



Ministry of Tourism

Ministry of Tourism showcases 'Indian Motoring Expeditions (Driving Holidays)' under 38th webinar of Dekho Apna Desh series

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Motoring expeditions have become very popular of late with those who are looking for thrills and want to explore what the Country has to offer with a Vehicle. The Union Tourism Ministry's Webinar Series under the banner "Dekho Apna Desh" on 25th June 2020 showcased the potential Motoring Expeditions(Driving Holidays in India. The webinar showcased diverse network of roads and terrain available in various corners of the Country. DekhoApnaDesh Webinar Series is an effort to showcase India's rich diversity under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat.

The 38th session of Dekho Apna Desh webinar series on 25.06.2020 was moderated by Ms. Rupinder Brar, Additional Director General, Ministry of Tourism and presented by Manish Sarser, Head-off-Road driver Training Programme, Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd and Hari Singh, Head of Operations, JK Motorsports & Founder, DriveTech India.

Mrs. Rupinder Brar started the session stating India's leadership position in terms of length of road networks. She stated that India has the second largest road network in the World with total length of around 5,897,671 kilometres. Indian road network consists of 1000 km -Expressways, 79,243 km - National Highways, 1, 31,899 km -State Highways and Other major district and rural roads. She explained how Indian motoring expeditions offers a fantastic and thrilling experience considering the varied terrain that India has like desert, plateau, mountains, highest passes, costal roads etc.

Opening the presentation, Hari Singh spoke how car has become more of a necessity than luxury and driving holidays in car gives one an opportunity to experience culture, diversity, cuisines and people of India. Motor expeditions require little bit of planning, passion for thrills and driving. With every expedition one gains new experience.

Given India's varied climatic conditions , the motoringexpeditions can be year round activity .For instance expeditions to Himalayan region can be planned during summers, similarly the expeditions in Rajasthan can be taken in winters, while in the western India, especially in Maharashtra the best time to visit is from June to September during monsoons.

The presenters recommended SUVs to be most suitable for driving in high altitudes and more important the need to have good knowledge about the vehicle possessing driving etiquette.

The presenters gave out a "to do" list like knowledge of service centres available in those routes so that in case of emergency the vehicle could be attended to. Carrying certain spare parts such as tubes, tyres etc., servicing of the vehicle before beginning the journey and having a music system in the car to make the trip more enjoyable and memorable.

Talking about the itineraries, the most popular motoring expedition in the Himalayas is for about 9-10 days. The journey starts from Chandigarh Shimla (a halt there for lunch) Narkanda (Visit to Hathu Temp e and overnight stay) angla (stay for 2 days and enjoy the local trip during the day time) 1)Jako

in Spiti Valley (Stay in tented camps) Kaza Valley (which has the highest Post Office of the village i.e. the Hikkim Post Office and then visit to Gue Mummy monastery which is about 500 years old) Manali Chandigarh

Another recommended itinerary in the Himalayas lasting for about 5 days begins from Chandigarh Sangla Kaza Valley (stay for 2 days) Mandi (2 days) Chandigarh.

Discussing about the lodging facilities, the speakers stated that during the expedition on these routes there are plenty of options available for accommodations such as the star-category hotels, home stays and basic guest houses. However, one should explore the option of home stays as the people there are very hospitable and are helpful in taking you to local visits. Through interactions with the locals, one can really explore and also learn about their culture, belief, local cuisines and languages. The hospitality is truly amazing.

Another motor-expedition itinerary during New Year time, lasts for about 7 days. This expedition starts from Delhi Sikar (overnight stay) Bikaner (2 days) Jaisalmer (2days) Jodhpur (overnight stay) Jaipur(overnight stay) Delhi. For a shorter expedition, Gujarat will be recommended for about 3 days starting from Ahmedabad Rann of Kutch Shahabad

A popular expedition from southern India starts from Bengaluru Chikmagalur Cochin Munnar which is about 4-5 days.

Motoring Expedition to North East is also a fantastic experience. The state government of Nagaland hosts the Hornbill Festival ever year in the month of December, similarly Arunachal Pradesh hosts Orange Festival. Visit during these festival periods is full of fun, fair and music. Local people are hospitable and even the State Government authorities from Chief Minister to local authorities welcome the visitors. One can plan 7 days road trip starting from Guwahati Imphal Kohima Bandula Tawang Guwhati.

The presenters advised that while on a motor expedition, following things must be always carried:

- Driving License
- Identity Card
- Indian Credit Card
- Passport
- Insurance coverage

Further, as a responsible traveller, one must abide by following guidelines:

- Do not litter the place. There are various untouched regions especially in the Himalayas which could get polluted and may lose their natural beauty.
- One should always respect the local customs and the place. Privacy of the locals must be respected. One should be a responsible traveller and has to be sensitive and non-intrusive.
- Don't create any noise or disturbance in the place. Enjoy the peace and the tranquillity of the place.

The Dekho Apna Desh Webinars are presented by the Ministry of Tourism with technical support from the National e-Governance Division (NeGD) created by the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY)

The sessions of webinars are now available on the given links

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbzIbBmMvtvH7d6Zo_ZEHDA/featured

<http://tourism.gov.in/dekho-apna-desh-webinar-ministry-tourism>

<https://www.incredibleindia.org/content/incredible-india-v2/en/events/dekho-apna-desh.html>

The sessions of webinars are also available on all social media handles of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

The next Dekho Apna Desh webinar on 27th June 2020 at 1100 hrs IST is on “Unlocking travel & tourism safely & responsibly during COVID: A healthcare perspective” presented by Public Health Foundation of India. Registrations open at <https://bit.ly/UnlockingTourism>

NB/AKJ/OA

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