charar-e-Sharief, located approximately 40 km from Srinagar near Yusmarg, is a 600-year-old mausoleum dedicated to Sheikh Nooruddin Noorani, also known as Sheikh-ul-Alam. The shrine, originally a marvel of wooden architecture, was tragically burnt, but was reconstructed in the same pattern, attracting devotees seeking blessings and favor. Sheikh-ul-Alam, a revered Kashmiri saint, promoted communal harmony and is admired by Hindus and Sikhs.



Kheer Bhawani

Kheer Bhawani Temple, 22 km north of Srinagar in Tulmulla, Ganderbal district, honors Goddess Ragini Devi (Kheer Bhawani), revered by Kashmiri Pandits. Positioned in a spring that changes colors, the ancient temple draws thousands of devotees in May/June for the Kheer Bhawani festival. The vicinity includes a temple for worship and local markets where customers buy ritualistic items. Springs around the temple are surrounded by government-protected historic monuments. Just 2 km away is Manasbal Lake, a post-prayer recreational destination for devotees.



St. Mary's Church, Gulmarg

St Mary's Church, a Victorian architectural marvel near Gulmarg Golf Course, stands tall even after a century. Resembling a countryside chapel, its grey stone walls exude vintage charm, especially in the snow-laden winter. A top attraction in Gulmarg, the church's wooden walls, adorned with green-tiled roofs, house frescoes depicting Bible scenes. Accessible only by trekking, it is surrounded by the meadows, alpine trees, and mountains, creating a captivating rustic backdrop. Constructed in 1902 during British rule, the church underwent renovation in 2003, holding its first Christmas mass in 14 years post-restoration. While regular masses aren't held, the church is open daily from 7 am to 5 pm.



Baba Reshi

Baba Reshi's Shrine, dedicated to Baba Payamuddin Reshi, stands at an altitude of 7000 feet in north Kashmir's Baramulla district. Built in 1480 AD, the three-storey monument features 15th-century Persian-Mughal architecture with intricate wood carvings. Surrounded by a garden for prayer gatherings and offering scenic views of the Gulmarg Valley, the shrine includes a community kitchen providing free, hygienically prepared meals. Baba Reshi's tomb, inside a beautifully carved minaret known as 'Noor Khawan,' is covered with a satin cloth embroidered with Quranic verses. The site marks the location where Baba Payamuddin Reshi, renowned for his selfless service, once lived.



Maharani Temple

Maharani Temple constructed in 1915 by Mohini Sisodia, is dedicated to Lord Mahadeva and goddess Parvati. Located in Gulmarg, a renowned ski resort in Kashmir, the temple stands on a hilly meadow, visible from various points in Gulmarg. Commissioned by Mohini Sisodia, the empress and wife of the last Dogra ruler, Maharaja Hari Singh, the temple is maintained by a local resident, serving both as a tourist attraction and a religious site.



Sharda Peeth, Kupwara

The ancient Sharda temple, one of the 18 Maha Shakti Peethas, is located in Teetwal area of Kupwara. Despite limited evidence about its origin, it is thought to have been built during the Kushan Empire in the early 1st century. The temple's architecture follows mythological scriptures and falls under the auspices of Sharda Peeth. The idol of Sharda Maa, donated by Sringeri Math, is installed here.





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