

A traveller's guide



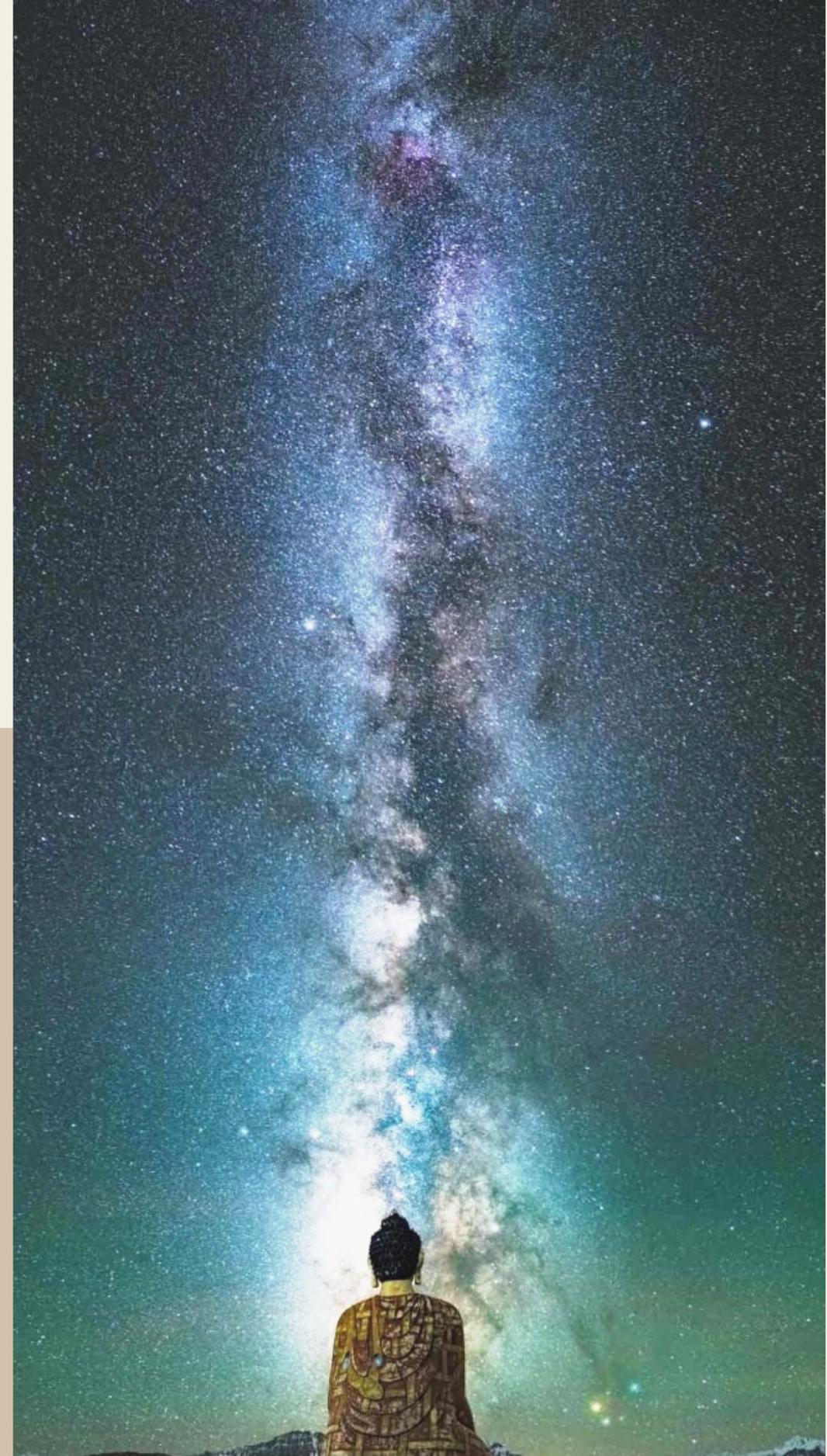
Spiti Straight Up

From the fragrance of the mountains to the crisp fresh air, the flow of clear springs, the rhythmic chants of the monks, the whirl of the wind across the river valley, the golden rays of the morning sun and the gentle warmth of the crimson orb at the end of the day, Life in Spiti provides all that the soul needs to thrive.

FROM THE MILLERS



Short on time? This whirlwind tour is designed to show you the heart of Spiti and all that makes it special in a jam packed itinerary. This quick introduction to Spitian culture and life in the valley is sure to have you planning your return before you even leave.





Day 1- Manali - Kaza
Driving time -8hrs
Distance -170kms

The Manali – Spiti road usually opens in June. When it does, the curious traveler can enter via this valley. Home to spectacularly jagged and arid mountains. As you cross the Kunzum Pass towering at 4550mts, you enter what was once a Buddhist kingdom. You'll find fascinating gompas dramatically crowning rocky outcrops garlanded with fluttering prayer flags & surrounded by whitewashed stupas. Home to red-robed monks, Losar is the first village you cross after descending down from Kunzum into Spiti.

On arrival in Kaza you will be welcomed by Simba and Karan at Deyzor, your home for the next two nights. As much an ethnographic museum as it is a Hotel, you will find a collection of artifacts from Spiti gathered to showcase the culture and history of the region.





Day 2- Kaza - Ki - Gete - Tashi gang - Kaza

Driving time -3hrs

Distance -70kms

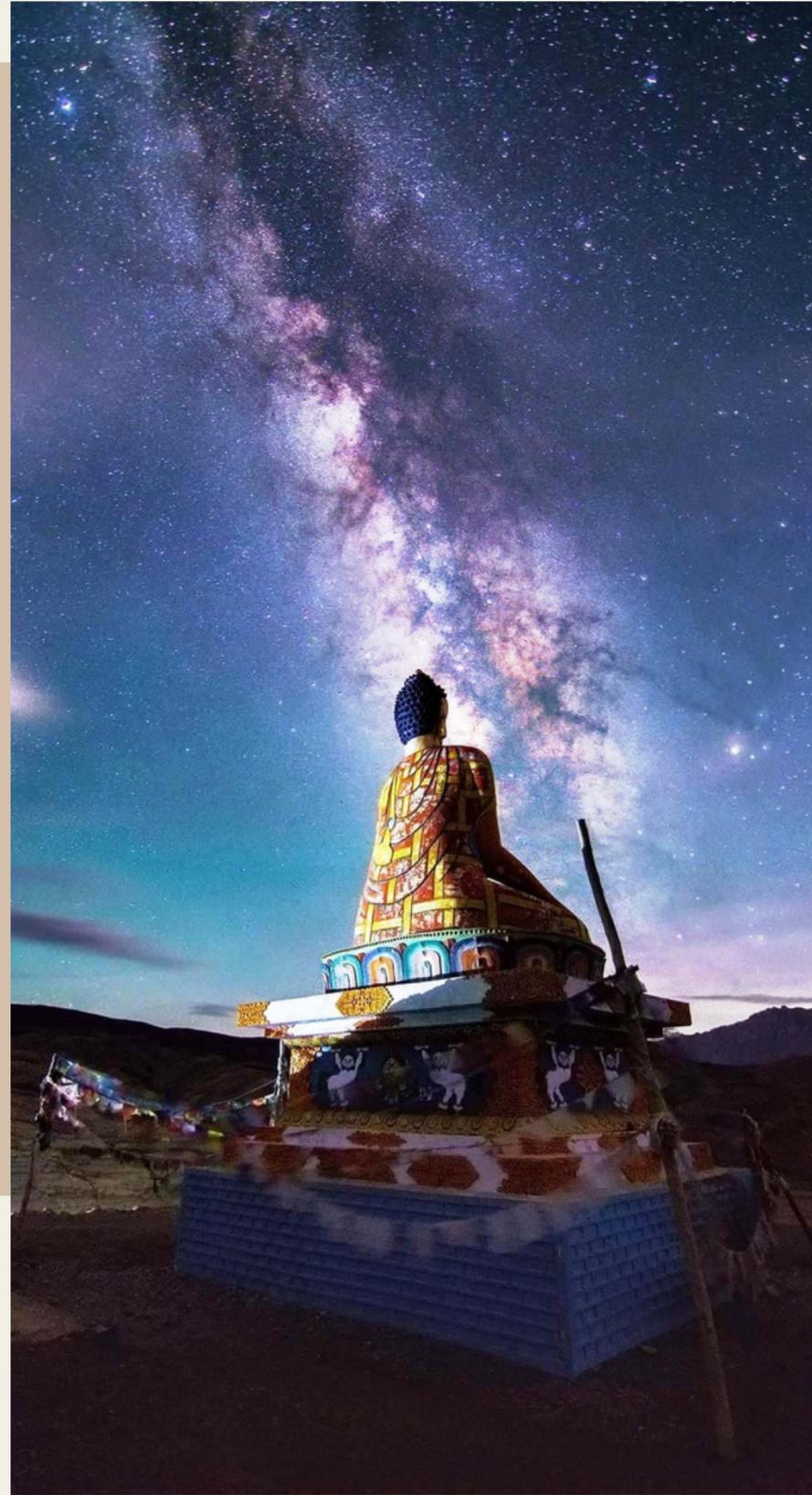
Experience life on the roof of the world. Covering a conical hillock with whitewashed monastic buildings, Ki Gompa is home to nearly 300 monks. After Ki you'll head to Tashi gang, a hamlet of just 30 homes. An easy one hour trek from the village brings you to a meditation cave decorated with beautiful carvings. If you're lucky you may have the company of a Griffon circling above. On your return a stop at Gete will reward you with one of the most stunning views in the valley. Looking down towards Ki Gompa from the ridge above. See for yourself that the giant rock mountains surrounding you could not have been carved by any mortal hand but rather by the force of wind and water over millennia.

Return to Kaza is via Kibber which is the start for several treks, including the old trade route to Ladakh. If you're lucky you may spot an Ibex, Bharal (Blue sheep), Red Fox or a few Raptors.

Day 3 - Kaza- Hikkim - Komic - Kaza/Langza

Driving time -3hrs

Distance -65kms



Fancy sending your loved ones or yourself a postcard from the world's highest post office at Hikkim? If not then you can head straight to one of the highest inhabited places in the world at 4600mts, Komic. The views are breathtaking and Komic also has a monastery from the 13th century.

After Komic you will head to Langza where lunch will be served at a homestay. At Langza you can also try your hand digging for marine fossils, some of them being over 100million year old. Considered one of the most fossil rich areas in the world by the Geological Survey of India the fossils of marine animals and plants are from a time when Spiti was submerged under the Tethys Sea.

For the night you can either head back to Kaza or choose to stay at a homestay in Langza

Day 4- Kaza/Langza - Lalung - Dhankar - Dhankar lake-

Tabo

Driving time -3hrs

Distance -70kms



Part of the western Tibet or Guge Empire, Spiti in the 11th century was at the center of the second diffusion of Buddhism which resulted in re-establishment of Buddhism in the Tibetan plateau. Monasteries surviving from that time include Lalung, Tabo and Nako. Lalung monastery is an outwardly modest monastery but is actually an antique gem. The main hall has interior walls lavished on three sides with an extraordinary array of colorful mud plaster

sculptures. They're so old that locals claim they were made by God not man. Dhankar is another 45min from Lalung and the old temple at Dhankar is over 1200 years old. Dhankar's crag-top fort and old gompa together create yet another of the most spectacular sights in Spiti. This was the former capital of the kings who once ruled Spiti. A two hour trek to the sacred lake above Dhankar is also possible.

Passing scattered villages in this serrated moonscape while driving next to the turquoise-grey ribbon of the Spiti river you'll reach Tabo, your halt for the night.



Day 5 - Tabo - Mane - Sagnam (Pin valley)

Driving time - 2hrs

Distance - 50kms

Built in 996AD, Tabo is regarded as the oldest continuously operating Buddhist enclave in the Himalayas. Built on a Bon temple, the monastery is one of the highlights of Spiti with a plethora of wall paintings and mud statues. The surrounding hillsides are dotted with caves which have been used as assembly halls for monks and also as dwellings for meditation over the winters.

Lunch will be at Lobzang's homestay in Mane.

From Mane you head to the dramatic, wind-scoured Pin valley. For anyone interested in geology the stupendous views of different strata tilted at all conceivable angles tell the story of the earth. In Pin you will visit the Kungri nunnery and have a chance to interact with the nuns. You'll stay with the inspiring Soni and Karma who live and breathe the compassion that Buddhism espouses.

Day 6 - Sagnam - Chandertal lake

Driving time - 130kms

Distance - 7hr



Heading to Chandertal from Pin for the last leg in Spiti, you'll come across sprawling green pea and barley fields, dramatic views of the valley and soaring peaks. A fitting place to end your trip, the Chandertal lake presents mirror-perfect reflections of the surrounding mountains. A walk around the lake is sure to get you breathless, but it's well worth the effort. The lake is also a



nesting sight for migratory birds and you may also sight the Snowcock, Kestrel, Golden Eagle, Marmots or Red Foxes. Before reaching the lake you will drive past the soaring 4551mts Kunzum Pass with the Spiti River as your near constant companion, although sometimes way below in precipitous gorges.

Day 7 - Chandertal lake - Manali

Driving time - 7hrs

Distance - 140kms



You will have lots to ponder over as you make the 6hr drive back to Manali. From your time in Spiti you'll experience for yourself that it's a place to connect with nature and here you see that if you let people live as they have for thousands of years, then the world has more to learn from them than they from the world.

This Trans-Himalayan backcountry is indeed one of the most stunning and rugged regions on earth. With its unique high altitude ecosystem and an isolation that transcends the barriers of time, Spiti is sure to leave you spell bound.

Day 1- Manali - Kaza

Driving time -8hrs, Distance -170kms, Accomodation - Hotel Deyzor

Day 2- Kaza- Ki - Gete - Tashi gang - Kaza

Driving time -3hrs, Distance -70kms, Accomodation - Hotel Deyzor

Day 3- Kaza- Hikkim - Komic - Kaza/Langza

Driving time -3hrs, Distance -65kms, Accomodation - Hotel Deyzor/Lara homestay

Day 4 - Kaza /Langza -Lalung - Dhankar - Dhankar lake - Tabo

Driving time -3hrs, Distance -70kms, Accomodation - Maitreya hotel

Day 5-Tabo - Mane - Sagnam (pin valley)

Driving time -2hrs, Distance -50kms, Accomodation - Soni & Karma homestay

Day 6 - Sagnam - Chandertal lake

Driving time -7hrs, Distance -130kms, Accomodation - Parasol campsite

Day 7- Chandertal lake - Manali

Driving time -7hrs, Distance -140kms, Accomodation - Johnson's Spa

Day 8- Manali - Chandigarh

Driving time - 8hrs, Distance - 300kms