



Important Monasteries In /around Dharamshala

Dharamshala has the grandest and picturesque monasteries in India that have preserved the Buddhist and Tibetan culture after the Dalai 'Lama's exile from Tibet. While there are other famous tourist attractions such as the Dharamshala cricket stadium, tea gardens, Kangra fort and rock temples of Masroor (more on these in my series of articles coming up soon) in and around Dharamshala, one can certainly not miss visiting the monasteries in Dharamshala.

1

Tsuglagkhang Complex



This complex is the official residence of the 14th Dalai Lama and 'that's why it holds immense importance for both Tibetans and locals. The most striking features of Tsuglagkhang are its scenic location, the backdrop of beautiful mountains, the periphery of pine trees and architecture.

Must not miss: If planned well in advance, travelers can schedule their bookings to attend a teaching session by HH Dalai Lama himself! To attend Dalai Lama's course, you will need to register at the Tibetan Branch Security office in Mcleodganj for a nominal fee of Rs. 10, if you are an Indian citizen, and carry a photo ID. The discourse is usually in the Tibetan language. Seating is strictly on the first come, first serve basis.

2

Namgyal Monastery

This one is the personal monastery of the present Dalai Lama and considered as one of the perfect places in the world. Initially established by the second Dalai Lama in Tibet, Namgyal was re-established by the 14th Dalai Lama in Dharamshala after his exile from Tibet.

The monastery focuses explicitly on preservation and conduction of Tibetan Buddhist rituals and practices. If you get a chance, you must speak with some monks and learn about their life.

3

Gyuto Monastery



Set against the beautiful backdrop of Dhauladhars this tranquil monastery is the seat of Tantric Buddhism in India. Initially founded in 1474 in Tibet, it was re-established in Dharamshala after 1959. Gyuto is one of the most serene and calm monasteries in the town. I think, its surroundings and spacious ambiance is something to do with it, besides, of course, the positive vibrations emanated by the lamas and their practices.

4

Norbulingka Institute



The explorer in me wanted to know and learn more about Tibetan culture and Buddhism, even after visiting these monasteries, and after speaking with a few locals, I discovered this beautiful place.

Must Not Miss: One of the best features of this institute is their in-house Cafe, which serves delicious vegetarian Tibetan, Italian, and select middle-eastern cuisine. The open-air garden cafe has a delightful setting of fluttering prayer flags and shady trees.

Himalayan Travel Tips

- Have Buffer Days
- Stay Warm & Hydrated
- Avoid Alcohol
- Carry Required Clothing, Food & Water
- Drive with Caution & Care
- Start Early, Sleep Early



#SaveOurHimalayas

- Spread Smiles Not Plastic
- Stop Littering
- Bring Back Your Own Trash
- Avoid Plastic Water Bottles