

PAKISTAN'S PREMIER MAGAZINE FOR TOURISM, HOSPITALITY, RESTAURANTS, AIRLINES, TRAVEL & FOOD INDUSTRY

HOSPITALITY PLUS

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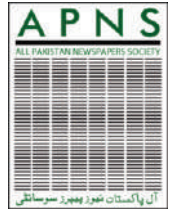
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EMBRACING NEW HORIZONS IN 2024



The dawn of a new year brings with it a sense of renewal, an opportunity to reflect on past achievements, and chart a course towards new goals and purposes. In the dynamic landscape of hospitality, adaptation and innovation have always been the keys to success. As we navigate through the evolving trends and challenges of our industry, it's imperative that we embrace change with open arms and a forward-looking mindset.

2023 was a year of resilience and transformation for the hospitality sector. We witnessed the resurgence of travel, albeit with a renewed emphasis on safety and sustainability. From the rise of eco-conscious accommodations to the integration of cutting-edge technology in guest experiences, the industry showcased its ability to evolve in the face of adversity.

Looking ahead, 2024 holds the promise of even greater strides and accomplishments. As we embark on this journey, let us set our sights on new goals that encompass not only business growth but also social responsibility and environmental stewardship. Sustainability, diversity, and inclusivity must continue to be at the forefront of our agenda, guiding our decisions and actions towards a more equitable and resilient future.

Moreover, let us seize the opportunities presented by emerging trends and technologies to enhance the guest experience and streamline operations. Whether it's the adoption of AI-driven personalization or the expansion of contactless services, innovation will be the driving force behind our quest for excellence in hospitality.

Let us embark on this new year with renewed vigor and determination, united in our pursuit of excellence and driven by a shared vision of a brighter tomorrow for the hospitality industry. Here's to embracing new horizons, setting new goals, and achieving new heights in 2024.



COTHM

TRANSFORMING
FUTURES THROUGH

DEGREE WITH SKILLS

In Pakistan,
organizations like
College of Tourism
& Hotel
Management
(COTHM) have been
leading the charge in
promoting skills-
based education.

The educational landscape in Pakistan predominantly focuses on theoretical learning, leaving graduates ill-equipped for the practical demands of the job market. Upon completion of their studies, students often find themselves holding mere certificates, lacking the essential skills needed for employment.

This mismatch between academia and industry aggravates the issue of unemployment, as employers seek candidates capable of immediately contributing to their organizations,

while graduates struggle to meet these expectations due to a lack of practical skills. Due to this permanent crisis, a huge number of young boys and girls are seen unemployed in Pakistan.

The root cause of this unemployment crisis lies in the absence of a skilled workforce. Pakistani universities churn out graduates with degrees but without the necessary skills to thrive in their respective fields. The educational model in Pakistan primarily focuses on theory keeping the students away from practical and hands-on training. A Computer Science graduate may lack practical coding abilities, a media graduate might struggle to craft a news story, and an English graduate may falter in basic language proficiency. In Pakistan, a degree in a subject does not guarantee even basic practical knowledge about that area.



Degree awarding institutes and universities must shift their focus from producing unemployed degree holders to nurturing a skilled workforce that can drive economic growth and innovation.



To address this issue, educational institutions must prioritize practical training and market-oriented skill development. By employing faculty with practical expertise and updating curricula to emphasize hands-on learning, universities can produce graduates who are ready to meet industry demands from day one. All they need is to prioritize skills in their educational streams.

This approach mirrors successful models adopted by developed countries, where skills-based education systems have proven instrumental in supplying relevant workforce to various industries. By aligning educational programs with market needs and providing students with practical training, these countries ensure that graduates are well-prepared for their chosen careers.

In Pakistan, organizations like the College of Tourism & Hotel Management (COTHM) have been leading the charge in promoting skills-based education. Since its establishment in 2002,



Since its establishment in 2002, COTHM has been offering courses in hospitality management, travel & tourism, culinary arts, baking and patisserie, and food safety. Embracing the motto of 'degree with skills', COTHM emphasizes practical training and provides job opportunities to successful graduates.



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The success of COTHM's approach underscores the importance of

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By employing faculty with practical expertise and updating curricula to emphasize hands-on learning, universities can produce graduates who are ready to meet industry demands from day one.



adopting similar strategies at the national level. Due to this approach and model, students graduating from COTHM are accepted in the market wholeheartedly. Degree awarding institutes and universities must shift their focus from producing unemployed degree holders to nurturing a skilled workforce that can drive economic growth and innovation. This is the only way-out to alleviate unemployment from the country.

In a conversation with Hospitality Plus, COTHM Founder & CEO Ahmad Shafiq reiterated the organization's commitment to empowering Pakistani youth through skills education. He emphasized the importance of equipping the younger generation with practical skills that not only benefit Pakistan but also open doors to opportunities abroad. He also emphasized that skillful youth are the cornerstone of Pakistan's future, and COTHM remains dedicated to shaping that future through skill development.

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THE BEST TIME

TO VISIT PAKISTAN

MONTH-BY-MONTH COMPARISON

By Samantha



So let me guess:
you're planning
an epic trip but
are now left
wondering when
is the best time to
visit places in
Pakistan?



While I know you were hoping for a basic and straightforward answer on when to come, the reality is that there isn't one. Pakistan is a large country with diverse landscapes and climates. Even so, there definitely is a "best" time to travel to each region, and certainly, some months that should be avoided altogether.

The best month will depend a lot on what you want to see and do while in the country, so here's a month-by-month breakdown to help you decide when to plan your trip.



January in Pakistan

January is typically the coldest month of the year all throughout Pakistan. Even in Karachi, you won't find temperatures exceeding 80 F, and a light jacket is a good idea everywhere.

Nevertheless, it's a fantastic month to explore everything Punjab and Sindh have to offer with consistent pleasant weather and minimal humidity. If you're looking to put your travel camera to use in urban centers, THIS is the time to do it!



February in Pakistan

February is a bit warmer than January in Southern Pakistan, and is one of the best months of the year to enjoy Pakistan's beaches. Major cities like Islamabad, Lahore, and Peshawar will have warmed up a bit, but will still be comfortable to walk around in. It's one of the only months you can check out all of the best restaurants in Lahore without needing an AC break.

While winter will still have a firm grip on Northern Pakistan, you can find several local festivals taking place down south, like the Cholistan Jeep Rally.



March in Pakistan

A transition time for the country, March brings spring to frigid Gilgit Baltistan, and with it millions of spring flowers. Blossom season typically begins around March 15th, with many trees bearing apricots, an essential Hunza Valley food. While the beginning of March trends along "pleasant summer temperatures" in Pakistan's major cities, blazing days in the 30s begin to make a resurgence as March moves along.



April in Pakistan

April marks a turn in Pakistan's weather – the northern mountainous areas finally begin to thaw, while the entirety of Punjab and Sindh start to bake. Until the middle of the month, many valleys in Gilgit Baltistan and Upper Chitral will still be filled with blossoms. And trust me, they're worth planning a trip around! Hunza Valley's sights seem just a bit more magical when blanketed



in flowers. Rain is common during April in the Northern Areas, but you can also experience the warmest and sunniest of days.

Most treks and high-altitude road passes (like Babusar) will still be closed for general use.

May in Pakistan

Ahh May, the official beginning of Pakistan's trekking season, and it's overall a glorious time to start any Pakistan trip. Most schools are still in session, so you'll be able to enjoy the mountains before the commercial trips fully begin. Temperatures in Northern Pakistan are typically sunny and around 70 degrees, though warmer or cooler days may occur. By the end of May, all motorable roads should be accessible, including the Babusar, Shandur, and Khunjerab Passes.

For the south, May usually means extreme and often record-breaking temperatures and heat waves. In short, summer travel in Pakistan is all about the North's incredible natural landmarks.



June in Pakistan

As far as tourism goes, June is one of the busiest months of the year for Northern Pakistan. Temperatures are well within the "summer" range, and the hiking and climbing season will have fully kicked off. Though many popular tourist destinations will be packed, it's very easy to beat the crowds. For example, June is perhaps the worst time of year to visit the ever-famous Fairy Meadows, but a perfect time to explore the raw and authentic Chapursan Valley.

The weather in mainland Pakistan's cities will be truly unbearable



throughout June. As the monsoon begins this month too, Karachi and other parts of Sindh and Balochistan have been known to experience severe rain and flooding.

July in Pakistan

July is the hottest month of the year in north Pakistan, with temperatures regularly exceeding 80 degrees. Many popular treks like the Shimshal Pass in Shimshal Valley and K2 Basecamp have their peak weather windows in July, and wildflowers are a common sight in almost any meadow. Camping will be at its most comfortable, and while still common, rain is less frequent in much of the Northern Areas.



August in Pakistan

Visiting Pakistan in August is unfortunately taking a gamble. The monsoon season finally reaches the Northern Areas, and can cause intense flooding and devastation. Rain in Pakistan is absolutely NO joke. What August in Pakistan can often look like...filled with clouds. This doesn't mean this will happen every year, but it's definitely something to keep in mind when planning your Pakistan trip.

When it's not raining, temperatures will be pleasant and warm throughout August up North. You'll also find Independence Day celebrated all throughout the country on August 14th.



September in Pakistan

Surprisingly, September just might be the best month to visit Northern Pakistan. Domestic commercial tourism slows significantly, and the vast majority of days are still warm and sunny. September is also the last month to comfortably trek in the mountains, though nights will start to progressively get cooler as October approaches. Still, you can definitely get some solid high-altitude use out of your hiking backpack throughout the month! Towards the end of the month, you'll be able to see some magical fall colors in Upper Hunza, parts of Skardu, and Upper Chitral.

September is still not a great time to explore the south-days still often exceed 100 degrees-though by the end of the month temperatures will get a bit comfier.



October in Pakistan

If you love fall colors, then the best time to visit Pakistan is definitely in October. While it might be a bit chilly, the incredible foliage to be found all over Gilgit Baltistan is worth wearing an extra jacket for! Nearly the entire GB territory experiences foliage in some shape or form, though I'm a bit partial to the magical regions of Central Hunza and Nagar.

You can also find incredible colors all over Skardu as well as in Phander, a bucolic village in the Ghizer District. October is also when you'll find Pakistan's major cities (Lahore, Islamabad, Karachi) finally become enjoyable from a temperature perspective, though the end of the month will be notably cooler than the beginning.



November in Pakistan

Foliage will be on display until roughly November 15th all throughout the northern areas, and temperatures will drop with the leaves. Temperatures regularly approach 0 degrees F at this time of year, though rest assured that plenty of extra winter gear is sold in local shops.



Meanwhile, November is one of the best months of the year to visit South Pakistan. From Karachi to Peshawar, temperatures will be extremely pleasant and may even get a bit chilly at night as the month moves along.

December in Pakistan

December is one of the coolest months in Pakistan overall, but that just means it's finally enjoyable in most of the country's Southern areas. December is a fantastic time to explore Karachi, though you might even find it a bit chilly if you want to swim! Islamabad and Peshawar will be around 40-65 degrees during this month, as will Lahore.

The Northern Areas will be extremely cold in December, and the vast, vast majority of hotels and homes do not have central indoor heating.



The Best Time to Visit Pakistan: Final Thoughts!

I hope you now have a better idea on when the best time to travel to Pakistan is! As I said earlier, the country's complex climate can be summed up with: the summer is for the north and the winter is for the south!

HOW TO TRAVEL TO **EUROPE?** THIS SCHENGEN VISA GUIDE FOR **PAKISTANIS** ANSWERS EVERYTHING

Traveling to Europe for leisure or business has been a dream of everyone due to the scenic beauty and economic opportunities but Pakistanis find it difficult to get a visa.

The government of Sweden has announced the procedure for getting the Schengen visa through which Pakistani citizens can navigate Europe with ease and comfort.

The Schengen Visa is valid throughout the Schengen area, but one needs to apply to the country that is the main destination for the journey.

As per the information available on the website of Sweden's Embassy in Pakistan, those who want to apply from Pakistan for a Schengen visa to visit Sweden should hand in their application at VFS Global in Bangkok, Yangon, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Manila, Cebu, Jakarta, Bali, Phnom Penh, Kuala Lumpur or Singapore.



The authorities have clarified that it is the sole responsibility of the applicant to choose where to hand in the application and to arrange for a visa in the chosen location if required by that country.

'The Embassy of Sweden will not be able to assist or give information in any matters of entry permit or visa to the country the applicant chooses. After an application has been submitted to VFS Global, it is sent together with the passport to the Embassy of Sweden in Bangkok for processing and decision,' says the official statement posted on the website of the embassy.

As far as the duration of stay allowed is concerned, the visa allows a maximum stay of 90 days within the Schengen area. Meanwhile, the visa applicants must substantiate a minimum bank balance covering 6 months and the bank statement must contain the signature and seal of the relevant bank officer.

The applicant also needs to show that they have enough to sustain in Sweden for which they should furnish a proof of 2400 euros or equivalent in their bank account for a 30-day stay in the country.

For the procedure, one must know that applicants can choose their preferred location for visa submission and pay the fee which is 80 Euros for Pakistan.

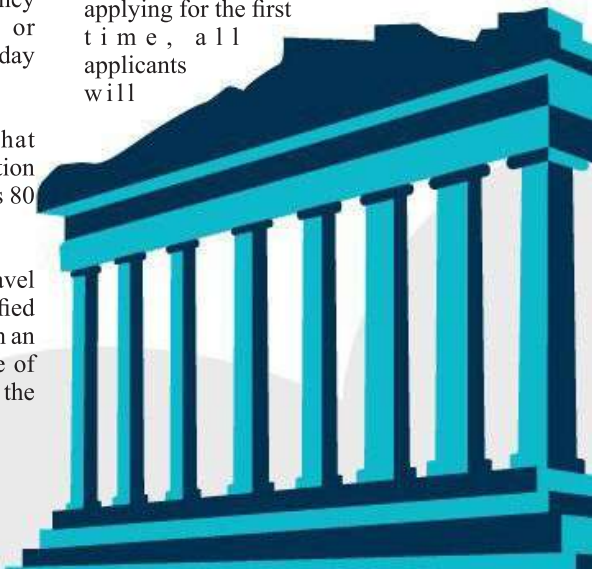
As part of the documents, one also needs travel insurance and the Swedish embassy has clarified that the applicant can either get a policy from an insurance company based in Europe or one of the companies based in Pakistan but not all the insurance companies are eligible.


The list of eligible insurance companies is as under:

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Askari General Insurance Company Ltd
CICL (Century Insurance Company Ltd)
East West Insurance Company Ltd
EFU General
IGI
NJI (New Jubilee Insurance)
PICIC (Pakistan Industrial Credit Investment Corporation)
Premier Insurance Limited
Shaheen Insurance
SPI Insurance Company Ltd (formerly Saudi Pak)
TPL Direct Insurance Ltd
UBL Insurers Ltd
VIC
Universal Insurance Co. Ltd

The Swedish embassy has also clarified that the applicant is required to contract a full Schengen travel insurance, covering - for a minimum amount of 30 000 euros - any medical, hospitalisation and repatriation costs, as well as associated care expenses which might occur during any single trip into the Schengen states.

The applicant also needs to provide the biometric data (fingerprints and a photograph) as part of the visa application. When applying for the first time, all applicants will






have to appear in person at the VFS Global/ Gerry's.

The Swedish embassy has also clarified that if the fingerprints have been taken within the 59 months after 2014 and if usable, the fingerprints should not be retaken unless the applicant requires having their fingerprints retaken.

The government has also clarified that the following applicants shall be exempted from the requirement to give fingerprints:

(a) children under the age of 12;

(b) persons for whom fingerprinting is physically impossible.



(c) heads of State or government and members of a national government with accompanying spouses, and the members of their official delegation when they are invited by Member

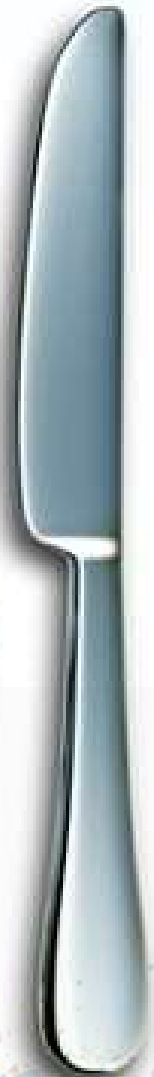
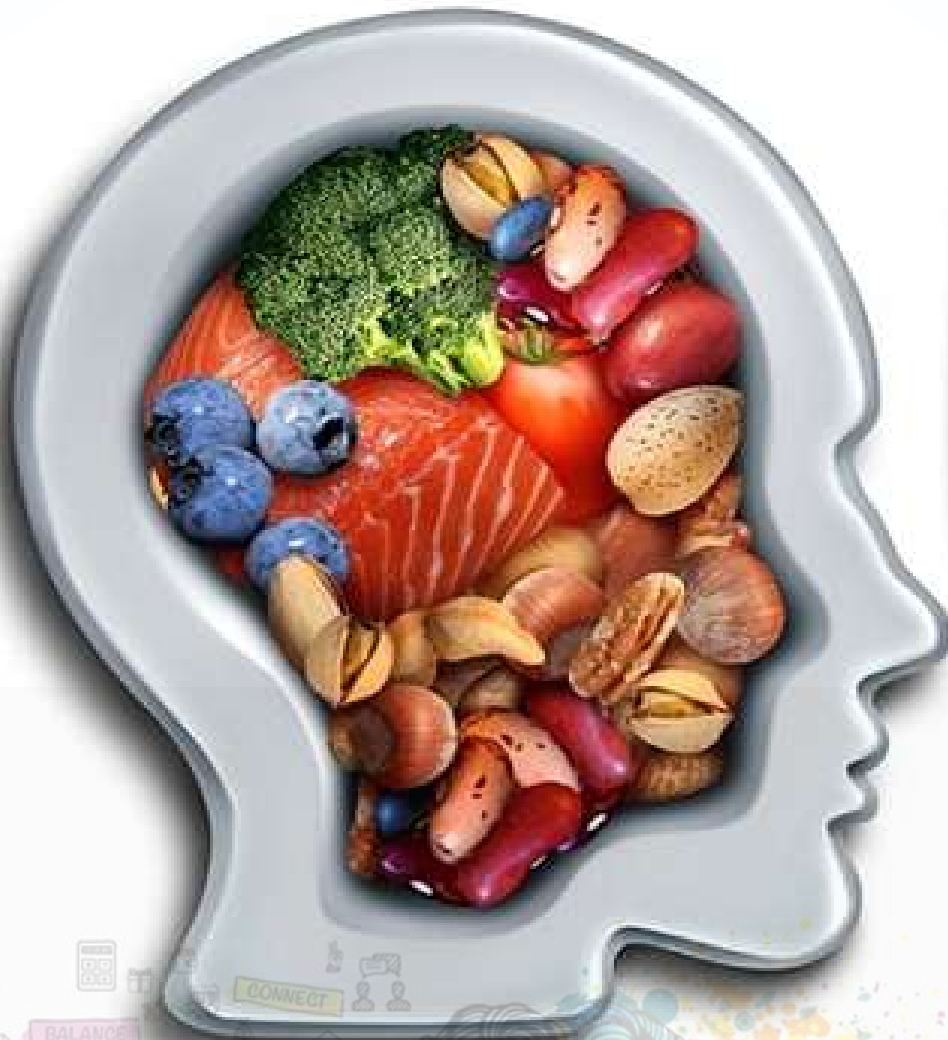
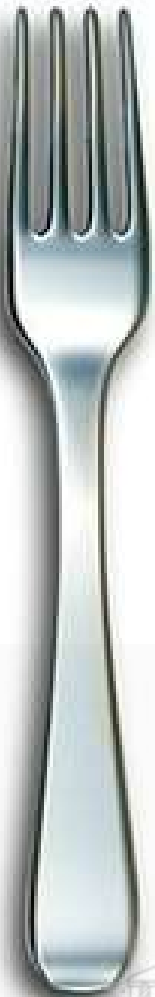
States' governments or by international organizations for an official purpose; sovereigns and other senior members of a royal family.

It bears mentioning that one can appeal against the refusal of the Schengen visa application as the decision to reject an application for an entry visa always has justification.

If an applicant's visas is refused, the government informs them as to why their application was rejected but for appeal, one can submit a written appeal no later than 3 weeks from the day they received the decision.

After receiving the appeal, it is the Embassy that initially decides whether to review the decision. The Embassy will verify that the appeal came in on time and will go over the case again. If more than 3 weeks have passed, the appeal will be rejected and an afresh visa application would have to be filed.

Courtesy: Daily Pakistan



7 FOODS THAT boost MENTAL HEALTH

By: Ranom Hera

Choosing foods that promote weight loss is a common focus when planning a healthy diet. While it's critical to consume a healthy diet, you should also be aware of how your food choices can affect your brain. In addition to improving your waistline, you can improve your brain function - and potentially help fight cognitive diseases - if you include many of the foods listed here in your diet.

1. chicken

Chicken contains tryptophan, the amino acid that is also found in turkey, making it an excellent choice for those looking for lean protein. Taking it helps your brain produce serotonin, which helps it regulate mood, fight depression, and maintain strong memories.



2. whole grains

Foods such as beans, soy, oats, and wild rice fall into this category. Despite the fact that the body and brain rely on carbohydrates for energy, we consume too many simple carbohydrates, which cause blood sugar levels to spike. Whole grain foods contain complex carbohydrates that produce glucose more slowly, providing you with steady energy.



Besides helping the brain absorb tryptophan, whole grains are also beneficial for reducing symptoms of depression and anxiety when eaten with foods such as chicken and turkey.

3. spinach

Leafy greens, such as spinach and kale, provide your brain with high levels of folic acid, which has been shown to reduce depression. In addition, it is known to reduce dementia in older individuals and fight insomnia, both of which are strongly linked to mental impairment.



4. yoghurt

There are numerous food products that contain active cultures, including yoghurt and other dairy products. Stress and anxiety can be reduced by probiotics, which are often associated with digestive health.

Additionally, yoghurt provides potassium and magnesium, which benefit the brain by allowing oxygen to reach it.



5. olive oil

A healthy Mediterranean diet has become quite popular as of late as a result of the use of extra virgin olive oil. Polyphenols present in this kind of oil help protect the body from the effects of proteins linked to Alzheimer's disease. Additionally, it can improve memory and learning.

Olive oil should be purchased with caution, however. The benefits of most brands of brain health products are significantly reduced due to liberal cuts of vegetable or seed oils. Make sure the olive oil in a brand is pure by researching brands online.



6. tomatoes

Known as an all-around beneficial phytonutrient, lycopene is the source of a tomato's red hue. This supplement can help fight brain disease among many other health benefits. It prevents cell damage and delays Alzheimer's Disease progression.

As well as helping with memory, attention, logic, and concentration, lycopene has been shown to help with many other features.

7. dark chocolate



Chocolate is classified as dark because it contains cocoa, which milk chocolate does not. In addition, dark chocolate - with at least 85% cocoa - is considered to be the healthiest.

Flavonoids, which are antioxidants, are abundant in dark chocolate. Studies have shown that it supports attention, memory, mood, and cognitive function. Moderation is still the key when it comes to chocolate consumption.

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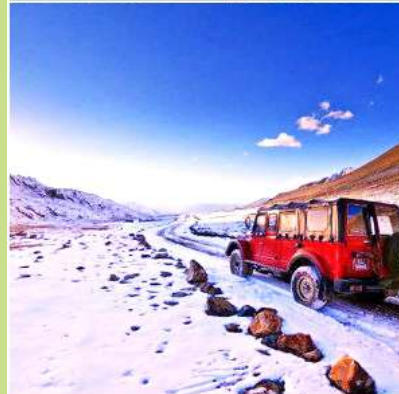


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A REMARKABLE 2023

PAKISTAN EMERGES AS

TOP TOURISM DESTINATION



In a groundbreaking revelation, Caretaker Minister for Tourism, Wasi Shah, has announced that Pakistan witnessed an extraordinary surge in tourism during the year 2023. According to the minister, there was an astounding 115 percent increase in foreign tourist arrivals, marking a significant rebound from the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This positive development also translated into substantial economic gains, with the country earning a revenue of 1.3 billion dollars from the tourism sector.





The recognition of Pakistan's tourism prowess is solidified by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), which has declared Pakistan as the best country for tourism in the year 2023.

The minister highlighted the findings of the 'World Tourism Barometer,' a publication by the World Tourism Organisation of the United Nations, which indicated that Pakistan achieved an impressive 92 percent recovery to pre-pandemic levels in 2023. The data paints a picture of resilience and adaptability within the tourism sector, showcasing Pakistan as a destination that successfully navigated the complexities brought about by the global health crisis.

In a televised interview, Minister Wasi Shah expressed optimism for the tourism landscape in 2024, anticipating further growth and international interest. He emphasized the government's proactive role in promoting Pakistan's tourism opportunities on the global stage, aiming to attract more tourists to explore the diverse offerings of the country.

The recognition of Pakistan's tourism prowess was further solidified by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), which declared Pakistan as the best country for tourism in the year 2023. This prestigious acknowledgment was conveyed by the secretary interior during a meeting with a delegation from the Pakistan Association of Tour Operators in Islamabad.

The secretary interior affirmed that the promotion of tourism ranks among the top priorities of the government, highlighting the commitment to resolving challenges faced by the tourism industry. One notable outcome of the meeting was the decision to streamline the process of tourist visa issuance, making it easier and faster for visitors to choose Pakistan as their preferred destination.

Aftab Rana, the Managing Director of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), has also shared insights into the country's exceptional performance in the tourism sector. He has revealed that PTDC has been actively engaged in six major global events, fostering crucial Business-to-Business connections with foreign tour operators. The corporation played a pivotal role in showcasing Pakistan's tourism potential on an international platform.

Caretaker Minister Wasi Shah has extended congratulations to the PTDC team for their instrumental role in the remarkable achievements of 2023. With a 115 percent surge in foreign tourist arrivals and positive acknowledgments from international organizations like UNWTO, Pakistan's tourism sector is poised for a stronger performance in the coming year, signaling a bright and promising future for the country as a leading global tourism destination.





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WINTER TOURISM

A PRECIOUS
**EARNING
SOURCE**
FOR GB PEOPLE

“

Winter in Gilgit-Baltistan offers an opportunity to experience nature's raw beauty through festivals, skiing, snowboarding, trekking and much more and being in some money for the local people.

”

A land of mesmerizing valleys, towering mountains, chilly deserts, singing brooks and enchanting lakes – Gilgit Baltistan offers unlimited bounties of nature to visitors pouring in from across the country and abroad.

Boasting of world's great mountain ranges -the Karakoram, Hindukash, and Himalayan, this region is also home to pride of Pakistan – the K-2 and Nanga Parbat, the second-largest glacier Siachen and the breathtaking Deosai plain situated at 14,000 feet above sea level.

The marvel of Karakoram Highway carved through mountains, dozens of lakes scattered all cross Gilgit-Baltistan and tall pines speak volumes of its natural beauty and serene environment always praised by nature lovers.

But, despite all the natural beauty and loveable scene of the region, the potential for winter tourism is yet to be fully tapped and numerous destinations are yet to be either fully explored or developed to attract more tourists.

Winter in Gilgit-Baltistan offers yet another opportunity to experience nature's raw beauty through festivals, skiing, snowboarding, trekking and much more and being in some money for the local people.

Living in a distant and tough region, most of the region's population usually bank upon earning from tourism, handicrafts and dry fruits among which tourism offering them sufficient dividend to keep the mare go.



Although winter tourism is challenging and adventurous yet the nature-loving souls do not miss to embrace the opportunity to see snow covered peaks and freezing lakes with mercury going down to around minus ten.



GB Sports and Tourism Secretary Asif Ullah Khan has said that nearly two million local and international backpackers attended various winter and summer festivities in the area last year while more than 155 high-altitude climbers summited the world's second tallest mountain, K2.

"These activities provide for an ample opportunity of earning for the GB government and the local people and we want to see more tourists coming to GB in winter as well," he said.

"Therefore, we are promoting winter activities and endeavor to



keep this area open for tourists throughout the year to experience unique traditions and culture of the local people,” Asif Ullah said. Although winter tourism is challenging and adventurous yet the nature-loving souls do not miss to embrace the opportunity to see snow covered peaks and freezing lakes with mercury going down to around minus ten.

So, the experts and local people desire from the government to play its due role by promoting winter sports like skiing, ice hockey and mountaineering in difficult terrains and support cultural activities and festivals.



“Despite being in its early stages, Gilgit-Baltistan has hosted several winter festivals like Shyok Winter Festival and winter games at Khalti Lake, Naltar valley and other places,” remarked Alam Khan, a local tourist guide.

“But, there is a dire need to properly advertise these events and improve infrastructure to boost winter tourism,” Alam added.

Ice hockey stands out as a popular winter sport in Gilgit-Baltistan, with championships held in various districts. It’s Naltar and Rattu areas are famous for skiing, with the National Ski Championship attracting international participants. With increased outreach and funding, new ski resorts can be established across Gilgit-Baltistan.

Ali Akbar, a member and trekker of GB-based adventure tourism outfit has stated that while trekking is often associated to summers, winter trekking in GB has its charm and vast potential.

“Challenging treks like Gondogoro La Pass and Biafo Hisper Snow Lake Trek always await adventure seekers,” Ali said. “Winter mountaineering – although a bit riskier, is yet an exciting opportunity offered by the high-altitude mountains of GB. Scaling snow-capped mountains during winter can be a memorable expedition.”

Planning a winter trip to Gilgit Baltistan involves considering available hotels, heated rooms, transport and restaurants. Accessible places in winter include Kachura Lakes, Naltar valley, Hunza valley, Khalti lake in district Ghizer Khaplu, with Khunjarab being perfect for snow lovers.

“Kachura Lakes in Baltistan region offer a picturesque winter experience as breathtaking Naltar and Hunza valleys are less to none in beauty and adventure,” said Imtiaz Ahmad, an expert for winter trekking. “The valleys across the region not only offer leisure time for tourists but also provide opportunity for local people to earn some money.”

The Nature has gifted Pakistan with majestic mountain peaks like Nanga Parbat, Tirich Mir and K2 and picturesque valleys, meadows, lakes and plains therefore it is urgently required to tap this potential for the welfare of local people, earning revenue for national kitty and promoting Pakistan’s nature friendly image across the globe.



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INDUSTRY

PEACE, PROSPERITY BLOOM IN NORTH WAZIRISTAN AS TOURISM TAKES CENTRE STAGE

1



North Waziristan, distinguished by its beauty and allure, stands out among other regions in the country for its unique cultural and historical significance. A multitude of tourist attractions awaits visitors in places like Shawal, Datta Khel, Ismail Khel, Spara Gher, Mana, Dadum,

Razmak, Darya e Tochi, and Kund Ghar, offering a rich blend of cultural experiences and breathtaking landscapes. This newfound emphasis on tourism in North Waziristan is not only a boon for the region's development but also promises to contribute positively to the nation's foreign exchange

reserves.

The Pakistan Army, acting as a catalyst for change, is actively leveraging its resources to promote tourism, echoing its commitment to the well-being of the local populace.

ISLAMABAD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT NOW OFFERS FREE MASSAGE CHAIR FACILITY FOR PASSENGERS

2



Flyers waiting for their aircraft at one of the airports in Pakistan can now enjoy the therapy facility and that too without spending a penny. The Islamabad International Airport now offers free massage chair facility to the flyers as they await their aircraft.

The service is available in domestic and international departure lounges so that the passengers can relax while their departure formalities are sorted out. The facility is set to assist the elderly and patients who are uncomfortable waiting at the airport while sitting on regular benches or

chairs.

The short therapy would help flyers avoid a bit of jet lag, especially for those headed to long distance destinations.



HIGHLIGHTS

LAHORE AIRPORT IMPOSES NEW DOMESTIC FLIGHT CHARGE

3



Travelers departing on domestic flights from Lahore's Allama Iqbal International Airport will face a new airport charge effective from January. The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has announced a mandatory Rs 100 fee, payable by passengers and collected by airlines. This new directive, communicated via a recent

notification, aims to streamline operations and enhance services within the country's aviation sector. The additional charge will contribute towards airport maintenance, upgrades, and potentially improved passenger amenities. Airlines operating domestic flights from Lahore are responsible for collecting the Rs 100 fee from each

departing passenger. Passengers are advised to factor this additional cost into their travel budgets and inquire with their chosen airline about the specific method of payment for the new charge.

GDA ESTABLISHES TOURISM COMMITTEE TO ENCOURAGE INVESTORS

4



Gwadar Development Authority (GDA) Director General Dawood Khan Khilji has established Tourism Committee to ensure an attractive environment for investment in the tourism sector of port city. The committee headed by Director Administration while the members include Director of Finance, Director of Urban Planning and others would take steps

for the exploration the tourist spots and opportunities in Gwadar. The GDA has already approved a comprehensive tourism policy through its governing body in order to revamp and develop the sector to increase the revenue. The tourism policy has been formulated in view of the global and natural tourism importance of Gwadar, which includes the

basic principles of local-private partnership, ease of doing business, innovation and sustainability, improving the quality of services and protecting the rights of tourists in Gwadar. The initiative would also help the development of the tourism sector and the creation of employment opportunities.



INDUSTRY

GRCP HOSTS 2ND ANNUAL GANDHARA CITRUS FESTIVAL TO BOOST AGRICULTURAL TOURISM

5



Gandhara Resource Center Pakistan (GRCP) proudly unveiled the Second Annual Gandhara Citrus Festival with a dynamic celebration held in Taxila. This event was aimed to stimulate agricultural tourism by showcasing the distinct citrus offerings of the region while highlighting its rich Buddhist heritage, GRCP public relations officer said.

Firstly, it sought to promote a diverse range of oranges from Khanpur, fostering enduring connections between orange producers and exporters nationally and internationally. Secondly, it aimed to spotlight and exhibit the ancient stonework of the Gandhara civilization, fostering connections between artisans and exporters. The festival offered many activities,

including live painting sessions, exhibitions, and promotions of locally harvested citrus fruits and homemade products. Additionally, it served as a platform to showcase the intricate Stone Carving Art of the Gandhara civilization, contributing to the advocacy and promotion of local heritage.

MINISTER ANNOUNCES TO ESTABLISH TOURISM POLICE UNIT IN SINDH

6



Caretaker Minister for Tourism, Climate Change and Coastal Development Sindh, Arshad Wali Muhammad has announced to establish dedicated “Tourism Police Units” in the province. “This initiative aims to bolster confidence in Sindh as a premier tourist destination”, the minister said in statement. Secretary Tourism and Culture, Government

of Sindh, Khalid Chachar has formally requested the Home Department to allocate police personnel for deployment at key tourism sites in Sindh. This dedicated force will be trained in tourist-centric policing, focusing on cultural sensitivity, communication and emergency response, creating a welcoming and secure environment for visitors, he said. The

establishment of Tourism Police underscores the Government of Sindh’s commitment to promoting sustainable tourism while ensuring the well-being of tourists. This initiative paves the way for increased tourism flow, boosting economic growth and cultural exchange in the province.



HIGHLIGHTS

PAKISTAN, INDONESIA AGREE TO ENHANCE COOPERATION IN IMMIGRATION, TOURISM

7



Pakistan and Indonesia have agreed to enhance mutual cooperation and coordination on the matters related to immigration and to increase tourism. The bilateral ties were discussed in a meeting between Ambassador of Pakistan in Indonesia Ameer Khurram Rathore and

Director General of Indonesian Immigration Silmy Karim. Both the representative agreed that enhanced tourism between both the countries could ultimately enhance mutual cooperation and coordination. They also agreed that there should be lenient immigration terms between both the

countries.

In the meeting, they discussed several matters of mutual interest, the embassy said in a statement.

PUNJAB TOURISM SECRETARY RAJA JAHANGIR INSPECTS TOURIST SPOTS OF SOON VALLEY

8



Punjab Tourism Secretary Raja Jahangir along with Sargodha Commissioner Muhammad Ajmal Bhatti visited tourist spots of the Soon Valley in Khushab, including Khabeki Lake, Uchhali Lake and Kanhati Garden. They reviewed facilities being provided at the spots. Deputy Commissioner Khushab Zeeshan

Shabbir Rana and other officers were also accompanied them. The commissioner presented several suggestions to the secretary for the promotion of tourism in the Soon Valley. Both officers also inspected the under-construction roads from Jaba Road and Noshera to Pail and directed the contractor to complete it within the stipulated time.

Assistant Commissioner Noshera Irfan Martin also briefed the secretary and commissioner about problems being faced by people of the Soon Valley and other matters.



Happy
New Year
2024



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
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