



Article published on June 30th 2012 | [Travel Tips](#)

Kashmir Valley or Vale of Kashmir is the most beautiful region in the northernmost Indian state of Jammu & Kashmir. Located between the Great Himalayas and the Pir Panjal Range, the valley is fondly described as the Heaven on the Earth. It was called the "Paradise on the Earth" by Mughal emperor Jahangir. Srinagar is the main city in the valley and also the summer capital of the state. Anantnag and Baramulla are other main cities in the region. Gulmarg, Sonamarg, Pahalgam and Amaranth are most sought after tourist places in the region. The region is famous for its stunning landscapes, sparkling rivers, sleepy lakes, gorgeous gardens, amazing serenity, rolling hills, snow-clad mountain peaks, gorgeous gorges, deep valleys, picturesque hills, beautiful flowering meadows and religious shrines. Due to abundance in its natural beauty the region is also termed as the "Switzerland of Asia".

Tourism in the vale of Kashmir never fails to lure its visitors with its changing scenes from alluring white snow of winter to blooming fragrance of spring. The eye-catching greenery of summer and the flaming beauty of autumn are too alluring. Rightly, the region is called as the Paradise on the Earth. Though there are many interesting tourist places in the region but the main places are Srinagar, Gulmarg, Pahalgam and Sonamarg. Here is brief information about these famous tourist places of the valley.

Srinagar: Srinagar is the main city in the valley. It is also the summer capital of the state. It is gateway for tourism in the vale of Kashmir. It attracts a large number of tourists including nature lovers, families, honeymooners and adventure enthusiasts from all over the world. Srinagar is famous for lovely lakes, deluxe houseboats, stunning landscapes, beautiful Mughal gardens and religious shrines. Major tourist attractions to see in this city include Dal Lake, Wular Lake, Nagin Lake, Nishat Bagh, Shalimar Bagh, Pari Mahal, Sher Garhi Palace, Gulab Bhawan, Tulip Garden, Nasseem Bagh, Chashma Shahi, Hazratbal Shrine, Shankaracharya Temple, Khanqah-e-Molla, Kheer Bhawani and Jama Masjid. Dal Lake is famous for houseboats and Shikara rides.

Sonamarg: Sonamarg (the Meadow of Gold) is a prominent tourist destination in the valley. It is located at the distance of 87 km from north-east of Srinagar. It offers spectacular backdrop with white snowy mountains against the cerulean clear sky. It is very popular among nature lovers, honeymooners and adventure enthusiasts. It offers amazing trekking options.

Gulmarg: Gulmarg is a town and prominent hill station in the valley. It is located at the distance of 46 km from Srinagar. It is one of the finest winter and summer resorts in India. It is one of the best destinations for skiers during the winter months. According to CNN, it is the "heartland of winter sports in India." It is also famous for "Gulmarg Gondola," one of the highest cable cars in the world. Summer in Gulmarg offers various outdoor activities; such as world class golfing, trekking, mountain biking, horse riding, water skiing, and fishing. Gulmarg is also famous for Golf Club, the highest green golf course in the world.

Pahalgam: Pahalgam is a prominent tourist destination and hill station in the valley. Every year, many tourists visit this place to explore its beauty and serenity. It is located at the distance of 45 km from Anantnag and the distance of 94 km from Srinagar. It is very popular among nature lovers, honeymooners, trekkers and adventure enthusiasts. It is also associated with the annual Amarnath Yatra. Tourists can enjoy various outdoor activities; such as fresh trout fishing, horse riding, trekking and hiking.

All the aforementioned places are key attractions of Kashmir tourism. These are destinations of

almost all Kashmir tour packages made available by various travel agencies and tour operators.

Article Source:

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Article Keywords:

Kashmir Tourism, Kashmir Tour Packages

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