CHAPTER 3

AN OVERVIEW OF PUNJAB AND VARIOUS TOURIST DESTINATIONS

Punjab, located in the north west of India, is one of the smallest and the most prosperous states of India. The five rivers Sutlej, Beas, Ravi, Chenab and Jhelum gave it its name 'punj-ab' or the 'land of five waters'. These five rivers divide the state into three regions: Majha, Doaba and Malwa. Punjab is certainly a primarily agricultural state and enjoys the natural benefits of fertile soils and abundant waters.

As a civilization, it is one of the most ancient in the world with a distinguished culture. The Punjabi language has its origins in the Indo-European family of languages which also included Persian and Latin. A land of ethnic and religious diversity, it is the birthplace of a number of religious movements. Some of the prominent ones include Sikhism, Buddhism and many Sufi schools of Islam.

Punjab flourished significantly during the reign of the great Mogul emperor, Babar, whose empire stretched from Delhi in the east to Kabul and Ghazni in the west. The prosperity continued under Maharaja Ranjit Singh's (1780-1838 AD) rule. But it saw a major downfall in 1947, when the partition of the nation shrunk the boundaries of Indian Punjab resulting in a great loss of land and resources. At present, the present state is just a fourth of its original area.

Post-independence, Punjab has made considerable economic progress despite the setback it suffered in 1947. It contributes nearly two thirds to the total production of food grains and a third of milk production in the country. It is the leading producer of wheat at a total production of 2 million tonnes per annum. The initiative of Green revolution (a major agricultural initiative) has been keenly taken forward by the people of Punjab. Even though, Punjabis account for less than 2.5% of the Indian population,
they are one of the most prosperous races in India. Their per capita income is twice the
national average.

Enriched with a distinct blend of rural and urban flavours, Punjab has a lot to offer to a
tourist eye. It has a unique religious legacy with a host of Gurudwaras, the largest and
the most prominent being The Golden Temple at Amritsar. Every year, thousands of
tourists from around the world visit this holy shrine. The dome of the temple covered
with pure gold presents a fascinating sight as its reflection falls in the holy waters of the
sarовар. Other gurudwaras worth visiting are Sri Anandpur Sahib (the birthplace of
Khalsa), Damdama Sahib and Goindwal sahib.

Jallianwala Bagh of Amritsar is another historical spot where a number of people
jumped into a well to escape the firing of a British General. The place reminds one of
the horrors of the British rule and Punjab's sacrifice to the struggle for freedom of India.
Then there is the Summer Palace of Maharaja Ranjit Singh which has now been
converted into a museum. It preserves the weapons dating back to the Mogul times and
portraits of the ruling dynasties of Punjab.

The best times to visit Punjab are the autumn and the spring seasons. The natural
landscape looks breathtaking with lush mustard fields. The rustic charm of the place and
celebratory spirit of the Punjabis are sure to make for a memorable.

Punjab travel helps the tourists to unravel the cultural diversity of the state which is also
known as the 'Land of Five Rivers'. It is at this site that the first war between the Aryans
and the non-Aryans took place. The region saw the emergence of many kingdoms such
as the Mauryan Empire, Mughal Empire and the British Raj. Besides, the archaeological
evidences of Ropar, Dholbaha, Kiratpur, Ghuram and Rohira add to the historical
importance of Punjab.
Punjab Tourism

Punjab is one of India's most beautiful states. The century old Punjabi culture is renowned for its tolerance, progressive and logical approach to life. The state is the location of one of the world's first and oldest civilizations - the Indus Valley Civilization. Above all, the warmth and hospitality of the people are the main attractions in this region. Punjab has many things to offer to an enthusiast who wants to explore it. Some of the main cities in Punjab are Amritsar, Jalandhar, Ludhiana and Patiala. Punjab has a vast public transportation network, which provides excellent tourist transportation.

Punjab fulfills the dream of a perfect traveller. This north Indian state is a perfect destination for pilgrimage tour in the country. The world’s largest gurudwara – the Golden Temple is here which attracts millions of devotees from across the whole world to see its inimitable architecture. Apart from gurudwaras, the land is also studded with historical monuments, temples, churches, mosques and a number of other holy shrines that remain unexplored.

Tourism in Punjab is principally suited for the tourist interested in culture, ancient civilization, and spirituality and epic history. Punjab has a rich history incorporating Sikhism and Hinduism. Along with the celebrated Punjabi culture, it has many royal Punjabi palaces, historic battles, shrines, temples and examples of Sikh Architecture.

Punjab has an integrated cultural history and is a treasure trove for an avid tourist. For this land of great Gurus not only boasts of ancient monuments but throbs with historical embodiments. It is no secret that whoever comes to this land of yellow fields with Blue Mountains providing the romantic and picturesque backdrop has never gone back without imbuing the essence of Punjab.

There is no dearth of breathtaking palaces, for Punjab was the seat of royalty. It’s Museums galore and so are the religious places with the Golden Temple offering succour to the mind and soul of anyone visiting. If you are a wild life freak, then Punjab...
can take you on a tour of sanctuaries, which are hot favourites with migratory birds. Since this State Borders Pakistan, there are two main posts, from which you can peep into the land that was once the integral part of Punjab and experience the feelings of the people separated by a line.

**Location**

Punjab is bounded on the northwest of India surrounded 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.

It covers a geographical area of 50,362 sq. km, which is 1.54 % of country’s total geographical area. Punjab state is located between 29° 30' N to 32° 32' N latitude and between 73° 55' E to 76° 50' E longitude. Its average elevation is 300 m from the sea level.

Due to the presence of a large number of rivers, most of the land of Punjab is fertile plain. There are many sub-tributaries of these rivers that provide a base for the most extensive canal system in India. But one can find the southeast region being semi-arid and desert landscapes. A belt of swelling hills extends along the northeast at the foot of the Himalayas. Punjab state is situated between the great systems of the Indus and Ganges rivers. Most of the state is an alluvial plain, irrigated by canals; Punjab's arid southern border edges on the Thar, or Great Indian, Desert. The southeast region of the state is semi-arid and gradually presents a desert landscape. A belt of undulating hills extends along the north-eastern part of the state at the foot of the Himalayas. The Siwalik Range rises sharply in the north of the state.

In Punjab, the soil characteristics are influenced to a very limited extent by the topography, vegetation and parent rock. The variations in soil profile characteristics are much more pronounced because of the regional climatic differences. Punjab is divided into three distinct regions on the basis of soil types. The regions are: South-western
Punjab, Central Punjab and Eastern Punjab. Punjab falls under seismic zones II, III, and IV. Zones II and III are referred to as Low Damage Risk Zone while zone IV referred to as high damage risk zone.

Regions of Punjab

The much-truncated India’s portion of present Punjab is divided into three natural regions:

- The Majha
- The Doaba
- The Malwa

Majha

Majha starts northward from the right bank of river Beas and stretches up to the Wagha village, which marks the boundary between India and Pakistan. Majha in Punjabi means the heartland. The region is divided into three districts:

1. Amritsar.
2. Gurdaspur.
3. Tarn Taran.

Doaba

The rivers Sutlej in the south and Beas in the North bound the Doaba of Punjab. The Doaba region is divided into four districts:

1. Jalandhar.
2. Nawanshahr.
4. Hoshiarpur.

Malwa

The area south of the river Sutlej is called Malwa. The name has stuck because a clan called Moloiis (sometimes written as Malawis in ancient works) once ruled this area, which must have spread up to present State of Gujrat which was known as the Subah of
Malwa as late as the Mughul times. Malwa the largest part of the Punjab is divided into the following 12 districts after the names of their headquarters:

1. Bathinda
2. Barnala
3. Faridkot
4. Fatchgarh Sahib
5. Ferozepur
6. Ludhiana
7. Mansa
8. Moga
9. Sangrur
10. Muktsar
11. Patiala
12. Rup Nagar
13. SAS Nagar - Mohali

Amritsar – Ram Tirath - Sarai Amanat Khan -Wagha Border – Amritsar

Ram Tirath takes us back to the times of Ramayana, at Sarai Amanat Khan we come down to a highway inn of the Mughul times, at Wagha Border we suddenly land into the present. The pageant of the beating of the retreat and the change of guard within handshaking distance of the Indian and Pakistani forces here makes the most charming of the spectacles as a daily evening drill. Ascertain the timings before you leave to see this spectacle since these are changed seasonally.

Amritsar - Dera Baba Nanak -Qadian-Kala naur-Gurdaspur-Pathankot

At Dera Baba Nanak the first Prophet of Sikhism, Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji spent the last days of his life. At the historic Gurudwara built in his memory holy robes that were presented to him at Mecca are still preserved. Qadian is the home of the founder of the Ahmedyia Sect of the Muslims. At Kalanaur, Akbar-the-great was coroneted. Pathankot
is India's link city to the State of Jammu and Kashmir and the best tourist destinations of Himachal Pradesh.

Amritsar-Tarn Taran-Hari-Ke-Pattan - Goindwal Sahib - Sultanpur Lodhi - Kapurthala( Kanjli lake) –Jalandhar

A majestic gurudwara with a golden dome and a large holy pool having healing powers is built at Tarn Taran in the memory of 5th Prophet of Sikhism, Sri Guru Arjan Dev ji. Hari-Ke-Pattan is a wild life sanctuary of international fame. Goindwalsahib was the seat of Sikhism during the lifetime of the 3rd Prophet of Sikhism Sri Guru Amar Dass ji. It has a deep well with 84 steps. The faithful say that if you recite Jap Ji Sahib, a composition of the first Prophet of Sikhism at each step after a bath you cross the cycle of 84,000 lives and attain moksh. At Sultanpur lodhi Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji spent 12 years in the service of Nawab Daulat Khan Lodhi. It was from here in 1500 A.D. that he had begun his first holy travel towards the east and the south to preach the Word of God. Kapurthala is renowned for beautiful palaces and buildings. Kanjli Lake receives several species of migratory birds and is a fulfilling picnic spot.

Amritsar - Baba Bakala – Kartarpur – Jalandhar

At Baba Bakala the 9th Prophet of Sikhism Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Ji had revealed himself to Makhan Shah Lobana. The 5th Prophet of Sikhism founded Kartarpur. The authenticated, handwritten copy of Sri Guru Granth Sahib compiled and edited by him and having his seal is located here. It is also famous for the manufacture quality world-furniture. Jalandhar is the oldest city of Punjab. Today it is internationally famous for the manufacture of sports goods and landmarks connected with the Hindu religion.

Chandigarh, Ropar (Rup Nagar), Anandpur Sahib, Bhakra - Nangal, Ropar, Chandigarh

Ropar is famous for its archeological funds. The valley of river Sutlej, from Kiratpur Sahib to Anandpur Sahib was the seat of Sikhism for almost 80 years and is full of
historical gurudwara, Takhat Sri Keshgarh Sahib being the most important because on
the day of Baisakhi in 1699 the 10th Prophet of Sikhism had consummated the Sikh into
the Khalsa -saint soldier. Within Ropar town there is a wetland thrown up by river
Sutlej. The valley is also full of historical landmarks. At Bhakra we have the world's
highest straight gravity dam.

Ludhiana - Moga - Ferozepur - Bhatinda - Malout - Muktsar-Faridkot

Ludhiana is Punjab's home of industry and famous Punjab Agriculture University. At
Moga the multinational Nestle Company manufactures a large variety of food
specialties. The border town of Ferozepur is known for its memorials to the freedom
fighters of India. At a nearby town on Ferozepur- Moga road called Zira a beautiful Jain
Swetembar Temple with ancient icons and wall paintings is located. Bathinda has an
1800 years old fort and a multinational firm Pepsi has set up plants here to manufacture
Agro products. Malout is an old mandi town,where produce from surrounding areas is
brought for sale. Muktsar is connected with the victory of the Sikh forces commanded
by the 10th Prophet Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji over the Mughal forces of the Governor of
Sirhind in 1705. Faridkot, the capital of erstwhile Phulkian state, is famous for its fort
and palace having remarkable paintings, mirror - work and frescoes designed all over
their walls.

Patiala-Nabha-Malerkotla - Ludhiana - Fatehgarh Sahib – Chandigarh

Patiala is renowned for its palaces, museums, sports, cuisine, fashionware. Nabha a
smaller State became famous as the venue of the freedom struggle where Pandit Nehru
had come to court arrest. Horlicks, the British firm runs a flourishing tonic food plant
here to enrich beverages. Malerkotla is a Muslim Pathan state in Punjab . When the
Governor of Sirhind had ordered the entombment of the two younger holy sons of the
10th Sikh Prophet,Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the ancestor of the Nawab of Malerkotla
had protested. In recognition of this act this state was not molested during the holocaust
of 1947. For embroidery, insignias and handiwork artifacts Malerkotla is famous in India. Fatehgarh Sahib and Sirhind nearby have several historical buildings, especially of the Muslim era. Chandigarh is an ideal starting point for visiting Punjab.

**Jalandhar-Hoshiarpur, either back to Jalandhar or Ropar-Chandigarh**

Connected both by rail and road the old town of Hoshiarpur is famous for its Vedic Research Institute, Bhrigusamhita system of astrology, manufactures, especially, inlay work and lacquer finish furniture, musical instruments and an archaeological museum.

**Climate of Punjab**

**Maximum Temperature** – 43.33°C

**Minimum Temperature** – 4.44°C

**Climatically the state has three major seasons**

Hot weather is from April to June when the climate of the plains is excessively hot and dry with temperatures as high as 49°C (120°F). Rainy season is from July to September. The average rainfall annual ranges between 96 cms in the sub-mountain region and 58 cms in the plains. More than 70 percent of the annual rainfall occurs during this monsoon season. Winters are cool with some frosts. Annual rainfall ranges from about 915 mm (about 36 in) in the north to 102 mm (4 in) in the south. The average temperature in January is 13°C (55°F), although at night the temperature sometimes lowers to freezing. Winter months are October to March with cool and pleasant weather.

**Best season is October to March.**

Cotton clothing are suitable for the summer months and woollens are required for the winter months.
**How to Reach Punjab**

Getting around in Punjab is not difficult, but one should know the possible means of transportation before going to Punjab. Punjab is easy to reach by road, train, or airplane. From New Delhi, Chandigarh, the capital of Punjab, is 246 kilometres. Amritsar, the holiest city for the Sikhs, is 446 kilometres.

**Roadways**

The entire Punjab State is connected through an extensive network of medalled roads. State Highways connect major cities to the state capital. NH 1 or the Grand Trunk Road connects the state with most of the north as well as east India.

Punjab has about 35,000 kilometres of state and rural roads. The national highway is about 1000 kilometres. The roads link the 12,342 villages and national highways connect the major towns. Driving from one end of the state to the other takes six hours. Driving from Delhi to Punjab takes four hours.

Almost all major towns and cities have buses going to Chandigarh. Villages have buses going to the nearest major town. Between the major cities, New Delhi, Patiala, Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Amritsar, and Chandigarh, there are deluxe bus services. In addition, there is taxi service available in various towns.

**Railways**

Punjab is extensively linked to the other parts of the country by rail. Chandigarh, Amritsar, Ludhiana, Pathankot, and Jalandhar are the major railway hubs in the state from where one can take trains for most parts of the country. Trains pass through all major towns and cities. Chandigarh, Ludhiana, Amritsar, Ferozepur and Jalandhar are on the main line and have excellent daily train services and overnight trains to New Delhi. By express trains, travelling from Delhi to Chandigarh takes three hours. Travelling
from Delhi to Amritsar via Ludhiana takes six hours. If given the opportunity, try to travel by train, the trip is scenic and travelling is relatively convenient.

**Airways**

Chandigarh and Amritsar both have airports are connected to other cities in India by regular flights. Indian airlines do have regular flights from Chandigarh to Delhi, Lucknow, Leh, and Amritsar. Jet air also has regular flights to Chandigarh. Domestic travel by plane within all of India is relatively expensive. However, Chandigarh has excellent air service, and it is linked with Delhi. Ludhiana and Amritsar also have daily air service to New Delhi. Furthermore, Amritsar airport is an international airport. By airplane, from Delhi one can reach any city in Punjab within two hours.

**General Information**

**Area:** 50362 square kilometres (Punjab occupies 1.54 % of the country’s total geographical area.)

**Location:** Punjab is situated in the northwest of India; it 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.

**Geography:** Find Punjab on the globe at 29°30’ N to 32°32’ N latitude and 73°55 E to 76°50 E longitude.

**Capital:** Chandigarh.

**Religion:** Hindus (34.46%), Sikhs (62.95%), others (2.59%)

**Languages Spoken:** Punjabi and Hindi are the main languages for communication, but now English has also taken over in the big cities of Punjab. Many people are fluent in English. Urdu is also one of the languages among the people.
Currency: An Indian Rupee (100 paise equals one rupee).

State Animal: Black Buck - Locally called kala hiran, the Black Buck is a graceful antelope is blessed with a striking color and spiraled horns. The fawn’s coat is yellowish but it becomes turns black at maturity. It is found in the plains and avoid forests and hilly tracks. Mostly found in herds of 20-30, large herds may number several hundreds. With a keen eyesight and speed, it responds to alarm call by leaps and bounds.

State Bird: Baz (Eastern Goshawk)

State Tree: Shisham

Major Land Features: Most of Punjab is a fertile plain; toward the southeast one finds semi-arid and desert landscape; a belt of undulating hills extends along the northeast at the foot of the Himalayas. Four rivers, the Ravi, Beas, Satluj and Ghaggar flow across the state in a southwesterly direction. They have numerous small and seasonal tributaries. In addition, Punjab is watered by an extensive canal system.

Tips for Travelling in Punjab

Clothing
Travel as light as possible. It’s better for women to avoid tank tops or short skirts / shorts. The best and comfortable outfit, especially during the hot summers, apart from Salwar –Kameez’, is a T-shirt worn with loose cotton trousers. You can purchase them anywhere in Punjab, at very reasonable rates, at any of the shops.

Social Interaction
If you give the impression of being from a different country or State, chances are that you might be stared at, especially in the smaller towns. Don't be offended - they mean no harm, it is just curiosity.
Toilets
In Punjab, public toilet facilities are few and far between. Take every opportunity you can to use a clean toilet in places such as hotels and restaurants. Make this a habit wherever you go.

Beggars
Do not let them hassle you, and do not encourage them by giving them money.

Food and Drink

- Drink only bottled water. Many popular brands are available. In restaurants insist that they bring a sealed bottle to your table.
- Eat non-vegetarian food only in good restaurants & popular eating Joints. The meat in cheaper and smaller places can be of dubious quality.
- Good quality vegetarian food is easily available.
- Curd or yogurt is served with most meals. It is a natural aid to digestion and helps temper the spicy food.

Shopping
Before purchasing, check the prices at shopping places before making a choice. Bargaining is standard in most places and is enjoyed by all. One can also shop in government handicraft shops as there the prices are fixed and the quality is certified.

Tipping

- In hotels and restaurants, tips are not normally included in the bill.
- Some hotels include service charges on their bills. In such cases tipping is not necessary.
- The standard tip is 10%.
- In hotels, porters and room service attendants are normally tipped at the end of the stay, though an early tip is likely to get you better service.
• Tipping of taxi drivers is not customary.

Sightseeing
• Dress codes for religious places can include covering your head, being barefoot etc. Ask, so that you don't unwittingly give offence.
• Some temples do not permit any leather articles at all on their premises.
• Certain temples are not open to Non-Hindus. Please check with the local tourist information office.
• The dry summer heat can drain you completely. Drink lots of water and fluids.
• The sun is strong. Remember to use sunscreen on exposed parts of the body. Wear sunglasses to screen out harmful rays.
• Photography is not always permissible, and at many places it is permitted only at a fee. There is usually a higher fee for using a video camera.
• Smoking is not allowed at public places. All properties of the Indian Railways including trains and railway stations are strictly non-smoking zones with stiff penalties for violations.

Health Precautions
• Always drink bottled water.
• Eat fruit you can peel.
• Always wash fruit well before eating it.
• Wash your hands before and after eating.
• Always keep a tube of mosquito repellent with you.
• Always carry a kit of the basic emergency medicines you might need for diarrhea, fever, etc. Also, band aids and an antiseptic ointment.

Punjab Tourism Helpline
Punjab Tourism Development Corporation
Chandigarh -160018
Ph: 91-172-2781138, 2781091, 2781147. Fax: 91-172-2548828
Historical Aspects

History

Punjab, a region in Northern India, has a long history and rich cultural heritage. The region has been invaded and ruled by many different empires and races, including the Aryans, Persians, Greeks, Egyptians, Afghans, and Mongols. Around the time of the 15th Century, Guru Nanak Dev founded the Sikh religion, which quickly came to prominence in the region, and shortly afterwards, Maharaja Ranjit Singh reformed the Punjab into a secular and powerful state. The 19th Century saw the beginning of British rule, which led to the emergence of several heroic Punjabi freedom fighters. In 1947, at the end of The British rule, the Punjab was split between Pakistan and India.

Fairs & Festivals

The festivals in Punjab have always been celebrated with much exuberance and fanfare. For the masses these festivals are popular occasions for social interaction and enjoyment.
The festivals of Punjab have one common objective of bringing people together to participate in the happiness of the occasion. The important festivals and fairs celebrated in Punjab are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fair/ Festival</th>
<th>Place Held</th>
<th>Month</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maghi Mela – Lohri</td>
<td>Muktsar</td>
<td>January</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural Sports</td>
<td>Kila Raipur (Ludhiana)</td>
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<td>Basant</td>
<td>Patiala</td>
<td>February</td>
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<td>Hola Mohalla</td>
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<td>Baisakhi</td>
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<td>Urs of Sheikh Mujaddid-Alif-Saar</td>
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<td>Rauza of Sheikh Ahmed Farooqi</td>
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<td>Chappar Mela</td>
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<td>September</td>
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<td>Sheikh Farid Agman Purb</td>
<td>Faridkot</td>
<td>September</td>
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<td>Ram Tirth</td>
<td>V.Ram Tirth(Amritsar)</td>
<td>November</td>
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<td>Diwali</td>
<td>Amritsar</td>
<td>Oct - Nov</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shaheedi Jor Mela</td>
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<td>December</td>
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<td>Harballabh Sangeet Sammelan</td>
<td>Jalandhar</td>
<td>December</td>
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<td>Baba Sodal</td>
<td>Jalandhar</td>
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**Lohri**

Lohri, which comes on the last day of Poh (December-January), is another extremely popular festival. A huge bonfire is made in every house and the fire god is worshipped. This is a special day for making offerings to fire. When fire is lit up in the evening, all the members of family go round it, pour offerings into it, and bow before it in reverence.
The first Lohri for a new bride, or a newborn babe, is enthusiastically celebrated, and sweets are distributed. Children visit homes in the neighborhood and sing songs. Lohri marks the end of the winter season.

Maghi

Next day after Lohri comes Maghi, also called Makar Sakranti (entry of the sun in the sign or Capricorn). It is very popular with the punjabis. The people go out for a holy dip and give away a lot of charity. The special dish of the day is kheer cooked in sugarcane juice. On this day fairs are held at many places. For Sikhs, Maghi means primarily the festival at Muktsar, a district town of the Punjab, in commemoration of the heroic fight of the Chali Mukte, literally, the Forty Liberated Ones, who laid down their lives warding off an attack by an imperial army marching in pursuit of Guru Gobind Singh.

The action took place near a pool of water, Khidrane di Dhab, on 29 December 1705. The bodies were cremated the following day, the first of Magh (hence the name of the festival), which now falls usually on the 13th of January. Largest assembly takes place at Muktsar in the form of a big fair during which pilgrims take a dip in the sacred sarovar and visit several shrines connected with the historic battle. A mahala or big march of pilgrims from the main shrine to gurdwara Tibbi Sahib, sacred to Guru Gobind Singh, marks the conclusion of the three-day celebration. Maghi is also celebrated in the Gurudwaras.

Holi

The most colorful and hilarious of all the festivals, which are celebrated in, Punjab is Holi, celebrated on the full moon day of Phagun. Holi is a festival of colors. It is spring time in India, flowers and fields are in bloom and the country goes wild with people running on the streets and smearing each other with gulal and coloured water.
Originally a festival to celebrate good harvests and fertility of the land, Holi is now a symbolic commemoration of a legend from Hindu Mythology. The story centres around an arrogant king who resents his son worshipping Lord Vishnu. He attempts to kill his son but fails each time. Finally, the king's sister Holika who is said to be immune to burning sits with the boy in a huge fire. However, the prince Prahlad emerges unscathed, while his aunt burns to death. Holi commemorates this event from mythology, and huge bonfires are burnt on the eve of Holi as its symbolic representation.

This exuberant festival is also associated with the immortal love of Krishna and Radha, and hence, Holi is spread over 16 days in Vrindavan as well as Mathura - the two cities with which Lord Krishna shared a deep affiliation. Apart from the usual fun with coloured powder and water, Holi is marked by vibrant processions, which are accompanied by folk songs, dances and a general sense of abandoned vitality.

**Holla Mohalla**

Holla Mohalla is a Sikh festival celebrated in the month of Phalguna, a day after Holi. An annual festival held at Anandpur Sahib in Punjab, Hola Mohalla was started by the tenth Sikh Guru, Gobind Singh, as a gathering of Sikhs for military exercises and mock battles on the day following the festival of Holi. It reminds the people of valour and defence preparedness, concepts dear to the Tenth Guru who was at that time battling the Mughal Empire. On this three-day festival mock battles are held followed by music and poetry competitions. The Nihang Singhs (members of the Sikh army that was founded by Guru Govind Singh) carry on the martial tradition with mock battles and displays of swordsmanship and horse riding. They perform daring feats, such as Gatka (mock encounters), tent pegging, and bareback horse riding and standing erect on two speeding horses.
There are also a number of durbars where Sri Guru Granth Sahib is present and kirtan and religious lectures take place. Sporting shining swords, long spears, conical turbans, the Nihangs present a fierce picture as they gallop past on horseback spraying colors on people. On the last day a long procession, led by Panj Pyaras, starts from Takth Keshgarh Sahib, one of the five Sikh religious seats, and passes through various important gurdwaras like Qila Anandgarh, Lohgarh Sahib, Mata Jitoji and terminates at the Takth.

For people visiting Anandpur Sahib, langars (voluntary community kitchens) are organized by the local people as a part of sewa (community service). Raw materials like wheat flour, rice, vegetables, milk and sugar are provided by the villagers living nearby. Women volunteer to cook and others take part in cleaning the utensils. Traditional cuisine is served to the pilgrim who eats while sitting in rows on the ground.

Like all other festiva, this festival is also celerated at all the Gurudwaras with same enthusiasm. Holla Mohalla is an occasion for the Sikhs to reaffirm their commitment to the Khalsa Pantha.

**Basant Panchami**

Being the famous seasonal fair heralds the advent of spring. Yellow mustard flowers all around create an aura of romantic vive infecting the spirit of the Punjabis. Deeply merged in heart and soul with the Nature, every Punjabi expresses his gratitude with dance and songs. Basant is celebrated towards the close of winter in the month of January-February. The weather circle seems to be changing otherwise Basant used to bring a message of softness in the weather in place of the hard cold season. Basant is the time when mustard fields are yellow with it the spring is ushered in. Punjabis welcome the change and celebrate the day by wearing yellow clothes, holding feasts and by organising kite flying.
Baisakhi

Punjab being a predominantly agricultural state that prides itself on its food grain production; it is little wonder that its most significant festival is Baisakhi, which marks the arrival of the harvesting season. For the Sikhs, Baisakhi has a special significance because on this day in 1699, their tenth guru, Guru Gobind Singh organized the Order of the Khalsa. Baisakhi is New Year's Day in Punjab. It falls on the month of Vaisakh.

The tenth guru Guru Govind Singh selected the auspicious day of Baisakhi to form the order of the Khalsa.

On the 13th of April in 1699, at a meeting in Anandpur in Punjab, the guru called upon his people to come forward to sacrifice themselves for the good of the clan. Initially there was no response from the audience. However, after several calls from the guru five persons—Daya Ram Khatri, Dharm Das, Mokhan Chand, Sahib Chand and Himmat Rai—were ready to offer them. Guru took each of them to the tent nearby and every time he returned alone with his bloodied sword. Then the guru went to the tent yet again, this time for a long time. He reappeared followed by the five men, clad in saffron-colored garments.

They sat on the dais while the guru prepared water to bless them. In an iron vessel, he stirred the batasha that his wife, Mata Jitoji had put into water, with a sword called Khanda Sahib. The water was now considered the sacred nectar of immortality called amrita. It was first given to the five volunteers, then drunk by the guru and later distributed to the crowd. All present, irrespective of caste or creed, became members of the Khalsa Pantha. Those five men were christened the Panch Pyare. He discontinued the tradition of gurus and asked all Sikhs to accept the Grantha Sahib as their eternal guide. The suffix Singh derived from the Sanskrit word singha meaning 'lion', was added...
to the name of all male Sikhs, while the women were to call themselves Kaur, assistants to the Singh.

The celebrations of Baisakhi are similar to the three-day schedule of the celebrations of other Gurpurabs. It is generally celebrated on 13th April every year.

Teej
Teej heralds the onset of Sawan (monsoon), which is essential for the agricultural prosperity of the state. Dressed in all their finery, with mehandi on their hands, the womenfolk converge to welcome the rains and pray for the long life of their husbands. 'Teej' or Teeans, which is celebrated in the month of Sawan (July), is also a source of entertainment for girls. Teej festival starts on the third day of Sawan and continues for about thirteen days. This is a period when rainy season is at its best, having said goodbye to the scorching heat, people are out to enjoy the rains. It is also the time for sowing. The whole atmosphere is relaxed and people have a sigh of relief. The girls celebrate it by having swings. One sees girls, even today, on the swings all over the villages during the rainy season. They have new clothes, special dishes to eat and special songs for the occasion. This festival has also made inroads into the urban society.

Dussehra
Dussehra (tenth day) is one of the significant Hindu festivals, celebrated in the entire country. The occasion marks the triumph of Lord Rama over the demon king, Ravana, the victory of good over evil. Brilliantly decorated tableaux and processions depicting various facets of Rama's life are taken out. On the tenth day, the Vijayadasmi day, colossal effigies of Ravana, his brother Kumbhkarna and son Meghnath are placed in vast open spaces. Rama, accompanied by his consort Sita and his brother Lakshmana, arrive and shoot arrows of fire at these effigies, which are stuffed with explosive material. The result is a deafening blast, enhanced by the shouts of merriment and
triumph from the spectators. In Punjab, the festival wears the colourful garb of Ramlila wherein various incidents from Rama's life are enacted, as is the destruction of Ravana and Bharat Milap, that is the reunion of Ram and his estranged brother Bharat, on the former's return to Ayodhya after 14 years of exile.

Bandi-Chhorh Divas (Diwali)

The Sikh celebration of the return of the sixth Guru Hargobindji from detention in the Gwalior Fort coincides with Hindu festival of Diwali. This coincidence has resulted in similarity of celebration amongst Sikhs and Hindus. The Sixth Guru Hargobind, was freed from imprisonment in the famous fort of Gwalior by Emperor Jahangir in October, 1619 because he was afraid of the Guru's growing following and power. The Guru's father, Guru Arjan, had been martyred for the same reason. According to Sikh tradition, the Guru agreed to be freed only if the other Indian chiefs (rajahs) imprisoned with him were freed. Jahangir was under pressure from moderate but influential Muslim religious leaders like Hajrat Mian Mir, a friend of the Guru. So he relented grudgingly and ordained, "Let those rajahs be freed who can hold on to the Guru's coat tails and walk out of prison". He had in mind no more than four or five being freed with the Guru.

However, the Guru was not to be outmanoeuvred in this way. He asked for a special coat to be made with 52 coat tails - same number as the rajahs in prison with him! And so the rajahs were freed and the Guru became known popularly as the "Bandi Chhor" (Deliverer from prison). The sikhs celebrate this day as Bandi Chhorh Divas i.e., "the day of release of detainees", He arrived at Amritsar on the Divali day and the Har Mandar (now known as the "Golden Temple") was lit with hundreds of lamps i.e. he was received in the same way as the Lord Rama and the day came to be known as the "Bandi Chhor Divas" (the day of freedom). The Sikhs on this day, which generally falls in October-November, hold a one-day celebrations in the Gurdwaras. So in the evening,
illuminations are done with Deewé (earthen oil lamps) or candles and fireworks. The celebrations are held both in the Gurdwaras and in homes.

Another important Sikh event associated with Divali is the martyrdom in 1734 of the elderly Sikh scholar and strategist Bhai Mani Singh, the Granthi (priest) of Harmandar Sahib (Golden Temple).

**Diwali**

Deepawali or Diwali is a festival of lights symbolising the victory of righteousness and the lifting of spiritual darkness. The word 'Deepawali' literally means rows of diyas (clay lamps). A family festival, it is celebrated 20 days after Dussehra, on the 13th day of the dark fortnight of the month of Asvin (October-November).

Continuing the story of Rama, this festival commemorates Lord Rama's return to his kingdom Ayodhya after completing his 14-year exile. Twinkling oil lamps or diyas light up every home and firework displays are common all across the country. The goddess Lakshmi (consort of Vishnu), who is the symbol of wealth and prosperity, is also worshipped on this day.

This festive occasion also marks the beginning of the Hindu new year and Lord Ganesha, the elephant-headed god, the symbol of auspiciousness and wisdom, is also worshipped in most Hindu homes on this day.

Another view is that Deepawali is meant to celebrate the destruction of the arrogant tyrant Bali at the hands of Vishnu when the latter appeared in his Vamana (dwarf) avatar.

The occasion of Deepawali sees the spring-cleaning and white-washing of houses; decorative designs or rangolis are painted on floors and walls. New clothes are bought
and family members and relatives gather together to offer prayers, distribute sweets and to light up their homes.

In West Bengal, the Deepawali festival is celebrated as Kali Puja and Kali, Siva's consort, is worshipped on this day.

**Tika**

Tika is celebrated in the month of Kartik (Oct-Nov.) one day after Diwali. Women put a tika of saffron and rice grains on the foreheads of their brothers, to protect them from evil.

**Chhapar Fair**

The fair is celebrated near the shrine 'Gugge di Marhi' of Gugga Pir on Anand Chaudus, the 14th day of bright half of the month of Bhadon. Gugga Pir was a Chauhan Rajput who believed to have come down to earth directly with his steed and never returned. The Pir possessed special power over all kinds of Snakes. On his day of the fair, the villagers scoop the earth seven times by invoking Gugga Pir to protect them against Snakes. The fair lasts for three days with fun, music and dance.

**Jarag Fair**

The Jarag fair of village Pail in the month of chet (March-April) is celebrated in the honour of Goddess Seetla. The fair is otherwise known as Baheria fair. In the Puja sweet gurgulas i.e. jaggery cakes are offered to the goddess and thereafter to the donkey who is her favourite. All the devotees of Seetla gather near the pond and scoop the earth and raise a small hillock, which is treated as the shrine of the Goddess, and offer Puja. The attraction of the fair is the colourfully dressed donkeys of the plotters.
Roshni Fair

The Roshni fair held in Jagraon from 14th to 16th day of Phagun honours Abdul Kader Jalani the Muslim Pir. Celebrated by both Hindus and Muslims, lighted earthen lamps are offered near the tomb of the Pir making the light visible from long distances. The fair gets its colour with the Bolian and dances of the village's to the tune of the flute and Toomba.

The culture of Punjab from among the cultures of the world has its own unique fragrance. It is unmatched. The scent of this fertile land is such in which the warmth of you-are-my-own is inborn. All communities hold pride in their traditions life. A guest in Punjab is considered as a representative sent by God. The first impression of Punjab one gets is that of a land pulsating with prosperity. The plains of Punjab, with their fertile soil and abundant water supply, are naturally suited to be the breadbasket for India. The land of five rivers is a land of exciting culture, myriad images of swaying emerald green fields and hearty people whose robust rustic ways of camaraderie and bonhomie are very much a part of their heritage. Today's Punjab has become a land of boundless opportunities, offering distinct advantages for investment and industry. Since the recent liberalization of India's economy, Punjab has started making its mark on the global business mainstream, with major players from around the world forming joint ventures in the field of agri-business.

- Most people are very religious; they are extremely fun-loving and full of life, most of them having earned their money by sheer hard work and spend it lavishly on the good things of life. Unlike many other places, people's wealth here is in the 'show-window' demanding to be seen and admired. Soon big-hearted and hard working Punjabis made Punjab the jewel in the crown of India. There are many cities, but the majority of the people live in villages. On the streets, wear shoulder bags across the body (impossible to snatch), and keep all money and valuables out.
of sight (never in unzipped pockets). Beware of being frisked by beggars
pretending a friendly hug. Never give anyone your camera, radio or walk man to look at', unless you feel quite sure of getting it back again.

- On trains, where there is much robbery, use your ruck-sack or bag as a pillow (or stash it under your knees) when sleeping. If going to the bathroom, bolt your bag to a fixed compartment attachment or to a window bar.

- On crowded local buses, keep a constant eye on your luggage. You may be asked to put your bags under a seat to make room for other passenger. Don’t do it.

- In cheap lodging, double-lock the door (with combination padlock) and secure all windows before retiring for the night-thieves are adept at creeping into unsecured hotel rooms.

- If leaving your luggage for anywhere, for any reason, padlock it to a pipe, a bedstead, or anything that cannot be moved. Some hotels will remind it for you-but always get a receipt, and always check nothing’s missing on your return.

- Don't accept any food or drink from total strangers, especially on trains or buses. There are good chances that it might be drugged.

- Fear, anger or carelessness all attracts theft; calm confidence and alertness deter it. If you become a victim, report your loss to the police by all means (you will need their report for any insurance claim), but do not expect a lot of sympathy.

India is for the self-reliant-a quality that some travellers have to learn the hard way.

Land of Ancient Civilizations and Epics

Punjab is the cradle of the Indus Valley Civilization, more than 4000 years old. Archaeological excavations, throughout the state, have revealed evidences of the magnificent cities of Harappa and Mohenjodaro, which lived and died along the banks of the mighty Indus and its tributaries. The Mahabharata, which narrates life between the 7th and 5th century BC, contains rich descriptions of the land and people of Punjab at that time. The Vedic and Epic period of the Punjab was socially and culturally very prolific as during this glorious period, the people accelerated in
the fields of philosophy and culture. It is believed that parts of the Ramayana too, were written around the Shri Ram Tirath Ashram, near Amritsar; and it was in these forests that Lav and Kush grew up. Kaikyee belonged to this region. The authors of Vishnu Purana and the Shiv Purano belonged to the central Punjab. Other great historical discoveries have been unearthed at Ropar, Kiratpur, Dholbaha, Rohira and Ghuram. These relics throw light on the culture and changing architectural styles of Punjab, since the Harappan age. At Sanghol, in Fategarh Sahib district near Ludhiana, sites associated with great Mauryan Dynasty, have yielded remarkable relics that record the presence of Buddhism in the region.

**Aryan Migration and Persian Rule (516 BC — 321 AD)**

Among other reasons, one of the reasons of the decline of Indus Valley Civilization could be a series of raids or small-scale migration from Northwest between 1500 B.C to 100 B.C. The next thousand years of the history of Punjab is dominated by the Aryans. They used to call it Arya-Varta or the land of Arya. Here is where the oldest books of human history called the Rig-Vedas are supposed to have been written. The Aryans spoke Sanskrit, which became common language of the people.

The location of Punjab was on the outskirts of the Great Persian empires. The Persian rulers often attacked it. The Persian King Darius the great was able to occupy some parts of Punjab. But he was Persian King Gustasp who completed the occupation of Punjab in 516 B.C. Soon, Punjab became the wealthiest of all the Satrapies i.e provinces of the Persian kingdom.

At that time the greatest rival of the Persians were the Greeks. They also had some knowledge of the area. Persian emperor Darius I appointed Skylax, the Greek to explore the area around Indus for its commercial viability. Skylax later wrote a book "Peripulus" in which he mentioned about the area and its richness. Hectaeus (500
BC) and Herodotus (483-431 BC) also wrote about the "Indian Satrapy" of the Persians. In Greek maps we find the mention of the mightiest river of all the world called the Indos (Indus) and its tributaries of Hydaspes (Jhelum), Akesines (Chenab), Hydroatis (Ravi), Hyphasis (Satluj) and Hesidros (Beas).

**Alexander's Invasion (321 AD)**

The legendary king Great Alexander of Greece had an ambition of conquering the World. Around 321 B.C after crushing the might of Persians, he entered India through its Northwest frontiers. The place, which is modern day Punjab, was then under the rule of Persians and was the richest place on earth. Alexander invited all the local rulers of Punjab to submit to his authority. Some of the rulers did the same, but the ruler of the kingdom between rivers Hydaspes (Jhelum) and Akesines (Chenab), the legendary king Porus, refused to submit to his authority. As a result, fierce battle took place. Both sides suffered heavy casualties. Porus lost his sons and got injured. In the end Alexander's forces took over Punjab and they brought Porus to Alexander's court. Here the legendary conversation took place. Alexander asked Porus "How should I treat you?" Porus shot back "In the same way as a king treats another king". Alexander was struck by his genius and bravery. He returned the kingdom back to Porus.

Alexander as with his other occupied areas established two cities in the area of Punjab, where he settled people from his multi-national armies, which included a majority of Greeks and Macedonians. These cities along with the rule of the Indo-Greek thrived long after Alexander's departure.

Alexander's Eastern empire (from Syria to Punjab) was inherited by Seleucus Nicator, the founder of Seleucid dynasty. However the Greek empire in the east was disrupted by the ascendency of the Bacterians. The Bacterian King Demetrius I added Punjab
to his Kingdom in the second century BC. The best known of the Indo-Greek kings was Menander who established his independent kingdom centered at Taxila in 170 BC. He later moved his capital to Sagala (The modern Sialkot). Menander soon captured territories east of his kingdom and grew to rival the power of Bacterians. Menander died in a vain attempt to conquer Bacteria in 130 BC. Menander's successors maintained the their rule on Punjab till 55 BC when the whole area was disrupted by the events happening in greater Euro-Asia.

In the middle of the second century BC, Yui Chi tribe of modern China began to move westward which caused in turn to Sakas or Scythians to move. Northern Sakas successfully wrestled the power of the areas from the Indo-Greeks. Another Central Asiatic people to make Punjab their home were the white Huns who made continuous campaigns towards this part of the world. Finally establishing their rule in the later 3rd century AD.

**Muslim Invasions (713 AD -- 1300 AD)**

Following the birth of Islam in Arabia in 6th century AD, Arabs rose to power and replaced the Persians as the major power in the area. In 711-13 AD Arabs advanced to the land of five rivers, occupying Multan. Further north the area that survived the Arab attacks was divided into small kingdoms.

Meanwhile in Ghazni after the death of Subuktgin, the Turk, his son Mahmud assumed power in 997 AD. He was to expand his father's kingdom far to the west and east of Ghazni through his military conquest. He was to attack Punjab 17 times during his reign. The Ghauris who extended their rule as far as Dehli uprooted the Ghaznavids. Shahabuddin Ghauri annexed Lahore to his kingdom in 1186. After Ghauri's death his governor Qutbudin Aibak became an independent ruler of Punjab and founded the Mamluk sultenate. Khiljis' replaced the Mamluks in 1290. The two
successful raids by the Mongols who marched their way to Dehli twice during Alauddin Khilji's rule briefly disrupted the rule of Khiljis. Tughluqs succeeded Khiljis in 1320 AD. The Sayyids replaced Tughluq rule in 1414 AD. Lodhis gained control of Dehli in 1479 AD.

After that Mughals came and captured relatively the whole of India and remained in power for about 250 years.

**The Rise of Sikh Power (1700 AD – 1849 AD)**

In 1469 A.D, Guru Nanak was born at Talwandi, now in Pakistan. He was to show the world a new light, the path of brotherhood among Hindus and Muslims. Soon he became famous across Punjab and thousands of people started following his teachings. His followers were called the "SIKHS". Guru Angad Sahab Ji succeeded Guru Nanak in 1539. He was followed by Guru Amardas Sahab Ji, Guru Ramdas Sahab Ji, Guru Ajan Dev Sahab Ji, Guru Har Gobind Sahab Ji, Guru Har Rai Sahab Ji, Guru Har Krihan Sahab Ji, Guru Teg Bahadur Sahab Ji and finally by Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

After Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the Sikhs started following the holy book, Shri Guru Granth Sahab Ji, written and compiled by all the Gurus. The 10th Guru was Guru Gobind Singh Ji. He was a true warrior. On 13th April 1699, he modified his Sikhs to a community, different from normal Hindus. From now on, Sikhs were required to keep long hair on head and beard. They were also required to wear a Pagdi i.e. a Turban. He fought several battles with Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. Around 1757 A.D, both Punjab and Sind, had fallen to Ahmad Shah Abdali's rule. Ahmad Shah died in June 1773. After his death power of Afghans declined in Punjab.

Next was the territory of Ranjit Singh. During the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Sikhs had even ruled on Afghanistan. The Sikh religion flourished and the territorial
boundaries increased. Ranjit Singh constructed many Gurdwaras. He constructed the famous Sachkhand Sahib at Nanded in Maharashtra. He also covered the famous Har Mandir Sahib (Golden Temple) with Gold.

After his death in 1839, the Sikh governors started fighting with each other for supremacy. Slowly the Sikh kingdom started declining and the British took over it.

The British and the Post Independence Era

The British ruled Punjab for 200 years like the rest of India. Many of the Freedom Fighters of the Great Indian Freedom Struggle were from Punjab. Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, Sukhdev, Lala Lajpat Rai, Udham Singh were some of the brave sons of this soil who laid down their life for the country. In addition thousands of unsung heros sacrificed themselves in the "Jalian Wala Bagh" incident.

At last on 15th August 1947, India became independent and the State was divided between India and Pakistan. Punjab was again divided into the states of present day Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh for administrative reasons in 1966. Chandigarh on the border of Punjab and Haryana, remains the capital of the two states, yet is administered as a Union Territory from Delhi.

Various Schemes of Tourism Promotion Initiated by Punjab Government

As has already been discussed in the previous chapter that there are many tourism attraction in Punjab, therefore this chapter has been devoted to make out the tourism prospects from the point of view of the past experience and the data, facts and figures available and also to highlight the various tourism promotion projects and schemes initiated by the Punjab government.

Tourist Arrivals

From the following figure it can be made out that there were:
- Approximately 3.82 lakh total tourists in 2005 and that there was a growth by 60% over 1999.
- Around 3,100 foreign tourists visited Punjab in 2005.
- There were more than 3.8 lakh domestic tourists visited Punjab in 2005.

**Figure 1**
Total Tourist Arrivals in Punjab

![Graph showing total tourist arrivals in Punjab from 1999 to 2005.](image)

**Figure 2**
Foreign Tourist arrivals in Punjab

![Graph showing foreign tourist arrivals in Punjab from 1999 to 2005.](image)
Figure 3

Domestic Tourist arrivals in Punjab

Share

- Inbound foreign tourists market- 0.10%
- Domestic tourist traffic - 0.08%
- Foreign : Domestic Mix
  - Punjab: 2: 98
  - India – 1: 99

Figure 4

Share of Punjab in India tourist arrivals
Hotels in Punjab

- Approx 98 hotels in Punjab categories
- Around 2,200 hotel rooms
- 2-star category has the maximum room share of 45%.
  - 3-star category has a share of 38%
  - 5-star category is fast coming up and accounts for ~13% of rooms
Total 2,183 Rooms

Punjab Tourism Categories

- Religious and Cultural Tourism have been the main stay.
- Focus is on developing other products as well.
- Hybrid products such as rural and medical tourism are emerging

Connectivity

- Increasing international connectivity.
- Well connected for highway tourism

Futuristic Plans for Punjab

a) Establishment of Institute of Hotel Management at Mohali on 6 acres of land

b) Establishment of Convention Centre at Mohali on 2 acres of land

c) Establishment of Convention Centre at Amritsar on 5 acres of land (2 acres land already in the possession of the Department of Tourism and Improvement Trust has been requested to provide another 3 acres of land)
Establishment of an Integrated Multi Purpose Dimensional Tourist Project in Village Adhera (Kurali) on 65 acres of land in the name of Village Panchayat.

Some Emerging Segments

Medical Tourism: Desired Vision...

- Availability of good medical tourism expertise.
- Coordination among hospitals, hotels and tour operators.
- Rationalized tariff structure.
- Societal Involvement
- 9 ‘S’ focus
  - Safai (Cleanliness),
  - swagat (Hospitality),
  - Sanchar (Information),
  - Suvidha (Facilities),
  - Sahayog (Cooperation),
  - Safety (Security), Sewa
  - Sankalap & Sarachna (Infrastructure development).

Rural Tourism

Globally popular concept - Farm Tourism
- Live with nature and bring balance
- Instil pride amongst farmers
- Bridge between haves and have nots

Punjab - Farm holidays
- Warm and green environs away from pressures of modern life;
- Indulge in farm fresh food Punjabi food in open outdoors,
- Home away from home - families of farm owners who will be hosts and guides

Empanelled eight farm houses in Punjab
- Patiala, Abohar, Bathinda, Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur and Ropar

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Encouraged response from tourists, EOI invited from owners of Farm Houses located in Punjab for recognition of and registration of their Farm Houses.

Apart from normal agricultural operations, farmers engaged in other activities like Dairy Farming, Poultry, Fishery, Horticulture/Floriculture etc. also eligible.

**Eligibility criteria:**
- Minimum two bed rooms, preferably air conditioned with attached bath toilet.
- Home cooked food
- Familiarise tourists with village way of life.
- Demonstration of agriculture practice/farm operation carried out in the field.
- Introduce tourists to village culture, music, local fairs, dances, craft and village panchayat functioning and rides on bullock carts, cycle and tractors etc.

**New Initiatives for NRIs by Government of Punjab - Future Plans**

1. Strengthening of Department of NRIs Affairs Punjab
2. Expansion of Schemes under Mera Pind Initiative
3. NRI Suwidha Centers- web-based center for availing the Government and other services
4. Promote Investments by NRIs, particularly in the Service Industry
5. Setting up NRI Business Portal - for business with Small and medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Punjab
6. Organise Punjabi Parvasi Diwas as an Annual Feature on Lohri/ Maghi
7. Strengthen and enlarge the role of NRI Sabha- Jalandhar

**Further Measures Initiated By the Government**

Recently Punjab Government has realised that promotion of tourism is beneficial in a number of ways and it up-lifts the economy by generating direct and indirect employment besides promotion of other industries and earning of foreign exchange. In tune with this objective, the Government has initiated many projects for tourism promotion in the state.
Tourism in Punjab has become a part of its socio economic development. Keeping in view the importance of tourism, Punjab has set up a separate department of Tourism besides the Punjab State Tourism Corporation. This is expected to result into increased promotion and development of tourism in the state.

Some of the important projects initiated by Punjab Government:

Ropeway

Ropeways are meant for transportation in difficult mountainous terrain. They have gained acceptance in the tourism sector as a means of traffic handling and developing new resorts. More than a means of commuting, ropeways provide an enjoyable vision of scenic beauty of the destination or site. The proposed ropeway is used mainly for joy rides and shall pass over the Satluj river connecting the PTDC Complex at one end to the Maharaja Ranjit Singh Hill on the other.

Location

Ropeway is proposed at Maharaja Ranjit Singh Hill, Rupnagar.

Expected Contribution in Tourism Promotion

The foreign tourists can also be attracted in large numbers to the ropeway and the restaurant if a village theme is adopted. All the transit tourists can be encouraged for an extra stop-over to enjoy the ropeway ride.

Environmental Awareness

The project will help in increasing public appreciation and awareness of the natural environment. For transport of tourist passenger ropeway system is good because this is a pollution free environment friendly transport system.

Socio-Economic Impact

This project would increase the employment opportunities for the local communities near the highway and would eventually lead to the rise in their per capita income. This project would also improve the infrastructural facilities in the state.
Single Window and Wayside Amenities
Signboards at the destinations are necessary to increase the accessibility and attractiveness of the destination. Signboards showing road signs, directions, distances, blue prints of the destination, major attractions nearby etc. Help in accessing to the destination easily with minimum effort. The wayside amenities are important features associated with the tourist comfort in any distinction. These include safe drinking water and toilet facilities.

Locations
Signboards are located at all archaeological and historical monuments. It has been found that all the destinations in Punjab do not have proper signboards and have to be taken up on priority. Further such signage should be put up along all major state roads/highways. Similar wayside amenities should be set up along roads and highways. Such facilities are proposed to be set up in 30 locations.

Socio- Economic Impact
No socio-economic impacts of these projects are envisaged except for the creation of employment that too to a negligible extent.

Sound and Light Shows
Archaeological sites of historical importance could be effectively made more attractive for the tourists through the sound and light shows. Halogen lights with suitable sound and music system need to be set up at the site to explain in detail about the site through a recorded or live audio system. Celebrity voices could be recorded and played for this purpose. This project is crucial for projecting the locale as a historically important destination and thus enhancing the image of the state as well as the country.
Tourist Information Centres
This is the most important concept considering the need to build relationships with the tourists on a long term basis. Availability of proper and reliable information would help the tourists to plan their tour in a better way. Usually it has been found that problems faced by tourists are due to the lack of information on aspects like transport, linkages, place of stay etc. Information centres are the direct contact between the tourism promoters with the customers i.e. the tourists. The objective here is to convey all information required by the tourists ranging from reaching the destination to his/her returning back. An information centre should definitely possess equipment like internet connected PC, well-designed interior, required stationary and database of tourist destinations in Punjab along with well-trained executives. A typical tourist information centre consists of a desk, two chairs, a computer and occupied by two persons.

Possible Locations
Information centres and Visitor Management Systems are proposed at all gateways and cities / towns with large variety of attractions and the destinations, which already attract large number of tourists. The destinations where Tourists Information Centres and Visitors Management Systems are proposed include New Delhi, Chandigarh, Patiala, Amritsar, Ludhiana, Jalandhar and Kapurthala. Similar centres may be replicated subsequently.

Expected Contribution in Tourism Promotion
Market demand would be for all kinds of tourist inflow to different destinations. The target market for these projects will be all categories of tourists.

Socio-economic impact
No socio-economic impacts of these projects are envisaged except for the creation of employment to some extent.
Water Sports Complex

Water sports complexes can be developed on lakes, canals and other water bodies located in various tourist destinations of the state. These water sports complexes shall consist of the various types of safe and standardised water sports related equipments.

The activities envisaged in the complex include Aqua Tricycle (2 seater), Kayak (2 seater), Rowing boat (6 seater) Pedal Boat (4 seater) and water scooter (3 seater) for each location.

Possible Locations

The water sports activities are proposed to be set up extensively locations viz. Ranjit Singh Dam, Shahpur Kandi in Pathankot, Anarkali, Baradari in Batala, Gurdaspur and Neelon Ludhiana. In some places water sports in proposed to be set up along with restaurants i.e. at Patiala Kanjli wetland area and Ropar Beach.

Expected Contribution in Tourism Promotion

There is growing demand for adventure sports and related activities in India. Market demand for the water sports complex will be mainly from Domestic Tourist and visitor flow at different destinations. The target market for these projects will be NRI’s and a segment of the domestic tourists and the locals.

Meena Bazar

Haat bazaars are important infrastructure required in cities and towns where local art and culture are very prominent factor in attracting tourists. Meena bazaars refer to the setting up of stalls to sell the local artifacts and handicrafts. This concept was successfully tried and tested in the ‘Red Fort of Delhi’. The major
objective of these bazaars is to increase the popularity of Indian Art and Handicrafts thus ensuring steady income for the local artisans. This project concept helps in the up-liftment of the economically poor artisans. Meena bazaars should comprise of typical exhibition and display of products by the Artisans of Punjab for the visitors.

Possible Locations
Meena bazaar is proposed at Patiala Fort and Bathinda Fort.

Expected Contribution in Tourism Promotion
The market demand for Haat will come from the locals, domestic and foreign tourist visitors at the above destinations. The target market for Meena bazaars will be leisure tourists, special interest tourists and foreigners.

Art Gallery
This project would play an active role in providing the information about the historical importance of the destination along with the personality associated with Chilla Baba Sheikh Farid Shakarkanj. Baba Farid was a famous Sufi Saint based in Pakistan who visited the place enroute Delhi.

Possible Locations
Art Gallery is proposed to be set up in Faridkot.

Expected Contribution in Tourism Promotion
The market demand for the above type of gallery will come from foreign tourists interested in the mysticism of India and educational tour of domestic schools and colleges. The target market for these projects will be foreign and domestic educational tourists.
Socio – economic Impact

Socio – economic impact of these projects will be better understanding of the history of the Saint and creation of employment for some people. In case tourist activities increase in the location, economic activities may increase.

Possible Locations
Budget accommodations in Punjab are proposed to be set up at:

Expected Contribution in Tourism Promotion
The demand will come mainly from budget tourist mainly domestic or foreign.

Restaurants, Bars and Cafeterias
Non – availability of proper food is a common problem faced by tourists all over India. Hence restaurants offering multi-cuisine food are required. Cafeterias are also required for the refreshment of the tourists during their course of long journeys, considering the fact that road travel is one of the important mode of travel in Punjab and the road connectivity is extremely good in most parts of the state.

Possible Locations
Restaurants (with or without bars) and cafeterias are proposed at Patiala, Fatehgarh Sahib, Nangal, Amritsar and Jalandhar.

Expected Contribution in Tourism Promotion
Market demand would be for locals and all kinds of tourists visiting the destinations. The target market for these projects will be tourists in general.

Environmental Implications
The project is likely to develop commercial activities in the area.
Socio – economic Impact

There will significant socio – economic impact of their projects. This would create numerous self – employment opportunities for the unemployed and also the local communities of those destinations. The standard of living of the people involved in the establishment and running of such restaurants and cafeterias will improve.

Five Star Hotels (Accommodation)

Tourist accommodation is an essential infrastructure required in cities and towns where large number of tourists visit and stay overnight. 5 star hotel is proposed at destinations normally visited by upper class peoples like Non Resident Indians, upper class communities, Business Tourists, Foreigners etc. The proposed 5 star hotel will have 85 double rooms and 15 single rooms. The hotel should contain all the facilities and services essential for meeting the prescribed standard of a five star hotel viz spacious and modern swimming pool having both cold and warm system, Cafe shop, bar, health club etc.

Possible Locations

Two 5 star hotels have been proposed in Punjab at Ludhiana and Amritsar.

Expected Contribution in Tourism Promotion

The demand of a 5 star hotel will be based on the flow of domestic and foreign tourists at the destinations. The target market for 5 star hotels will be foreigners, NRI’s, upper class domestic tourists and business tourists.

Positive Impacts

The project will help in attracting more tourists to the destination and also extend their stay at the destination. The extra revenue generated can be used in conserving the surrounding environment, both natural and cultural. Proper care in construction phase and using local resources will minimise the impact on the
natural surrounding during construction. The project will also contribute to sustainable local development.

Socio-economic impact

Tourist accommodation at potential tourist destination will have positive socio-economic implication on the local community. Growth in tourism and availability of good hotels will extend the stay of tourists at the destination. Also availability of basic tourist infrastructure will attract more number of tourists at the place. It will enhance the tourist spending in the place and thereby benefit locals by increasing their income level. The socio-economic impact on women will not be much in the cities.

Amusement Park

Possible Locations

Amusement parks are proposed at Bathinda and Amritsar.

Expected Contribution in Tourism Promotion

The market demand for amusement park will come basically from the locals, domestic tourists and visitor flow that takes place at the proposed destinations. The target market for these amusement parks will be the locals, upper class and middle class domestic tourists. The demand is generally found to be high during weekends, festivals and public holidays. The proposed project is expected to attract large crowds from the neighbouring districts states as there are very little or no entertainment facilities in the region.

Positive impacts

Development of well-designed open spaces will have prominent positive impact on the area. It will help in improving the physical environment of the area.
Socio-economic impact

Emergence of water parks and a variety of theme-based parks in the recent time has gained momentum to a significant extent. These parks have increased the employment to a marginal extent in various ways.

Beach Cottage with Restaurant (Accommodation)

Though Punjab does not have a coastline, developing a tourist attraction on the lines of beach tourism will attract a large number of tourists to have an experience of beach tourism. The place identified for the beach tourism is the Satluj water body at Ropar. This can be utilized in the best possible manner without distorting the serene beauty of the wetland by building beach cottages providing accommodation with restaurant and bar of tourists. The proposed beach cottage project envisages a capacity of 10 rooms providing double accommodation with restaurant and a open air spacious bar.

The restaurant shall depict in its menu the mouth watering specialities of Punjab. The guests can enjoy the moonlit night the folk music and the traditional dance of Punjab. The project shall be finalised at the particular location after getting necessary clearance from the Environmental and Forestry departments. A self-contained system for solid waste management would be apt for this beach cottage.

Apart from hut and restaurant, there is a provision for Angling.

Possible Locations

Artificial beach development project is proposed in Ropar on the banks of river Satluj.

Expected Contribution in Tourism Promotion

The high-end Indian tourists and the foreign tourists who are on the lookout for a serene vacation, rich in culture and traditions are the appropriate target market. Weekend tourists from Delhi and other major parts of Punjab can be targeted effectively. The transit tourists are the other potential segment which can be tapped effectively. The unique cottages can be promoted through tour operators,
chartered flight operators as a unique cultural heritage away from the busy metropolitan life. Such a theme related resort providing natural ambience and traditional lifestyle will also attract more and more foreign tourists to the cottage.

Socio-economic impact
The tourists consider such spots as a weekend relaxation option, many of them do not stay for the night, and hence the target of the project should be to make the average stay of tourists 1.5 – 2 days. This would increase the tourist expenditure and thereby the income of the personnel employed in these resorts. The tourists coming to the resort can also be attracted towards the local arts and crafts by organising tribal shows on weekends thereby increasing the income level of the local craftsman.

Live Theatre
Historical important events and the culture and heritage of the state can be effectively presented through this concept. Local artists and the performers can add value to the tourist destinations. This project is crucial for projecting the image as a historically important destination and thus enhancing the image of the state as well as the country. The requirements for this project are local artists, a stage to perform and the musical instruments.

The suggested project would also provide a shopping place for selling various local handicrafts and artefacts. The stalls would be made available by the government to local private parties and in return a monthly rent would be charged. The place will also have a restaurant.

Possible Location(s)
The proposed live theatre haat will be located at Patiala.

Expected Contribution in Tourism Promotion
The market demand for the live theatre will come from the domestic and foreign tourists visiting the destinations. The target market for proposed project will be leisure tourists, Special interest tourists and foreigners.
Positive Impacts
This project will help in improving the overall physical environmental and in heritage conservation. The project will help in heritage property conservation and increase awareness about the culture and heritage of the place.

Socio – economic impact
Significant socio – economic impacts are envisaged as the local artists, women groups and people associated with handicrafts will get more opportunities for their livelihood.

Lake Complex
Lake Restaurant complex is proposed at Patiala near the Kali temple. The complex will be developed on the lines of Sarhind Floating Restaurant. The restaurant is proposed to be located in the centre of the lake with a small wooden jetty and mechanised boats for ferrying the tourists. Adequate lighting, cleaning and beautification will be done.

Possible Locations
The proposed lake complex will be located at Patiala near the Kali Devi Temple.

Expected Contribution in Tourism Promotion
Market demand will be mainly from the locals, domestic tourists and visitor flow at different tourist attractions at Patiala. The target market for this project will also be NRI’s and a segment of foreign tourists.

Socio – economic Impact
The socio – economic impact of these projects could be considered as good to a reasonable extent. This would create employment opportunities for the local communities. Women can be given the opportunity to run the complex e.g. total complex run by the women employees only. This would lead to the empowerment of the women and up-liftment of the society to a certain extent at the destination.
Upgrading PTDC Complexes (Accommodation)

Tourist facilities of the PTDC complexes visited during the field survey were not found up to the mark due to lack of maintenance. Most of these complexes need massive up-gradation measures to make these establishments commercially viable.

The minimum required tourist infrastructure like modern and clean bathrooms, curtains, bed and pillow covers, telephones and cable TV is also not available at most of the complexes. Considering the fact that all of the PTDC complexes are strategically located and have ample for expansion, these can be upgraded and marketed very effectively for substantial revenue generation.

Possible Locations

All existing PTDC complexes (17 nos.)

Expected Contribution in Tourism Promotion

Most of the PTDC complexes are located on NH / major state highways. Improvements in their conditions will attract the tourists of various categories travelling on these highways, more so because the state government is laying emphasis on highway tourism.

Environmental awareness

The project will help in increasing public appreciation and awareness of the natural and the cultural environment.

Socio-economic impact

Up-gradation of the PTDC complexes will provide temporary employment opportunity for some people involved in the renovation / up-gradation work.
Refurbishment of Forts, Palaces and other Heritage Buildings (Tourism Project)

The entire state of Punjab state is dotted with the ruins of old buildings. Since 1970 to date 56 ancient and historic sites have been declared “Protected Monument” by the Punjab Government. The government of India had separately declared 30 sites as protected sites. Among them are kos minars (small towers that were milestones for ancient roads), sarais, palaces, temples, tombs and forts. Some of the better known of these are: Sheesh Mahal and Quila Mubarak at Patiala, Aam Khas Bagh at Sirhind, Maharaja Ranjit Singh’s summer palace at Amritsar, Mughal sarais at Shambhu and Doraha, the tombs of Ustaad and Shagird at village Talania in Fatehgarh Sahib district. Dera Mian Meer at Sirhind, Masjid Bhagat Sadna Qasai at Sirhind, the Moorish Masjid at Kapurthala, the ancestral homes of Lala Lajpat Rai at Jagraon and Shaheed Bhagat Singh at Khatkar Kalan.

Most of these heritage buildings need restoration and refurbishment and extensive marketing to make them popular among the tourists visiting the state.

Possible Locations

Initially at Sheesh Mahal and Quila Mubarak at Patiala and then restoration work at other heritage sites can also be undertaken.

Expected Contribution in Tourism Promotion

Attraction for domestic as well as foreign tourists.

Positive Impacts

The project will help in increasing the public appreciation and awareness of the natural and the cultural environment.
**Socio – economic impact**

The socio – economic impact of these projects will be positive as an increase in number of visitors to these places will increase employment opportunities for the locals and women entrepreneurs specially the small time vendors.

**Casino (Tourism Project)**

There are no casinos in India. Most of the domestic tourists have to go to neighbouring countries to avail the enjoyment of a casino. Though the law of the land doesn’t permit opening and running of a casino, it was felt during the survey that there is ample demand for a casino in the state. Keeping in view the various steps being taken by the government for tourism promotion and shifts in policy to keep a pace with the changing environment, the team suggested a casino project in the state on a long-term basis.

Besides the casino, the project will comprise of a restaurant, bar and other recreational activities.

**Possible Locations**

The project is suggested at Patiala.

**Expected Contribution in Tourism Promotion**

Market demand would be for attract locals, high end domestic tourists and foreign tourists.

**Environmental Implications**

**Palace on wheels (Tourism Infrastructure)**

“Patiala Palace on Wheels” is a project suggested on the lines of the train which runs between Delhi and Rajasthan. The start will start from Delhi connect Bathinda via Patiala, go to Amritsar and come back to Delhi back in 5-6 days.
The proposed train will have total 21 coaches out of which, 2 will have Gen. Set, 2 will have Restaurant and remaining 17 coaches will have 5 star hotel. Further is having all facilities like attached bathroom (hot cold water), TV, Sofa, A/c etc. Each coach will accommodate 8 passengers.

**Possible Locations**
Delhi – Patiala – Bathinda – Amritsar – Delhi

**Expected Contribution in Tourism Promotion**
High – end domestic tourists and foreign tourists.

**Heritage Train (Tourism Project)**
A heritage train is suggested for Jaijon Doaba village in Hoshiarpur. The train will run between Jalandhar and Jaijon village. The train will have 4 AC coaches with 5 star facilities.

**Proposed Route**
Jalandhar – Jaijon Doaba – Jalandhar

**Market Demand / Segment / Target Market**
High – end domestic tourists and foreign tourist.

From the above discussion it is evident that Punjab Government has undertaken a lot many activities and initiates for tourism promotion in the state. Many of the schemes discussed above have already been initiated and others are in the implementation stage. It is expected that this will result into a significant promotion of tourism in Punjab.