

WINTER OUTING

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End of this year is a perfect time to go out somewhere and welcome the New Year. Venture towards sunnier climes this winter. Have a full blown holiday in spite of the cold and chilly breeze, unwind and explore. Looking a bit grey out there? Slightly chill and gloomy perhaps? Forgotten the feeling of some warmth on your back? This is an excellent time of year for a fix of winter sun. You just need to pick your destination carefully to be sure you get the weather you expect.

Many people don't take vacations often enough. With increasing frequency, when we do take vacations, we often bring work along with us, keeping ourselves essentially still in the work mindset we're trying to escape. This is really unfortunate.

A good vacation can help us to reconnect with ourselves, operating as a vehicle for self-discovery and helping us get back to feeling our best.

Workers who take regular time to relax are less likely to experience burnout, making them more creative and productive than their overworked, under-rested counterparts.

Taking regular time off to 'recharge your batteries', thereby keeping stress levels lower, can keep you healthier.

One study found that three days after vacation, subjects' physical complaints, their quality of sleep and mood had improved as compared to before vacation. These gains were still present five weeks later, especially in those who had more personal time and overall satisfaction during their vacations.

Spending time enjoying life with loved ones can keep relationships strong, helping you enjoy the good times more and helping you through the stress of the hard times. It should come as no surprise that vacations that include plenty of free time bring stress relief, but research shows that a good vacation can lead to the experience of fewer stressful days at least five weeks later!

That means that vacations are the gift to yourself that keep on giving.

The bottom line is that taking a good amount of time away from the stresses of daily life can give us the break we need so that we can return to our lives refreshed and better equipped to handle whatever comes.

While not everyone is able to take a vacation, for those who can take several days or a few weeks off for a trip, I've compiled the following resources from some of our travel sites. These can help you plan the best type of trip for yourself so you can come back feeling ready for anything. For those who have both time and budget crunch especially those living in or around West Bengal can always plan a short tour to the mentioned places to rejuvenate themselves from the stress of life and also can spend quality time with their loved ones.

MANDARMANI: FOR THE BEACH OUTING NEAR KOLKATA IN WINTER



Like feeling good? Chilling on a calm beach? This is the one of the best places to visit near Kolkata in winter! Some three hours from Kolkata, Mandarmani is a sweetheart beach destination which can take your stress away and prove to be an idyllic paradise worth a visit in the winter. With waves lower than the other beach resorts on the Bay of Bengal, this is one of those places where walking barefoot on the beach is going to prove therapeutic!

Mandarmani is just 170 km from Kolkata and one can take a bus or a cab to reach Mandarmani in approximately 4 hours via NH6 and SH4.

RAICHAK: IDEAL FOR A DAY TRIP FROM KOLKATA IN WINTER



The ultimate retreat for the weekend to pamper yourself silly, Raichak is one of the favorite places to visit near Kolkata in winter. Located on a river bend some 50 km away from Kolkata and 15 km from Diamond Harbour, and situated on the Raichak Jetty, this used to be home to a Dutch Fort built in the 18th century. It was taken over by Radisson group and converted into a beautiful hotel. Walk around in the idyllic surroundings overlooking the river, relax and pamper yourself in the hotel's God-awesome spa and play some golf if you wish. This is one winter visit that'll please you to the very core!

Raichak is located around 50 km from Kolkata and it takes roughly two hours in total, making it suitable even for a day trip.

MUKUTMANIPUR: FOR A QUIANT LITTLE OUTING FROM KOLKATA FOR WINTER



Mukutmanipur is a beautiful getaway in the Bankura district of West Bengal at the confluence of the rivers Kangsabati and Kumari. A huge water reservoir was planned at Mukutmanipur to provide irrigation facilities to agricultural villages nearby. The Mukutmanipur dam however, coupled with the scenic surroundings of hills and a green garland, makes for a very picturesque setting for a quiet holiday in the cold months of the year. Relatively close to Bishnupur, these two are places to visit near Kolkata in winter, and can be covered in a single trip.

Distance from Kolkata: 204 km

BAKKHALI: THE PERFECT OFFBEAT BEACH TOWN NEAR KOLKATA FOR WINTER

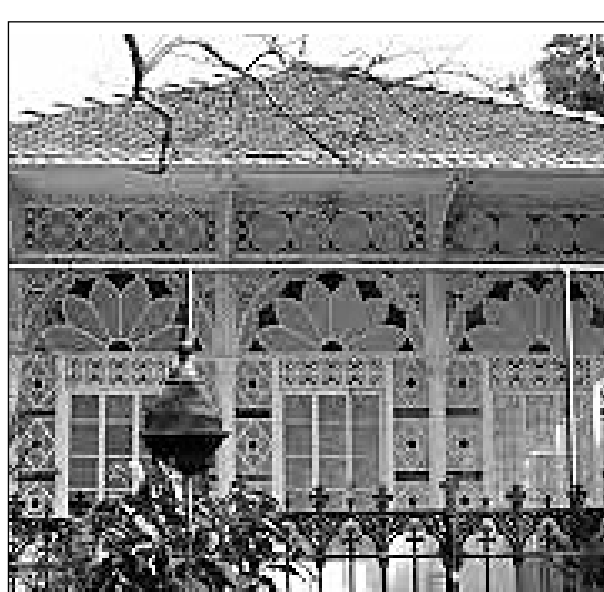


Sunset at Bakkhali

The very definition of a virgin beach resort, Bakkhali is a peaceful beach town that is hardly ever crowded, save the occasional longer weekends. It is an excellent place for cycling or taking long walks and just having a holiday where you do not feel the burning need to get up and do something. The break is ideal for early winter if you feel like swimming in the clean waters of this virgin paradise.

Distance of Bakkhali from Kolkata is just 125 km and it takes roughly 3 hours to reach here.

SHANTINIKETAN: FOR THE JOY OF CULTURE AND HERITAGE



Home to Rabindranath Tagore and his vision in the form of Viswa Bharati University, Shantiniketan is a peaceful retreat near Kolkata in the winter. Visit the Poush Mela (at the time of Makar Sankranti) which is celebrated to welcome the Spring and revel in the joy of the cold spring of Shantiniketan. Visit the history-laden museums and parks in and around

Shantiniketan to feel the culture of the little village. Distance from Kolkata: 166 km

GANGASAGAR: FOR A SPIRITUAL GETAWAY IN WINTER NEAR KOLKATA



A religious getaway that is every bit as loved as it is popular in Hindu mythology, Gangasagar is a beautiful place to visit in winter is concerned. Around Makar Sankranti, the biggest fair in eastern India called the Gangasagar mela is held in this estuary of the Ganges. On the auspicious occasion of Makar Sankranti, thousands of pilgrims gather here to take a dip in this confluence of the Ganges and the Bay of Bengal.

Distance from Kolkata: 135 km. However, to visit this place from Kolkata, one has to reach Harwood point by taking a Kakdwip bound bus. From Harwood point, one will have to cross the river Muriganga by a boat and reach Kachuberia. From Kachuberia, there will be a bus taking you to Gangasagar (30km, 1 hour). The total time would be approximately 5 hours. Alternatively, you can take a bus till Namkhana from Kolkata and then take a boat from Namkhana to Chemaguri. Chemaguri is just 10 km from Gangasagar and you can find buses to take you to Gangasagar from Chemaguri.

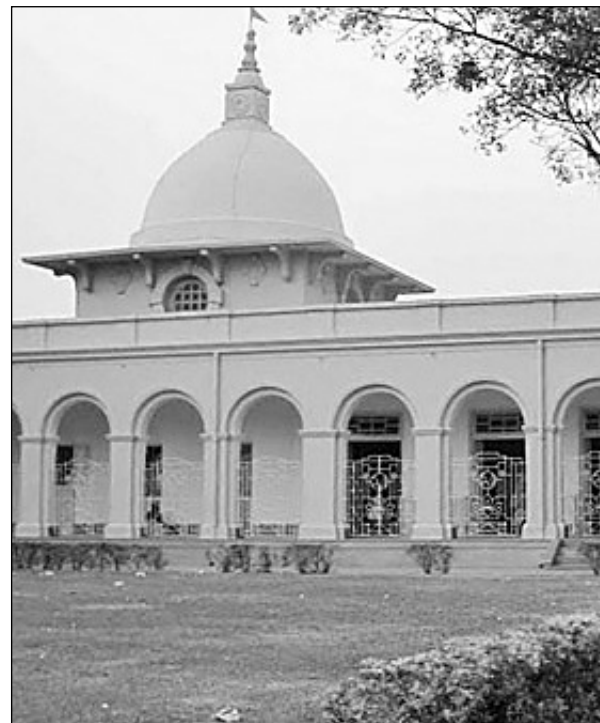
TARAPITH: FOR THE RELIGIOUSLY INCLINED



The name Tarapith is derived from Maa Tara, another form of the Goddess Kali. Tarapith is a pilgrim center dedicated to the fearsome Mother Goddess, who inspires Tantric rites and practices, with a tantric temple dedicated to the Goddess and a cremation ground attached. This is one of those holidays where believers will bask in the power of the Goddess and explorers will find sheer thrill in the mythical nature of this little town in the Birbhum district of West Bengal.

Distance from Kolkata: 220 km

JAIRAMBATI- KAMARPUKUR: RELIGIOUS VISIT NEAR KOLKATA FOR WINTER



Jairambati and Kamarpukur, situated 7 km away from each other, are always visited in the course of a single trip. Kamarpukur is the birthplace of Sri

Ramkrishna Paramhansa, an ardent devotee of the Goddess Kali. Jairambati is the birthplace of his wife, Maa Sarada. It boasts of a beautiful temple called the Matri Mandir, which was built on the exact spot where the Holy Mother was born. Kamarpukur has a Ramkrishna Math which is an ideal spot for spiritual relaxation and meditation. Both temples are beautiful places to visit in the colder months as summers are very relentless in both villages. Visitors should make sure they can savour the lunch and dinner at both temples, which is served as a prasad and every bit as delicious as it is of spiritual significance. Enjoy the feel of village life and uplift your soul on this trip.

Distance from Kolkata: 103 km

BISHNUPUR: FOR THE LOVE OF TERRACOTTA TEMPLES



A cosy little town to visit near Kolkata, almost bordering on the definition of a village, Bishnupur is an ideal place to spend at least one winter weekend. Stroll along the narrow alleys of the town, visit the old temples and palaces, click a lot of pictures, eat freshly harvested sugarcane and drink freshly harvested date syrup. Visit at the time of the Sankranti mela (mid January) and pick up artifacts like terracotta and mud figurines and the local Baluchari sarees.

Bishnupur from Kolkata is 135 km and it takes around 3 hour to reach here.

JAMSHEDPUR: FOR A CITY GETAWAY NEAR KOLKATA FOR WINTER



A place best known for being one of the most well planned cities of India, Jamshedpur is also one of the places to visit near Kolkata in winter. Having a number of clean, green tourist attractions like the Jubilee Park, Hudco Park and the Dimna Lake and dam, many people from Kolkata prefer taking this trip for a short, relaxing winter holiday. Give your lungs some much needed rest one winter weekend in this green industrial town – the phrase won't seem like so much of an oxymoron after you visit!

No wonder then, that the town's mood turns light and festive as winter approaches, when residents and visitors alike, are in for a feast, with the JAMSHEDPUR WINTER FESTIVAL, abozanza of events and tournaments!

This year, the treat is bigger than ever before! With more than 30 programmes in sports, music, dance, food and games, to cater to every taste, the JAMSHEDPUR WINTER FESTIVAL 2017, organized by Tata Steel is a nearly four-month-long extravaganza that has something for everyone!

Possibly one of the few of its kind in India, the Winter Fest is a uniqueness-wide festival supported by the town authorities - Tata Steel, the Jamshedpur Utility Services Co. (JUSCO), and other Tata companies; and it is also a partnership between residents and organizers. A colourful, fun-filled fiesta of events and activities for residents and visitors with the organizers making every effort to ensure that the festival is truly inclusive, it's a celebration that includes everyone. Almost all events, with the exception of one or two, are free and open to the public.

Jamshedpur is around 250 km from Kolkata and it takes around 5-6 hours to reach here.