

COVER STORY

DESTINATIONS



The white-domed Shanti Stupa in Changspa, Leh

LEH

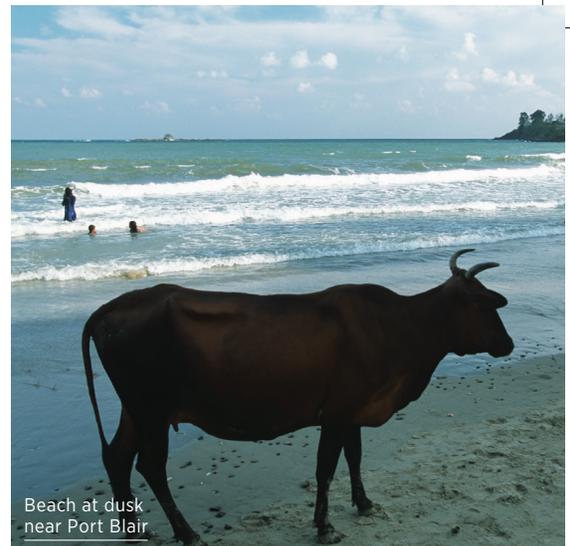
The natural beauty of the hilly terrains of Leh is almost on everyone's travel bucket list and this is with good reason. A motley mix of monasteries, royal palaces, mountain peaks, wildlife safaris, and adventure spots amidst stunning natural vistas makes Leh an absolute must-visit city. Start at one of the landmarks the Khar that houses the Leh Palace, Tsemo Castle, Namgyal Gompa and a museum that exhibits ornaments, thangkas and paintings that are centuries old. Also check the Shanti Stupa atop a hill in Changspa region located at a jaw-dropping altitude of 14000 feet that offers breathtaking and panoramic views of the beautiful city.

If you want to know what it is like to be patriotic do visit the Hall of Fame to salute the spirit of heroes of the Kargil War and also see how the soldiers in Siachen live here as they continue to work tirelessly to protect the border. For some retail therapy head to the Leh Main Bazaar the best place to pick some of the finest woolen wear and indulge in local food. Located close to Leh Palace behind the Jama Masjid in the Leh Main Bazaar is Datun Sahib a Meswak tree believed to be the first ever tree planted by Guru Nanak.

PORT BLAIR

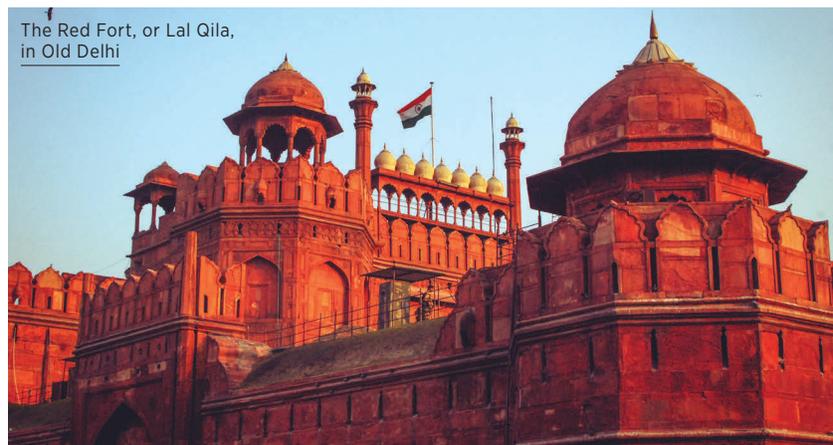
Capital of the union territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and located on the east coast of the South Andaman Island, Port Blair is the gateway to a string of pristine islands. It is an island town offering water-based activities like snorkeling, sea cruises and scuba diving. The Aberdeen Bazaar forms the centre of the town and most of the popular restaurants and hotels are located in close proximity to this area. The airport is only four kilometres away. There's a lot you can do in and around Port Blair. These include checking out historical sites like the Cellular Jail and Ross Island and museums like Samudrika (Naval Marine Museum), Anthropological Museum, Zoological Survey of India Museum and Fisheries Museum.

The historic and expansive Cellular Jail was used by the British to exile



Beach at dusk near Port Blair

political prisoners including Vinayak Damodar Savarkar and Batukeshwar Dutt. The original building had seven wings and was constructed from bricks brought from Burma. Named after surveyor Sir Daniel Ross, Ross Island was inhabited from 1788 onwards but is now entirely abandoned. But it still attracts curious tourists who love treading on the brick walkways all over the island.



The Red Fort, or Lal Qila, in Old Delhi

DELHI

The capital city of India has so many places to see that it makes for a destination like no other. Having just celebrated its 107th birthday recently, Delhi is a potpourri of history, culture, arts and tradition peppered by a liberal dose of its cuisine that makes it a city to see. It is a must-visit destination for culture and art aficionados. On top of your list is to get a history lesson by visiting the renowned

monuments including the Qutub Minar, Jantar Mantar, Humayun's Tomb, Jama Mosque, Lodhi Garden, Safdarjung Tomb and Red Fort. Delhi has several colonial buildings as well and the India Gate and President House are places on your to-do list. Do stop by at the Sunder Nursery, a heritage park complex next to the Humayun's Tomb that has a history that dates back to the 16th century and is bursting with colourful flowers.