Visiting places in Dharamshala

Dharamshala is an attractive hill station in Himachal Pradesh. This place is tucked away in the Himalayas. With thick deodar forests and the Dhauladhar ranges, Dharamshala has become the best in Himachal Pradesh tour packages. This picturesque place is popular among spiritual seekers as the residence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Dharamshala boasts of awe-inspiring backdrop, vibrant monasteries, picturesque lakes, sparkling waterfalls, old forts, colorful temples, and beautiful museums. If you want to make your trip to Dharamshala more attractive and exciting, then this article is for you. This article gives a list of places to visit in Dharamsala, which will make your tourism even easier. So get ready to enjoy the true beauty and charm of Dharamshala. Before this, let's know about the history of Dharmashala-

## History:

Dharamsala is the winter capital of Himachal Pradesh. Here is the world's highest cricket stadium, which is why Dharamshala is very famous worldwide. Dharamshala is a very beautiful city which is divided into two parts.

* The first part of Dharamsala - Kotwali Bazaar "Lower Dharamshala."
* McLeodganj "Upper Dharamshala", The second part of Dharamshala.

Dharmshala is situated in Kangra Valley. The height of this place is 1457 meters above sea level. The city of Kangra in Himachal Pradesh was a part of Punjab during the colonial period and was also the district headquarters. But in 1855, the British Government shifted all the administrative offices to Dharamsala.

The distance of Dharamshala from Kangra is only 30 kms. Although Dharamsala came into existence in 1849, the area around Dharamsala was ruled by the 'Katoch dynasty' rulers for two millennia. Before the arrival of the British, the people of the 'Gaddi tribe' used to live in the vicinity of Dharamsala. The British had captured the fields and seasonal pastures of the 'Gaddi tribe' people.

In 1848, the British took over Dharamsala and its surrounding area. In 1849, the British chose this site on the slopes of the Dhauladhar mountain range of the Himalayas to build a military cantonment for the Kangra district of Punjab. At that time, there used to be a Hindu Dharamshala in this area, due to which this place was named 'Dharamsala.' After the formation of a military cantonment, there was a lot of civilian and military activity in Dharamsala, due to which a city council was formed in Dharamsala on 05 May 1867.

The first meeting of the city council of Dharamsala was held on 06 May 1867 under the chairmanship of British District Magistrate' CF Elphinstone'. After the formation of the city council, the facilities available in Dharamshala started increasing very rapidly. In 1896, amenities like electrical energy were also accessible to the citizens living here. Earlier, this place was the summer capital of the British, but in the earthquake of 1905, more than 20,000 people were killed. Then Shimla was made the summer capital. The Gorkhas had contributed a lot to the reconstruction of the city after the earthquake in Dharamsala. After this, Shimla was made the summer capital. In India's freedom struggle also many Gorkhas played a major role as freedom fighters. Captain of the Indian National Army – Ram Singh Thakur, a Gorkha, gave the famous patriotic song 'Kadam Kadam Badhaye Jaa.'

## Religion and language-

Languages like Tibetan, Pahari, English, and Hindi are spoken by the people living here. The local folks of Dharamsala follow the Hindu creed. The Tibetan immigrants are strong followers of the Buddhist religion. During the evolution era, numerous individuals from all over the world begin occupying this city. Thus, Dharamsala is rich in different religions.

## Culture and food-

If you are looking for places to eat in Dharamsala, then let me tell you that many restaurants and cafes can be found here. Due to the dominance of Tibetan culture, most of the Tibetan cuisine is found here. You can taste momos, thukpa, and other Tibetan dishes here. Another special thing about this place is that honey ginger lemon tea is quite famous here. Pancakes, omelets, and sandwiches are also served with a variety of breakfasts in many cafes. Some of the best establishments here are Green Restaurant and Herbal Tea Shop. Foods such as the Tibetan type of samosa, soup, and noodles are common here.

## How to reach?

Situated on the upper hills of the Kangra Valley, Dharamsala is one of the most visited destinations in Himachal Pradesh. The beautiful hill station is known as the residence of the Tibetan leader Dalai Lama. The serene and spiritual atmosphere of the city allures travelers from all parts of the world. Traveling to Dharamsala is not a difficult task as you can easily reach the city by rail, air, and road. The place is well connected to major cities of India, including Delhi, Mumbai, and Jaipur.

## Best time to visit:

By the way, you can visit Dharamsala throughout the year. However, the best time to visit Dharamsala would be in spring and early summer when the weather is a maximum of 25 degrees Celsius. The winters here sometimes get drenched with snow, which makes the valley more beautiful at this time. Avoid traveling here in the monsoon as it may hamper your travel plans, but this place does not receive much rainfall compared to other parts of Himachal and Uttarakhand.

# Tourist Attractions-

## Kangra Art Museum:

Kangra Art Museum is a museum located in the city of Dharamsala in Kangra district of the northern state of Himachal Pradesh, India. This art museum was established in 1987-88 by some art lovers in the memory of Maharaja Sansarchand under the name Maharaja Sansar Chand Art Gallery. Later in January 1989, it was acquired by the Department of Language and Culture, Himachal Pradesh. After this, on 17 January 1990, it was dedicated to the nation in the name of Kangra Art Museum. There is a library and a separate section to display contemporary artists, and architects, which visitors can enjoy. Apart from this, people coming here can also see artifacts of beautiful Tibetan and Buddhist cultures which can win anyone's heart.

## Masroor Rock Cut Temple, Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh:

Masroor Rock Cut Temple is an archaeological site. This place is presently a ruin. Masroor Rock Cut Temple is located in Dharamsala at a distance of 32 km from Kangra. The complex here is a combination of 15 rock-cut temples designed in the Indo-Aryan style of architecture.

It is said to have been built in the 8th century, dedicated to the Hindu deities Shiva, Vishnu, Devi, and Saura. It has a square sanctum sanctorum in the middle, while on the other side of the temple, there is a rectangular mandapa with four huge pillars and four supporting shrines. The temple was constructed in the 10th century using a single solid piece of stone, with its architectural style reminiscent of the Ajanta-Ellora temple. Dedicated to the Hindu god Shiva, the architectural design of this temple can be dated to the 8th or 9th century. This place is like a paradise for history lovers and tourists.

## Dharamshala Cricket Stadium:

The full name of the world-famous cricket stadium of Dharamshala is Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association Stadium (HPCA). But most people prefer to call this stadium by the name of Dharamshala Cricket Stadium. Being the highest cricket stadium globally, this stadium holds its own identity in the whole world. Situated near the Dhauladhar mountain range of the Himalayas, this stadium has beautiful views of the snow-capped mountains. This beautiful natural scenery also makes it the most beautiful cricket stadium in the world. Initially, the stadium was used for Ranji Trophy matches and some domestic cricket matches.

The former director of India's National Cricket Academy, Dave Whatmore, first described this cricket ground in Dharamsala as suitable for hosting international cricket matches. The first international cricket team to play on this ground was the Pakistan cricket team. In 2005, the Pakistani cricket team played its first test match against India on this ground. The entry fee for the tourists in the stadium has been fixed at Rs 20/-.

## War Memorial:

The War Memorial was established to pay tribute to the martyrs. This memorial has been built in memory of the martyred soldiers in 1947-48, 1962, 1965, and 1971, who sacrificed their lives for the country's defense. Situated near the pine forest, this monument is one of the best tourist places to visit in Dharamsala. The names of the martyrs have been inscribed by the magnificent carvings on the walls of this monument amidst the lush green trees. Adorned with natural beauty, this place is a perfect destination to visit with family. The primary purpose of this war memorial is to commemorate the memory of the soldiers who sacrificed their lives for the defense of our motherland. The memory of the soldiers who died in the Indo-China war and UN peacekeeping operations is about 24 feet high.

Surrounded by deodar forests, this area attracts tourists with amazing panoramic views. Apart from this, you can also grab some refreshments from the nearby cafes that serve delicious snacks. You will like the taste of which.

The entry fee for the War Memorial is only Rs 10 per person. However, you will have to pay an additional 20 rupees for parking.

## Gutto Monastery, Dharamsala:

Gyuto Monastery, located just 08 kilometers from Dharamsala, is considered the main religious place of Tibetan society and people who believe in Buddhism. The original Gyuto Monastery was built in Tibet in the 15th century, but when China invaded Tibet in the 20th century, Buddhist monks from Tibet rebuilt the Gyuto Monastery in Dharamsala.

Gyuto Monastery is no less than a pilgrimage site for the people who follow Buddhism worldwide; that is why the followers of Buddhism keep visiting Gyuto Monastery throughout the year.

On the day of Buddha Purnima, many people who follow Buddhism come to this monastery. If you are coming here during Buddha Purnima, then definitely try eating the local food of Tibet found here.

Gyuto Monastery is a very powerful religious pilgrimage site with great historical importance among the people of Tibet and Buddhism. Gyuto Monastery is built on the top of a mountain; from the top of this mountain, there are very beautiful views of the Dhauladhar mountain range of the Himalayas and the Beas River. From 07:00 in the morning to 07:00 in the evening, devotees and tourists can come to see the Gyuto Monastery. Being a religious place, this monastery is open throughout the week.

## Kalachakra Temple:

Kalachakra Temple is located in Mcleodganj near Dharamsala in the Thekchen Choling Temple complex. The main reason for the popularity of this temple, as it sounds interesting, is the amazing frescoes of Kalachakra in the Kalachakra temple. This temple was built in 1992.

The Kalachakra Temple is situated to the west of the Tsughlaghan Temple. Images related to Avalokiteshvara are beautifully inscribed on the walls and pillars of the temple. Also, the traditional Tibetan thangka paintings are the main attraction of these walls.

In addition, the temple also houses a statue of Shakyamuni Buddha, surrounded by stunning frescoes of seven hundred and seventy deities of the mandala and a central Kalachakra image. One of the most popular religious pilgrimage sites in Dharamsala, the temple complex also houses a book shop and quaint cafes. Also, an annual festival is held here on the 15th day of every three months of Tibet.

## Picnic Places, Triund:

To enjoy the hills, dense forests, and beautiful places to the fullest, many people are fond of adventure activities. Suppose you are also fond of such activities. In that case, you must also try a trekking trip to Triund Adventures, which organizes all kinds of round trekking tours in Himachal from Dhauladhar mountain range to Lahaul Spiti.

This place is Equipped with good technology, better camp paylines, well-organized facilities, and trained trainers; this camp will make you enjoy your vacation to the fullest.

## Dharamkot:

Dharamkot village is about three kilometers away from McLeodganj. It is also known as Mini Israel because the people of Israel also live here. What happens in the village is what they like. There is 'Kabad House,' i.e., place of worship in Dharamkot village. Only people coming from Israel can enter it. No one has been able to know what the people of Judaism do inside the three-story building. Dharamkot is a favourite destination for people coming from Israel. The 'Kabad House' is always open for people from Israel, but it was closed in March due to the lockdown. The people living in Kabad House do not even talk to any other person. Even the local people have not gone inside it to date.

## Dal Lake:

We often like to go to such a place during the holidays to enjoy more and more things in one place. If you are also one of those people, you must visit Dal Lake, located in the Kangra district of Dharamsala. Surrounded by dense deodar forests, this lake is about 1775 m. is long.

Here you can also enjoy trekking in the mountains and forest in the mixed sky. Seeing the fish sitting in the peaceful atmosphere of the lake will enthrall you from within. And if you are fond of boating, then you can also enjoy it here. With permission from the authority, activities like fishing can also be done here.

Also, there is a very beautiful Shiva temple here. When it snows here in the winter season, the view here is unique. You will find trees covered with a sheet of white snow for a different beauty here. So it didn't happen in one place.

## Tea Garden:

By the way, Assam tea is very much liked all over India, and the big tea gardens there give a different comfort to the eyes. In the same way, the tea gardens of Dharamsala are also very famous; just these tea gardens are counted among the smallest tea gardens in India.

Despite being small in size, these tea gardens are spread over many acres, which is why tourists visiting Dharamshala go to see the tea gardens here. The aroma of tea leaves spread in the tea garden gives you a pleasant experience. Moreover, you can get a very beautiful and mesmerizing view of the Kangra Valley and the Dhauladhar mountain range from these tea gardens.

