



# India Secrets of Kashmir Cultural Discovery

12 Days



*The Adventure Company* | EST. 1969

**MT+SOBEK**<sup>TM</sup>

MOUNTAIN TRAVEL SOBEK

**CELEBRATING 50 YEARS**  
AS THE PIONEER OF ADVENTURE TRAVEL

# India Secrets of Kashmir

## Cultural Discovery

Unravel the mysteries of Kashmir, recently opened to tourism, on this behind-the-scenes journey through one of India's most remote regions. Hike the pristine mountains around Srinagar, take tea with local villagers, visit Lake Dal's vibrant floating market, and tour the mythical "Seat of Solomon." Experience the deep spirituality of the Dalai Lama's community in Dharamsala, behold the magnificent Sikh Golden Temple at Amritsar, and witness the colorful pageantry of the Wagah border ceremony. All this plus classic Tibetan, Indian, and Kashmiri meals equals the cultural exploration of a lifetime!

### Details

Arrive:	New Delhi, India
Depart:	New Delhi, India
Duration:	12 Days
Group Size:	3-14 Guests
Minimum Age:	13 Years Old

Activity Level:



### Testimonials

*"A spectacular adventure in a marvelous and diverse country. The trip is designed for each traveller to experience first-hand the beauty and spirituality of this complex society. The guides and itinerary are outstanding. You will come home and want to learn more of this beautiful culture."*

Diane S.

*"I've taken six MTS trips and they have all exceeded my expectations. The staff, the food, the logistics and the communications have always been exceptional. Thank you for being my "go to" adventure travel company!"*

Margaret I.

**GOT QUESTIONS? SPEAK WITH AN EXPERT.**

☎ 1-800-974-0300

✉ [info@mtsobek.com](mailto:info@mtsobek.com)

## Why Take This Trip With Us?

### REASON #01

MT Sobek's immersive Secrets of Kashmir itinerary is led by expert local guides who understand the complexities of the region.

### REASON #02

Only MT Sobek uniquely combines Sikhism, Buddhism and Islam and three different geographical areas of India.

### REASON #03

As part of our philanthropic endeavors, we donate \$250 per guest to benefit the Tibetan Nuns Project at the Dolma Ling Nunnery & Institute.

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## What to Expect



### ACTIVITIES

Cultural touring by private van and foot, with easy walks to explore Kashmir's historical wonders and meet local people.



### LODGING

Relax at comfortable and well-appointed hotels, including the elegant and luxurious Vivanta by Taj at Lake Dal — an exquisite five-star resort.



### CLIMATE

In April and September, low temperatures will range from 40°F - low 60°F and highs will range from 50°F - 100°F.

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## Meet Our Guides

Our expert guides and trip leaders are truly the key to our trips' success. Many are locals who live in-country year-round; others have made it their second home—all are passionate, enthusiastic and endlessly knowledgeable. Meet two of the guides that might be on your trip.

Born in Delhi to a Sikh father and American mother, Inder grew up in the capital city at a time of strong British influence in India. After studying in the US, the lure of India and its wonders finally pulled him back and into the travel world. Today, as a guide and tour director, Inder works closely with guests to ensure the best experience possible. He blends an understanding of Western perspectives with a local's approach to customs and languages (Hindi and Punjabi). A self-taught chef, history buff and travel enthusiast, with a great sense of humor, he will bring your MT Sobek adventure to life.

**Inder Dugal**

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# Itinerary

## DAY 1

### ARRIVE IN NEW DELHI

Welcome to India! Arrive at Indira Gandhi International Airport in vibrant New Delhi and transfer to the luxury Taj Mahal (Taj Man Singh) Hotel.

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## DAY 2

### SEE THE SIGHTS OF HISTORIC DELHI

After our welcome breakfast, tour New Delhi today, beginning with a drive through Lutyens' Delhi, named for the British architect who was responsible for much of the building during the British Raj. Pass the Presidential Palace, the imposing 138-foot-tall India Gate, and Birla House, former residence of Mahatma Gandhi. Take an afternoon walk through stunning UNESCO-listed Humayun's Tomb and Lodhi Gardens. Dinner is on your own.

**Meals:** B, L

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## DAY 3

### FLY TO DHARAMSALA & EXPLORE THE DALAI LAMA TEMPLE

Fly to Dharamsala, the seat of his holiness the Dalai Lama. In the afternoon, take a serene kora (circumambulation) of the Dalai Lama Temple and Namgyal Monastery, strolling with the monks as they chant, and learning about the various deities and forms of the Buddha. Within the complex is Kalchakra Temple, whose empowerment ceremonies are believed to contribute to world harmony.

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 4

### EXPERIENCE TIBETAN RITUALS & TRADITIONS

Visit the Tibetan Parliament and, time permitting, the Tibetan Traditional Medicine and Wellness Centre to meet a traditional healer. Travel to Gyuto Monastery, famous for its tantric rituals. Explore the workshops of craftsmen practicing traditional Tibetan painting and woodcarving. Conclude with an exclusive tour of the Zen-inspired Dolma Ling Nunnery, where the nuns spend up to three years in solitude!

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 5

### ENJOY A SCENIC HIKE IN THE HIMALAYAN FOOTHILLS

Drive to the Gallu Devi Temple above Dharamkot, surrounded by pristine forests. Head out for a scenic 4.5-hour forest trek to Triund (9,275') in the foothills of the mighty Himalayas, offering spectacular views of the Dhauladar Mountains and the Kangra Valley. Return to Dharamsala and enjoy some free time before dinner.

**Activity:** 4.5 hours/7 miles hiking with 1,800' elevation gain/loss

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 6

### ARRIVE IN AMRITSAR & SUNDOWN FLAG CEREMONY

Today drive to Amritsar, capital of the state of Punjab, and check into your hotel. In the afternoon, travel to the Wagah border for VIP access to the extraordinary sundown flag ceremony. The sight of soldiers from Pakistan and India, dressed in fantastically ornate uniforms and good-naturedly trying to outdo each other in pomp and pageantry, is an experience you'll never forget. Return to Amritsar and make a quick photo stop at the Golden Temple, spectacularly lit at night.

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 7

### EXPLORE THE MAGNIFICENT GOLDEN TEMPLE

This morning, you'll tour the magnificent Golden Temple in Amritsar, the holiest temple of the Sikh faith. You'll visit the inner sanctum, climb to the roof for an amazing view of the city, and see the world's largest kitchen, which offers free meals to some 50,000 people each day, regardless of caste or religion. Next, take a short rickshaw ride through the lanes of the old town, filled with tea and spice traders. This afternoon, fly to Srinagar, where you'll visit the Mughal pleasure gardens and the Palace of the Fairies, overlooking jewel-like Dal Lake.

**Meals:** B, D

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## DAY 8

### MEET LOCALS IN PAHALGAM, VALLEY OF THE SHEPHERDS

Depart Srinagar and head to remote Pahalgam, Valley of the Shepherds. Here, visit the Shepherd Project, which helps native Gujjar women sustain themselves through traditional weaving and embroidery. Meet the women and hear their stories as you join them for tea. Return to your hotel in Pahalgam for a traditional Tarami dinner.

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 9

### SCENIC TREK IN THE ARU VALLEY

Head out after breakfast for a drive to the scenic Aru Valley and begin your trek through pristine meadows and thick pine forests, visiting the local shepherd communities along the way. Enjoy a picnic lunch in the wilderness, ending with traditional Kashmiri saffron tea and the local kalari cheese, a dense ripened cheese indigenous to the region. Return to Srinagar for dinner at your leisure.

**Meals:** B, L

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## DAY 10

### WALKING TOUR OF OLD SRINAGAR

Step back in time on a walking tour of old Srinagar. Wander through ancient spice and fabric markets, and metal workshops. Pay a visit to Budshah Tomb, resting place of King Zain al Abidin, and two incredible mosques — the lavishly decorated, 13th-century Khanqah of Shah Hamadan, and the immense Jama Masjid, built in 1400. Both feature an unusual blend of Buddhist, Hindu, and Islamic designs. Explore mysterious Shankaracharya Temple, an ancient temple to Shiva. After lunch, visit Hazratbal, one of the holiest places in the state, housing a relic of the Prophet Mohammed.

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 11

### BOAT ON LAKE DAL & HIKE IN DACHIGAM NATIONAL PARK

After breakfast, depart for a hike in unspoiled Dachigam National Park. A top naturalist offers insights on the local plant and animal life. Take a shikara (classic wooden boat) ride on Lake Dal to see how the 150,000 people live on the lake — with schools, shops, homes and floating farms. Enjoy onboard tea service as you cruise through the communities. This evening, wrap up your fascinating Kashmir journey with a special farewell dinner accompanied by Sufi music.

**Activity:** Scenic boat ride & 2 hours/2 miles hiking

**Meals:** B, L, D

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## DAY 12

### DEPART FROM DELHI

Fly back to Delhi and enjoy a relaxing afternoon at the day rooms of the JW Marriott. Transfer to the airport for your flight to home or onwards.

**Meals:** B

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## Dates

Sep 20 - Oct 1, 2024

Oct 4 - 15, 2024

For full terms and conditions please visit [www.mtsobek.com/terms](http://www.mtsobek.com/terms). Please note that our itineraries may be subject to change.

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## Inclusions & Exclusions

### PRICE INCLUDES

- Expertise and services of our experienced adventure guides
- All accommodations as noted in the itinerary
- All breakfasts, almost all lunches and dinners as noted in the itinerary
- Snacks and water between meals
- Additional regional guides and experts on many trips
- Comprehensive Trip Planner with detailed pre-trip information
- Private guided tours at historic sites, museums, wineries and other select attractions as noted in the itinerary
- Special events and other select attractions as mentioned in the itinerary
- All gratuities at hotels and restaurants
- Equipment and experienced guides for activities as described in the itinerary
- Park and other entry fees (unless otherwise noted)
- Fares for trains, ferries and other modes of travel as listed in the itinerary
- Select transfers as mentioned in the itinerary
- Baggage transfers and portorage

### PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE

- International airfare, airport taxes, and excess baggage fees
- Alcoholic beverages (MT Sobek provides wine at select events)
- Gratuities for MT Sobek guides and guide-drivers
- Travel Protection Program
- Personal expenses

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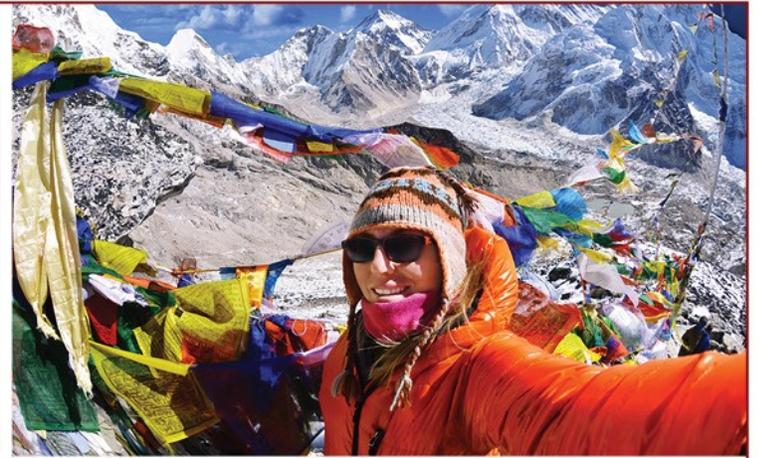
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## ➤ **The World of MT Sobek**

At Mountain Travel Sobek, we believe life is an adventure and adventure is life.

As the originators, innovators and leaders in adventure travel for more than five decades, we passionately create, craft and share indelible, transformative journeys to the world's most memorable places. Our more than 200 unique and once-in-a-lifetime trips are designed to inspire and exhilarate, enliven and excite--opening eyes and minds through profoundly personal connections with nature and culture.

Our small group and custom adventures span the globe, and the spectrum—of interests, environments and activities—every one expertly planned and knowledgeably and passionately guided. And our commitment to making every experience a remarkable one has earned us preferred travel outfitter status for National Geographic Active Expeditions, Active New York Times Journeys, and Smithsonian Active Journeys.

We are *the* adventure company.

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### **Awards**



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