



# Discovering Himachal

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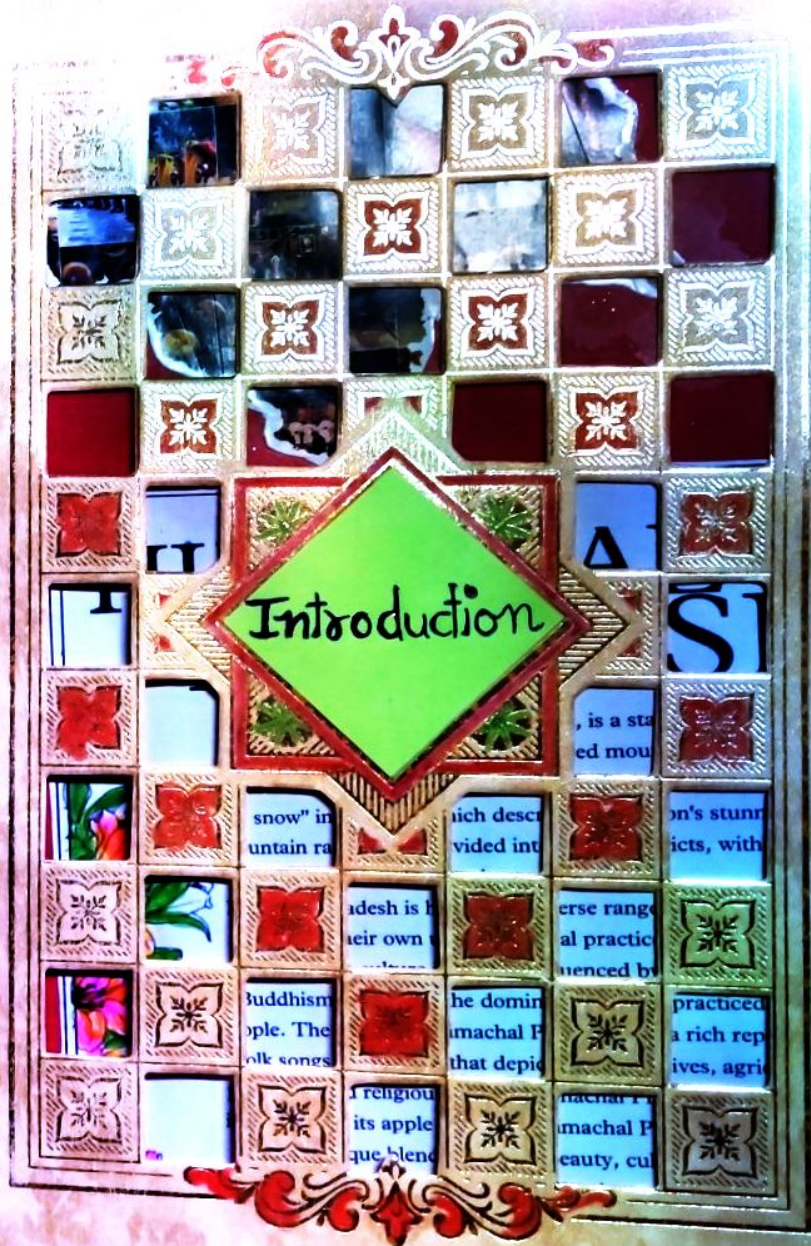
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# Overview





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# HIMACHAL PRADESH

located in the northern part of India, is a state known for its picturesque landscapes, snow-capped mountains, and rich cultural heritage. The name "Himachal" translates to "the land of snow" in Sanskrit, which describes the region's stunning mountain ranges. It is divided into twelve districts, with Shimla being its capital city.

Himachal Pradesh is home to a diverse range of ethnic groups, each with their own unique cultural practices and traditions.

The state's culture is heavily influenced by Hinduism and Buddhism, which are the dominant religions practiced by the people. The people of Himachal Pradesh have a rich repertoire of folk songs and dances that depict their daily lives, agricultural practices, and religious beliefs. Himachal Pradesh, and the state is famous for its apple orchards. Himachal Pradesh is a state that offers a unique blend of natural beauty, cultural diversity, and traditional practices. Its stunning landscapes, vibrant festivals, and warm hospitality make it a must-visit destination for travelers seeking an authentic cultural experience.

# PART-1

• Attire

• Handicraft



## Shimla

is the capital of Himachal Pradesh. Shimla is popular for holiday retreats during the summer months and famous for its Victorian architecture. Shimla has a deep-rooted rich culture in all aspects of life, including living and dressing style. The dressing style of Shimla is very simple as the natives and locals use woolen clothes because of the cold climate. Usually, locals wear simple salwar suits and kurta pajama with the waistcoat. The traditional dress of Shimla includes woolen kurta and pajama, Saluka for men and Suit, Rejhta, Dhatu for women.



**Dress for Men:** Men wear a woolen kurta or shirt, which is knee-length paired with a pajama called "Suthan" and with a waistcoat called "Saluka" or "Sadri." The head is covered by a round woolen cap which has a colorfully designed band around it.



**Dress for Women:** The dress for women is known as "Rejhta" It is a body-length gown with pleats at the waist that look like a long skirt. It is combined with a waistcoat called "Saluka or Sadri." The head is covered by a square piece of cloth called "Dhatu." Women also wear heavy gold jhumkas to complement the whole dress and make it more authentic and graceful.

## TRADITIONAL ATTIRE OF MANDI, SOLAN, UNNAO, HAMIRPUR, BILASPUR, KANGRA

These are also the districts of Himachal and famous for their traditional culture, farming, and food. These all districts cover the lower part of Himachal.



Traditional dress of women in these districts is very famous, and women always wear this during any auspicious occasion or in a wedding ceremony. The traditional dress includes a long blouse-like shirt without a button with a long skirt full of pleats called "Ghaghri" and red in color and carries a dupatta over their head. This dress becomes authentic when women wear their traditional jewelry of gold as mang tika and a large round nose ring called "Nath."



Men's traditional dress includes a frock like a kurta with pleats and pajamas called "Suthan,"

but nowadays men wear simple kurta and pajama and women prefer wearing salwar suit with dupatta on their head as the veil in daily routine. In hilly areas of Mandi and solan, women wear salwar suits with "Dhatu" to cover their heads.

## SIRMAUR

is one of the districts of Himachal Pradesh which is located in the Shivalik range. The Shimla district bounds Sirmaur. Sirmaur is famous for its beautiful landscapes and temples. Sirmaur holds the deep-rooted aspects of the old traditional culture of the Himachal. The traditional attire of Sirmaur is similar to Shimla.



**Women attire** in Sirmaur, women wear simple **salwar kameez** and wear woolen woven sweaters and **shawls** during the winter season. The head is covered with a square piece of cloth called "**Dhatu**."



**Men attire** Men wear a long woolen coat called "**Lohiya**" with pajama. The head is covered by a cap that is round in shape, similar to "**Kinnauri topi**."

## Kullu valley

is one of the open valleys near the Beas river. It is famous for its beautiful majestic hills covered in pine and deodar forest. Kullu valley is very famous among travelers and tourists for its treks, Manali valley, and temples.

The dress of Kullu is one of the most famous traditional dress of Himachal Pradesh and also very famous among the tourists as a "Himachali dress." Warm woolen clothes are used in Kullu valley because of cold climate conditions around the year.



**Dress for Men:** Men wear a long woolen coat with pleats called "**Chola**," and it is tightened with a cloth called "**Dora**" on the waist, which serves as a belt. This "**Chola**" is accompanied by tight pants called "**Suthan**." Their shoulders are covered with a blanket called "**Lachho**" or "**Loi**," a gents shawl mostly in grey, white, brown in colors. The Head is covered by a cap made of woolen cloth and has a colorfully designed band around it, and this cap is famous as "**Kulluvi Topi**."



**Dress for Women:** The dress for women is "**Patto**," which is like a shawl but heavier and thicker than a shawl. Women wear "**Patto**" over their clothes and pin both ends with local silver brooches called "**Boomini**". This patto covers the whole body and a piece of cloth tied around the waist, which acts as a belt called "**Gachchi**." The women cover their head with a

### 1. Chamba Dress



Chamba is famous for its Gaddi tribe. The Gaddi is a generic term used for all the population of the Bharmour area of Chamba District. Men of the Gaddi tribe wrap themselves in a long woolen coat called "Chola," which reaches below the knees. The Chola is tightened around the waist using a black cord called "Dora" made of sheep's wool and may run up to 60m in length. The legs are covered by woven woolen pajamas called "Suthan." The Head of men is covered by a cap called "topi" with a Peak-like projection and flaps around the margin. The peak of the cap represents the Mountain Kailash peak. The flaps of the cap are used to cover the ear during chilled weather, and the front side of the cap is decorated with dried flowers, a tuft of feathers, or a string of beads. Shoes made of leather called "Mocharu".

Female costume consists of Luanchari, Dora, and a long dupatta with a frill called Ghundu. Luanchari is like a frock with a contrasting color and decorated with a lot of frills & pippins. "Luanchari" is tied on the waist with black colored cord called Dora. The Head is covered by the long dupatta decorated with frills and sequins "Ghundu".

#### The silver jewelry worn by gaddi women are like:

- Chiri: This is similar to mang tika and wears on the forehead and weighs around 140-150 gm.



- Clips
- Jhumkas (earings)
- Pari (as Payal).
- Chanderhar: it is a big size long necklace and weighs around 300-6-gm.
- Chack: It is put in the back portion of the Head and is conical in shape. It is considered the important symbol of a married lady.
- Gojru: These are bracelets worn in hands

## Lahaul and Spiti

is a high-altitude district of Himachal. This place is famous for its majestic view of snow-covered mountains, high altitude treks, and famous Tibetan-rich culture. Lahaul and Spiti are the coldest regions of the Himalayas, and the area is covered with snow for six months or around the year.

- **Dress for Men and Women in Lahaul:** In Lahaul, Men wear woolen pants of dark color and full-sleeved shirts called "Kurti." A long loose gown called "Kattar," usually in grey, black or white is worn over the dress and gives a complete look by wearing a woolen round cap called "Lahauli topi".



- In Lahaul, Women wear a tight-fitting pajama with a long full gown called "Dugpo," which is tightened at the waist with a sash. Both men and women complete their traditional look by wearing "Lahauli topi," which is uni-colored and has no designed pattern around the cap. These Lahauli dress makes it a famous traditional dress of Himachal Pradesh.
- **Dress for Men and Women in Spiti:** The dress of Spiti valley is different from Lahaul valley. Spiti dress includes long loose frocks or coats known by other names that depend on which material is used for the dress. If the dress is made from wool called "Righoay" and if made from the skin of sheep and goat called "Thakpa" and if made from the fur of goat and sheep called "Charlak." To keep the back and abdomen warm, they tied a sash called "Kira." A tight woolen Pyjama called "Suthan" worn under the coat, and even a cotton or silk cloth frock under the coat called "Tochay."



## KINNAUR

is one of the most beautiful valleys of the Himachal. It is famous for its apples and charismatic view of landscape and mountains. Kinnaur is known as the "Land of fairytales" and remains covered with snow for six months. The style of living and attire of locals mainly depends upon the climate of Kinnaur. The cold weather of Kinnaur around the



**Dress for Men:** Men wear woolen cloth shirts called "Chamn Kurti" with a long woolen coat called "Chhuba" accompanied with woolen churidar pajama called "Suthan." Then a sleeveless woolen jacket is worn outside the Chhuba, and the Head is covered by a traditional woolen round cap called "Kinnauri Topi."

**Dress for women:** Women wear a woolen garment called "Dohru" paired with a sort of full sleeves blouse. Women wrap themselves with a woolen shawl called Dohru, and the first wrap of Dohru is on the back with embroidered border displayed throughout its length up to the heels. The darker shades of colors are preferred for Dohru with vibrant, beautiful embroidery on it. Besides this, women wear beautiful colored pattu (like a shawl thicker and heavier than a regular shawl) around their shoulders. Women wear gold and heavy silver jewelry to complement the whole dress and make it more beautiful and attractive.



**Headgear for Men & Women:** Headgear, known as "Kinnauri topi," is the favorite part of their dress.

# Handicraft



**Himachal** is rich in handicrafts and traditional art forms. The region is famous for its intricate **woodwork**, which includes carved furniture, utensils, and decorative items. The woodwork often features intricate designs and motifs inspired by nature, such as flowers, birds, and animals.

### CHAMBA RUMAL



The Chamba Rumal or Chamba handkerchief is an embroidered handicraft that was once promoted under the patronage of the former rulers of Chamba kingdom. It is a common item of gift during marriages with detailed patterns in bright and pleasing colour schemes

Known as a "peedle wonder" Chamba Rumal is now made in square and rectangular shapes. The materials used still consist of muslin, malmal, khaddar (a coarse fabric), fine charcoal or brush, and silk threads without knots. Using a double satin stitch for the embroidery, both

faces of the cloth are concurrently stitched by a forward and backward technique to maintain uniformity of design on both faces of the rumal. After completing the embroidery, the fabric is stitched with a border of about 2 to 4 inches on all sides

### MINIATURE PAINTINGS



Pahari painting had two principal phases of development. The earlier phase that started from the mid-17th century is extraordinarily colourful with its primitive expression charged with vitality and emotional intensity. These early Pahari paintings can be distinguished by fish-shaped elongated eyes, oval faces, receding foreheads, round chins and prominent noses. Bold figures are carefully laid against monochrome background of red, yellow, green or brown colours. Decorative pigmy trees suggest the feeling of perspective while the sky is indicated only by a narrow strip on the horizon.



The style underwent a change in the second quarter of the 18th century and a new phase of style developed in the Guler area. The paintings of this phase are done in a somewhat

marigold flowers or pretty tassels of dried flowers of the Himalayan Brahma Kamal (Lotus of Lord Brahma).



Usually worn by men, the cap is worn by women too in the Kinnaur region, where it is known as the pang. Women, elsewhere, in the state usually wear a dhaatu, a head scarf, typical to the state.

## KULLU SHAWL

Kullu has been famous for its shawls with striking geometrical patterns and vibrant lives. Earlier, the Kulivi people used to weave plain shawls but after the arrival of Bushehari craftsman from Rampur, Shimla district of Himachal Pradesh, the trend of patterned handloom came into existence. Typical Kullu shawls have geometrical designs on both ends. Besides geometrical designs, the shawls are also woven in floral designs, which may run all over, on the corners or on the borders only.



Traditionally, bright colours, viz. red, yellow, magenta pink, green, orange, blue, black and white were used for patterning and white, black and natural grey or brown were used as the

base in these shawls. But in the present times keeping in mind the customer demand, these bright colours are being replaced gradually by pastel colours. Mill spun yarn dyed in various colours is used for the ground, while a vast range of acrylic colours is used for the pattern in the border.



These shawls are available in Sheep Wool, Angora, Pashmina, Yak Wool and handspun material. The yarn used may be chemically dyed or vegetable dyed. Price of any shawl depends upon quality of wool and the number and width of patterns used in it. Owing to the high cost of labour involved in the sorting of fine pashmina fiber, the shawls prepared from pashmina wool are expensive.

## PULLAS



It is a handicraft most popular in upper reaches of Inner and Outer-Seraj in the Jalori and Bashleo pass regions. Pullans are grass shoes which are used as footwear. This footwear is made out of fibers procured from the bark of a wild bush, Bhang (*Cannabis sativa* Linn.). The upper portion of pullan is made of goat hair and is decorated with colourful designs using threads while the bottom of footwear is made of Bang fiber. These are available in different sizes and local people consider them as warm footwear.

## METAL CRAFT

The metal craft of Himachal Pradesh stands exemplary as the antique metal statuettes are one of the most significant aspects in many temples of Himachal Pradesh. The statues of gods and goddesses also appear as 'mohras' or in metal plaques.



The metal crafts of Himachal Pradesh not only serve the religious purpose but they serve as utilitarian items also. As per the history, the metal craft in Himachal Pradesh grew because the courts of the Himachal kings had the craftsmen who were specialised in metalware in the 600 AD. Since that age, the artisans have been practicing the art and have mastered in this field of exclusive creations.



The statuettes at temple entrances in Brahmaur, Chamba and the Vajreshwari Devi temple in Kangra are glaring examples of excellent craftsmanship. Even the temple doors of Vajreshwari Devi, Jwalamukhi in Kangra, Bhimkali in Sarahan and Chandika Devi in Kinnaur exhibit the Repousse technique in which the craftsmen excelled.



A canopy made of gold at the Jwalamukhi temple is one of the most admired examples of the metal craft of Himachal Pradesh, which is believed to have been gifted by the Mughal emperor Akbar.

## STONE CARVING



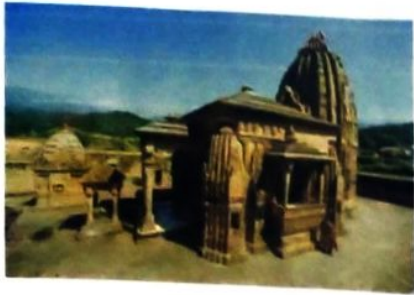
Stone crafts of Himachal Pradesh are an integral part of tourism. Himachal Pradesh has a variety of stones that are used for stone crafts. Among all, sandstone is predominantly used in the stone crafts of Himachal Pradesh. Even good quality lime stone is also used in large numbers. Rubble masonry is another stone which is mainly used for building purposes.



The stones are available in Kangra, Bilaspur, Mandi and Kulu and the artisans create wide varieties of objects out of them. Kangra, Mandi, Bilaspur, Sirmour, Chamba and Kullu have been traced as the traditional centres of stone crafts of Himachal Pradesh. The people of Bataihra or Batada community are adroit in stone carving.



The stone crafts of Himachal Pradesh can be observed in various temples, materials and pieces. Some of the common examples of stone crafts are temples and utility items. The plentiful supply of sandstone on the Shivalik hills has encouraged the stone crafts in Himachal Pradesh. The landscapes of Himachal Pradesh are dotted with numerous beautifully carved temples which stand unique in their carving styles. The temples of Masroor, Baijnath temple in Kangra, Shiva and Devi temples at Jagatsukh, Naggur, Nirmand and in Kullu are the great examples of stone craft. In addition to these temples, the shrines located on the banks of the river Beas in Mandi, the temples at Brahmaur, Chhatrahi, Chamba, Bilaspur and Sirmour are exemplary of the superb creations of the 7th and 13th century AD.



Art from carving excellent designs in temples and relief structural panels for temples, the artisans of this place create different utility items such as traditional stoves (angithi), circular pots for storing (kundi), pestle and mortar (dauri danda), millstones (chakki) etc that are used by the local people in day to day life.

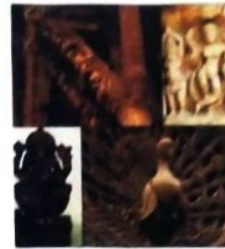
The stone crafts of Himachal Pradesh with the creating variations of the craftsmen have occupied a distinct place in the arcade of craft because of its unique style and designs.

## WOOD CRAVING



Himachal is a densely forest area. Wood carving is one of the most popular and beautiful art of himachal. The tribal areas like Minghal, Chhatrahadi, Bharmaur, Manali, Parasher, Karsog, Saranh, Moorang, Sarahan, Vilba etc are full of beautiful temples carved out of wood. Some of the memorable carvings are Shiva and Parvati sitting on the back of the Nandi Bull with the holy Ganges flowing out of Shiva's tresses on the entrance door of the sun temple at Neerath near Shimla. A panel depicting soldiers firing guns and wrestlers wrestling and

warriors dancing with daggers can be seen at the entrance of the Beejat temple at Chaupal. In the Malana village in Kulu a pillar depicts human figures in the act of love making.



Houses all over Himachal display intricate wooden carvings at the entrance gates, at the edge of the roof, rooftops, verandahs and pillars. These are especially in evidence in Kangra, Garli-Paraypur, Kulu, Simla, Chamba and Bharmaur areas. The door ways has a carved statue of lord Ganesh adorning it and flanked on either side by animal and bird figures. Carving upon the pillars depict flowering creepers, kings settling out on expeditions, wrestlers and family deities. The margins are usually adorned with ornamental designs.



# PART-2

- Fair and Festival
- Dhamu

## LOCAL FAIR AND FESTIVALS

### KULLU DUSSEHRA



Kullu Dussehra is a renowned grand fair where hundreds of Gods and Goddesses decked up in their finery coverage with their retinue for week long festivity at Dhalpur grounds is one of its kind. The folk flavour of the festivity, rituals and traditions here make it totally different from Dussehra celebrations elsewhere in the country. The pleasant weather and breathtaking beauty of the valley along with the celebrations fill the visitors with eternal happiness and satisfaction.

### LOSAR



Losar is the New Year

Losar is a festival of Tibetans mainly celebrated in Lahaul valley in Himachal. This festival celebrates the uniqueness of Tibetan Ethnicity in Himachal. It marks the beginning of the winter season in the valley and is celebrated during the first month of Tibetan calendar. Though the festival is majorly misunderstood as devil's dance, this festival has a great significance for the local people of the state and is carried out with a belief to attract prosperity and happiness

### HALDA FESTIVAL



The Halda Festival is dedicated to the Shiskar Apa, the Goddess of Wealth in the Lamaistic Pantheon. It is an occasion of joy and happiness when people come together from different parts of the state to celebrate the New Year and wish for their prosperity. This festival carries an uncanny resemblance to Diwali, the festival of lights and it lasts for two days.

### SAZO FAIR OR SAZI



Sazo is an ancient festival celebrated in Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh. It is famous for its exotic rituals, grand cultural celebrations and lip-smacking feasts. The locals believe that during this festival, the deities go to heaven for a short period of time. On this day, the whole district is gripped in an extreme religious fervor, and a spiritual ambience dominates the atmosphere. It also offers you the chance to understand the significance of religion and faith for the people living in these harsh



## DOONGRI



Doongri celebration is praised in Kullu to pay tribute to and to observe Hadimba Devi's (wife of Bheema in Mahabharata) birthday. A tremendous fair is organized on this day. The festival lasts for three days. It is organized at the Hadimba Temple, situated in the sacred Dhingri Forest in Manali.

## MANDI SHIVARATRI



The Mandi Shivaratri Mela, which lasts for seven days and marks the beginning of Shivaratri, is generally observed on the thirteenth night of Krishna Paksha. This festival, which boasts a rich deity culture, is about savoring religious fervor to the fullest. One of the main reasons why this fair is so beloved by the people is that it transforms the town of Mandi into a magnificent traditional spectacular. More than 200 deities from the Mandi district are said to congregate during this celebration, beginning on the day of Shivaratri.

## PHULAICH FESTIVAL



A seven-day extravaganza, Phulaich means 'the festival of flowers'. The festival is associated with the blooming of flowers in the Kinnaur valley. On the first day, villagers go to the mountains to collect Ladra flowers in a procession, playing drums and blowing bigtles. All the inhabitants dance and celebrate the 18th night with charismatic music beneath the deodar trees

Celebrated as an act of remembering the deceased, relatives offer rice, wine, and food to the departed, which are later distributed amongst the poor. Then, they head to the Dhangaspa family house and show their respect by putting garlands on members of the family.

## SAIR FESTIVAL



harvest season, Sair is a cultural festival that is observed in many parts of Himachal. But if you want to experience this famous cultural festival of India in its full glory then you need to head to Shimla. This is a centuries-old festival and sees celebrations in the form of carnivals, beating of drums, and blowing of trumpets. A major attraction of Sair Festival is bullfight.

## PORI FESTIVAL



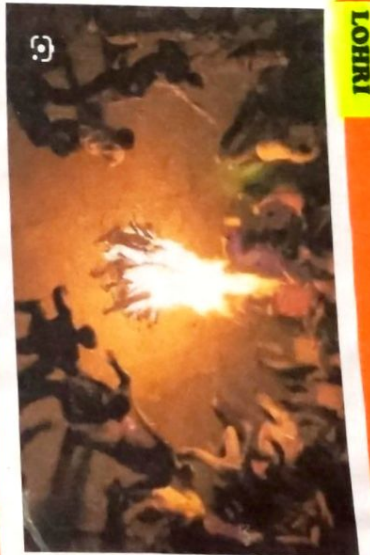
Every year, a significant number of tourists are attracted to and delighted by the Pori Festival, which the people consider a very sacred occasion. A beautiful prayer ceremony held within the Trilokath Temple's sacred grounds heralds the festival's start, during which worshippers honour the local deity and seek His favours. After that, they go to the parkrama gallery where they complete clockwise circumambulations of the gallery. Numerous stalls and shops selling a wide variety of items are set up in Lahaul during the Pori Festival which adds to the charm of the colorful vistas that engulf this scenic abode at this time of the year.

## MINJAR FAIR



The Minjar Fair is an important occasion in the lives of the people of Chamba and it is celebrated with great zeal and enthusiasm. An agricultural festival, the Minjar Fair is an event of joy and prosperity. The fascinating folk music and dance acts are the Minjar fair's main attraction. A large section of the town is dotted with countless stalls during the Minjar Fair, and this also makes Chamba a haven for shopaholics. You can witness the many fascinating customs and celebrations of the Chamba people by going to the Minjar Mela in Chamba, Himachal Pradesh.

## LOHRI



In Himachal Pradesh, Lohri is a significant Festival. It is often celebrated near the end of winter when the cold no longer stings and people celebrate the season with great excitement and festivity. In general, the Lohri Festival is held to promote fertility and wealth. Bonfire is an integral part of the Lohri Fair that has been named after the Lohri Festival. For the people of Himachal Pradesh, this is a month of joy when new clothes are purchased and festivities take place amid vibrant dance and music.

## La Darcha Fair



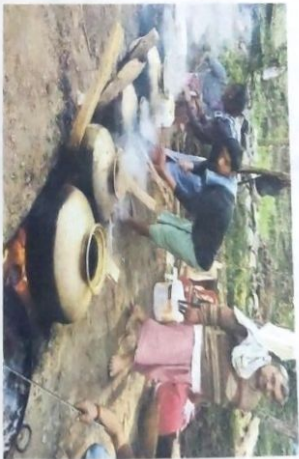
The Ladarcha festival in Kaza, celebrates the coming together of people and cultures of the Spiti, Ladakh and Kinnaur regions. Originally organised to strengthen the commercial bond between India and Tibet, the fair attracts many regional traders, local inhabitants, and tourist from across the world.

Initially, traders from the three districts used to put up their stalls here and trade items like jewellery, accessories, utensils, apparel, metalwork, plastic goods, dry fruits, grains and even livestock including yaks and pure blood horses. Now, one can witness the Chaam and Buchan dance, special Buddhist sermons, an archery competition, and performances from the artists of the Tibetan Institute of Performing Art, Bhutan, Ladakh, Sikkim, Kinnaur, and Nepal. There are large community meals organised for the visitors as well as locals.

# Dhaam

## HIMACHALI DHAAM

Dhaam is a local term for lunch/traditional feast. Himachali Dhaam is a traditional meal prepared in Himachali style. It is a special feast that is prepared and served on every joyful event or celebration like wedding, ceremonies etc. temples also serve dhaam on most of the religious festivals or auspicious dates. Dhaam consists of various local vegetables, lentils, rice, sweets, mushrooms, papad, bread, chutney, etc. The most important dish in Dhaam is "Madra", which is made from gram flour and is served with "Rajma" (kidney beans).



The preparation of Dhaam follows the old tradition and is prepared by the Dharmi Bandhus or Botiya, a group of Brahmin priests. They have the knowledge and expertise in cooking this elaborate meal. The cuisine is developed keeping in mind the geographical and climatic conditions of the state along with the traditional methods under natural conditions mostly from staple ingredients. The utensils used for cooking the food are normally brass ones called 'Barohi', 'Baltohi', or 'Charoti' in local language.

The ethnic food includes rajmah madra, kadi, khatta, sepu badi, and so forth exhibiting a treasure of food heritage. The meal is usually served on leaf plates called "pattals" and is enjoyed by the guests sitting on the floor.



Himachali Dham is an important part of Himachal Pradesh's culture and traditions. It adds strength and prosperity to the wedding ceremony and showcases the rich culinary heritage of the region.



HIMACHAL PRADESH

Himachal  
tradition  
showcase



### Folk Dances of Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh has preserved its culture even today in the era of modernity, folk dances of Himachal Pradesh are performed every year in fairs, festivals and other cultural events. Himachal Pradesh has a long list of unique dances for every occasion, in every form, and for every region! This folk dance is mostly performed in local fairs and on joyous occasions like marriages and the coming of the deities. Women and men dance gracefully dressed in their traditional costumes! so, in this article, we have provided information about the famous and traditional dance of Himachal Pradesh.

#### 1. NATI

- Nati has a rich dance tradition. It is the most popular and famous dance performed at fairs and festivals. This dance is performed in the districts of Kullu, Sirmour, Shimla, etc. of Himachal Pradesh. It is started at a slow speed, while doing this it is called loose pulse and later it increases at a rapid pace. Dholak, Karnal, Ransingha, Flute, Shehnai, and Nagade are used in this dance. In this dance, women express their happiness by dancing in the courtyard of the house.



- A lot of people join this dance and try to relish it in the best possible way. This dance is also famous among a few other communities of Chandigarh and Utarakhand.

## 2. RAKSHASHA DANCE



- Demon Dance - Chaamba or Rakshasha Dance - Himachal Pradesh. Another popular dance in Himachal Pradesh is the Demon Dance. It is also known as Chaamba or Rakshasha dance. The history of the dance dates back to ancient times. This dance reflects the traditional culture and lifestyle of the people. It can be performed by both men and women
- They have to wear masks and hold each other's hands during the dance. This dance group is guided by a leader who is known as Ghure. The dance shows how the demons attack the people and the way God saves them from the attack

## 3. KAYANG MALA:



- Kayang Mala is another dance of Himachal Pradesh that is performed by holding each other's hands and wearing a garland-like material. It appears to be colorful and nice. You will love to see the girls performing beautifully in this dance.

## 4. SHAND AND SHABU DANCE:

- However, before performing this dance the performers have to drink Chaang the local drink of Himachal Pradesh. At the present time, Kayang Mala is one of the most popular dances in Himachal Pradesh. If you want to relish the dance, then pack your bags and come to this place to explore the dance in the best possible manner.



- It is performed in front of the monasteries to show respect and in the loving memory of Lord Buddha. This dance originated in the Spiti and Lahaul districts of the state. Many times, it is also performed during the local harvesting period.
- During this dance drums and other instruments are played so that it becomes much more interesting. Nowadays people also use the violin to make the dance look attractive and good. You should not miss the chance to enjoy the dance.

## 5. CHOLAMBA DANCE:



- the locals of the region perform the dance in front of the dead animals. This is performed with great pomp and show. You will feel nice to be a part of this dance and enjoy it to the fullest. For a long period, this dance is one of the most amazing and oldest dances in Himachal Pradesh.

### 6. KEEKALI DANCE (GIDDA)



- It is one of the most popular tribal dances of Himachal Pradesh. The tribals of this region mainly perform this dance on any special occasion. It is found that if there is a marriage in their community the tribal people perform this dance. It is performed by both the male and female members of society. They dance with great pomp and show. The tribals are well-dressed during this period. The dance is found uniformly.

### 7. DANGI FOLK DANCE



- One of the major folk dances of Himachal Pradesh, this folk dance is based on one of the oldest folk tales and is performed in the temple of Naina Devi during the harvest season! It is a dance form of the Chamba area and performed at festivals, weddings and during Jataras by the Gaddi women. Female dancers are mainly involved in Dangi folk dance. There are different themes or variations of this dance! The dance is full of excitement and enthusiasm along with a plethora of emotions, one theme depicts the love story of a common village girl and a princely king, and the other depicts business transactions between a customer and a business!

### 8. CHHANAK CHHAM DANCE



- Chhanak Chham dance is very famous dance form of Himachal Pradesh in the Lahaul-Spiti region, in the memory of Lord Buddha and as a tribute! The Lamas of the Lahaul-Spiti region perform this devotional dance on the occasion of Chakhar, which happens once every three years! It is famous for its vibrant hats, costumes, and masks. The theme of his costume is yellow, black, and gold and is designed to be sleek and shiny. The cap is called a filter. This Himachal Pradesh dance is beautiful as compared to other slow-moving dances.

### 9. SWANG TEGI DANCE



- There is a tradition of dancing Swangtegi dances by wearing lion and garden wooden masks on Diwali. In this, there is a clean dance like wild animals. Dhakhni and Drodi are deity dances. Such dances are organized on occasions like Jagar, Shant etc. Scenes of warring heroes, invaders, temples, stupas, etc. are also presented in Swangtegi dances.

# Buildings Types

## TRADITIONAL BUILDING TYPES

The architectural houses of Himachal Pradesh are different from normal architectural houses. Most houses are constructed depending on the influence of culture, topography, and high altitude environments. Generally, you will get a vibe of Buddhist monasteries when you visit Himachal Pradesh. Some houses are also constructed with Brahmaical stones. I will share with you 3 types of houses in Himachal Pradesh that I have seen while visiting the lovely Himachal.

### Kath-Kuni style



Houses in Himachal Pradesh are constructed in the form of 'Kath-Kuni' style. This style has both religious and cultural influences. In these traditional houses in Himachal Pradesh, the walls are made of stones and timber woods alternatively. The most famous types of traditional houses in Himachal Pradesh are Kath-Kuni style houses because they are found across Himachal such as the Kullu, Mandi districts, and parts of the Shimla and Solan districts

The houses are constructed with wooden beams in alternate directions placed vertically side by side. Dry stones cover the space between the empty wooden beams.

### Dhajji-Divari Construction





Besides Kath-Kuni houses in himachal are built by Dhaji-Diwari construction. The houses are made up of stones and mud and timber. The size of the wooden beams varies from 450 mm to 600 mm. These houses are warm during winter and cool during summer. The houses are strong in nature. You can spot these houses in Shimla, Kullu and Kashmir regions.

● **Mud Construction**



In Himachal Pradesh traditional houses there are two kinds of mud construction: one is earth beam construction and the other one is sun-dried brick construction. In sun-dried brick constructions, the walls are 600 mm to 900mm thick. To avoid erosion the walls are plastered with puskha mud. The floors are constructed with wooden beams which are laid over the mud.

Himachal Pradesh is known for its unique and diverse architecture, which reflects the rich cultural heritage of the region. Here are some notable architectural features of Himachal Pradesh:

● **Traditional Wooden Architecture:**



Himachal Pradesh is famous for its traditional wooden architecture, especially in the areas of Kullu, Manali, and Shimla. The houses are built using locally available timber with intricate carvings and designs on the doors, windows, and balconies. The use of wood not only provides insulation but also gives a distinct aesthetic appeal to the buildings.

● **Tibetan Influence:**



Due to its proximity to Tibet, Himachal Pradesh has a significant Tibetan influence in its architecture, especially in areas like Dharamshala and McLeod Ganj. The Tibetan Buddhist monasteries, known as traditional Tibetan and Indian architectural styles. These structures are a blend of

● **British Colonial Architecture:**



During the British colonial era, Himachal Pradesh served as a popular summer retreat for the British officials. As a result, many towns and cities in the region have colonial-era buildings that showcase Victorian and Gothic architectural styles. The Mall Road in Shimla is a prime example of such architecture, with its grand colonial buildings and neo-Gothic structures.

The architectural diversity in Himachal Pradesh is a testament to the region's rich history and cultural heritage. The blend of traditional, Tibetan, and colonial styles creates a unique visual appeal, attracting tourists from all over the world.

## AYURVEDA



Himachal Pradesh has a rich tradition of traditional medical practices, including Ayurveda and folk medicine. Ayurveda, which originated in ancient India, focuses on holistic healing and balancing the body, mind, and spirit. In Himachal Pradesh, there are several Ayurvedic hospitals and wellness centers that offer various treatments and therapies. These include herbal massages, detoxification therapies, yoga, and meditation. Folk medicine is also widely practiced in Himachal Pradesh, especially in rural areas. It involves the use of local herbs, plants, and natural remedies to treat various ailments. Traditional healers or "vaidyas" are highly respected in the community and are sought after for their knowledge and expertise.

The state government of Himachal Pradesh has taken initiatives to promote and preserve these traditional medical practices. They have established Ayurvedic colleges and research centers to train and educate practitioners. The government also organizes health camps and workshops to create awareness about the benefits of these traditional healing methods.

Himachal offers a blend of modern and traditional medical practices, allowing people to choose the approach that resonates with them.

# Conclusion

Himachal Pradesh is a state that proudly showcase its rich and diverse cultural heritage. The state's vibrant festivals, fairs, traditional art forms, handicrafts all contribute to its unique cultural tapestry. The people of Himachal Pradesh take great pride in preserving and promoting their cultural heritage. The state government also plays an active role in organizing many cultural events and festivals to showcase and celebrate "Himachal's" rich cultural identity.

In conclusion, Himachal is a huge treasure trove of cultural experiences that reflects its history, geographical diversity and deep-rooted tradition. The state's commitment to preserving and promoting culture ensures that future generation will continue to be captivated by charm and allure of Himachal's vibrant culture.