

5 best summer escapes for families with kids

by Ami Bhat (Lonely Planet Author) Apr 2017



Share the Tulip frenzy with your kids at the annual tulips festival in Srinagar. Image courtesy: Flickr/Rajesh_India/CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

First, the heat of the examinations and then the soaring summer temperatures!

It isn't just the kids who need a summer break, but also the parents – a break from the stress of school and routine, from the rising temperatures and more importantly, a time to rediscover and strengthen a family bond. The best thing to do is to take a few days off and head to a destination that allows you to do things together and create memories for life.

And, so, here's where you should head.

KASHMIR

The perfect way to beat the summer heat is to head to the 'Paradise on Earth,' Kashmir. Chilled green valleys, crystal lakes and the snow-capped mountains of Kashmir have sheltered the inhabitants of the hot Indian plains from the times of the Mughals and continue to do so. While the rest of India experiences summer, your family gets to experience a real spring season – with beautiful tulip gardens, fresh green valleys and chirping birds.

THINGS TO DO:

Discover history and heritage with a stroll through the ancient Mughal gardens of Nishat Bagh and Shalimar Bagh in Kashmir.

Experience a stay on the houseboats at Dal Lake, Srinagar.

Share the tulip frenzy with your kids at the annual tulips festival in Srinagar.

Go for a cable car ride in Gulmarg and get your family to feel on top of the world.

Try a pony ride with your kids, through the various valleys of Kashmir.

ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS



Introduce your kids to the colourful underwater world with snorkeling and sea walks. Image courtesy: Flickr/salomonrb/CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

The gorgeous archipelago of islands in the Bay of Bengal with its swaying palms and turquoise blue waters is a perfect vacation spot for adults and kids. With a fair bit of history, interesting tribal influences, exotic marine life and plenty of adrenaline-pumping activities, Andamans promises something for everyone. Don't miss the Radhanagar beach – the one that has been declared the most beautiful in Asia.

THINGS TO DO:

Introduce your kids to the colourful underwater world with snorkeling and sea walks.

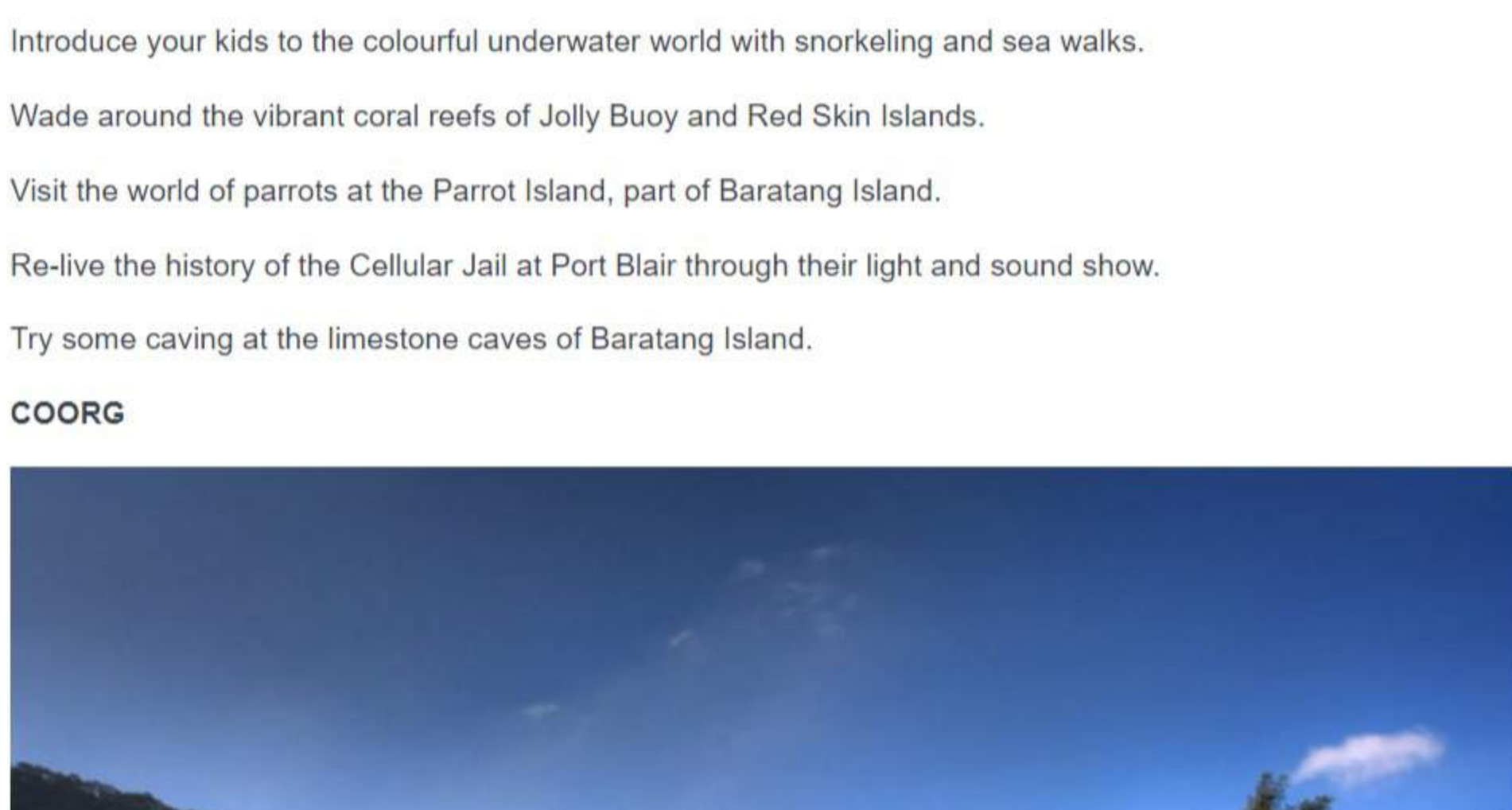
Wade around the vibrant coral reefs of Jolly Buoy and Red Skin Islands.

Visit the world of parrots at the Parrot Island, part of Baratang Island.

Re-live the history of the Cellular Jail at Port Blair through their light and sound show.

Try some caving at the limestone caves of Baratang Island.

COORG



Popularly called the 'Scotland of India', Coorg is a perfect family destination. Image courtesy: Flickr/kran kumar/CC BY-SA 2.0

If Kashmir is the Paradise on Earth, Coorg is the Paradise in South India. Popularly called the 'Scotland of India', Coorg is a perfect family destination with its lush green forests, diverse wildlife, fun coffee estates and a plethora of adventure activities. It does not matter if you have a toddler or a teenager; Coorg has some treat in store for everyone.

THINGS TO DO:

Meet the elephants at the Dubare Elephant Camp.

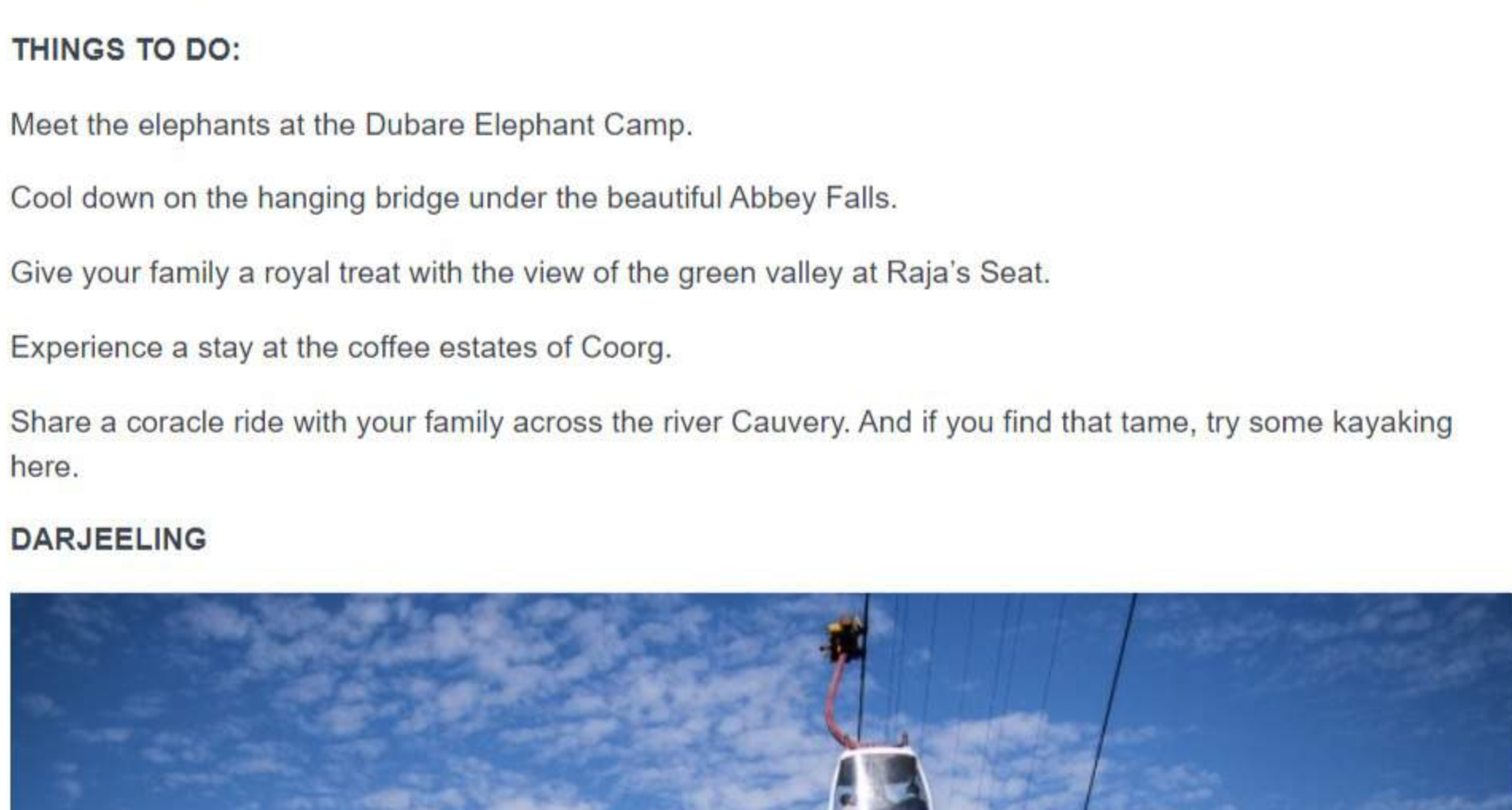
Cool down on the hanging bridge under the beautiful Abbey Falls.

Give your family a royal treat with the view of the green valley at Raja's Seat.

Experience a stay at the coffee estates of Coorg.

Share a coracle ride with your family across the river Cauvery. And if you find that tame, try some kayaking here.

DARJEELING



Try a fun ride on the highest and longest ropeway in Asia, the Darjeeling-Rangpo Valley Ropeway. Image courtesy: Flickr/Ram Joshi/CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Emerald Green tea gardens enclosed by snowy Himalayas, a pleasant weather in April and May, lovely nature trails, blossoming valleys and fun activities, Darjeeling is just great to beat the summer heat. There is a certain peace and tranquility in the atmosphere with its Buddhist monasteries and yet, at the same time, you experience a bit of the British charm, reminiscent of the early inhabitants of Darjeeling. It feels as though you are in India and yet not there.

THINGS TO DO:

Opt for a stay in the Tea Gardens and get the kids to pluck some tea leaves while there.

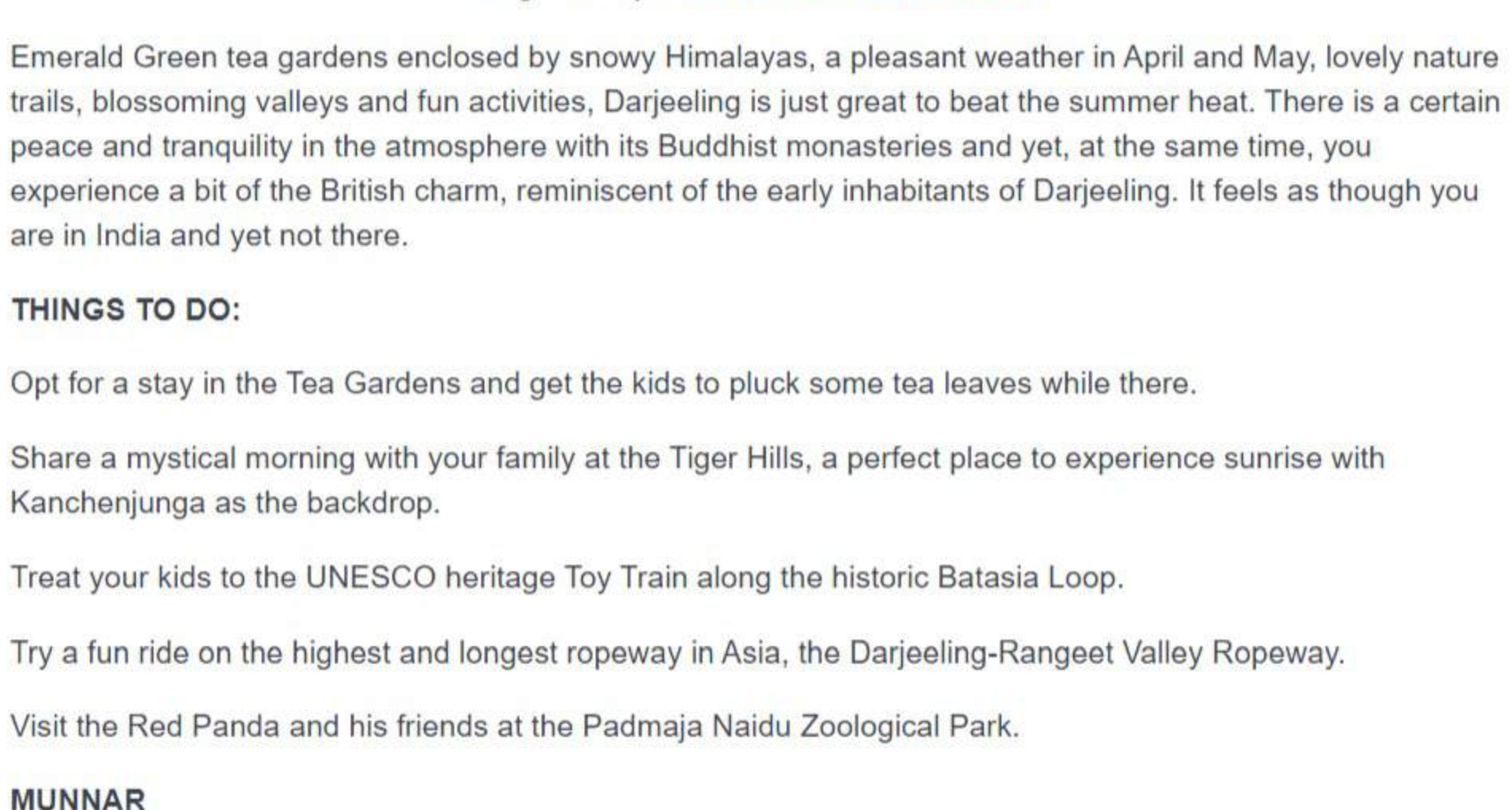
Share a mystical morning with your family at the Tiger Hills, a perfect place to experience sunrise with Kanchenjunga as the backdrop.

Treat your kids to the UNESCO heritage Toy Train along the historic Batasia Loop.

Try a fun ride on the highest and longest ropeway in Asia, the Darjeeling-Rangpo Valley Ropeway.

Visit the Red Panda and his friends at the Padmaja Naidu Zoological Park.

MUNNAR



Stay in the tree houses at one of the Munnar resorts - it'll be an experience worth travelling for. Image courtesy: Flickr/crosby_cj/CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Experience a beautiful drive along winding roads that takes you into the mist-laden hills of Munnar, this beautiful tea paradise from Darjeeling but equally exciting for the kids. Dotted with waterfalls, this beautiful hill station in Kerala makes for an idyllic escape for the entire family. With so much of serene, natural beauty around you, you will discover how calming and amazing it is just to lie in the grass or float on a boat while you spot beautiful birds flying around.

THINGS TO DO:

Stay in the tree houses at one of the Munnar resorts or opt for a homestay in a Tea garden.

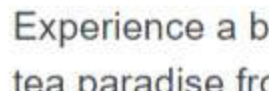
Indulge in some watersports with your kids at the Mattupetty Dam. You will also chance upon a visit from elephants that come here to quench their thirst.

Drive up to Top Station with your family for a magical view of the Western Ghats.

Explore the Tea Museum and take some tea-brewing classes with your family.

Indulge in fun activities like cycling or skating at the Blossom International Park or head to the Chinar Wildlife sanctuary to spot some wild beasts.

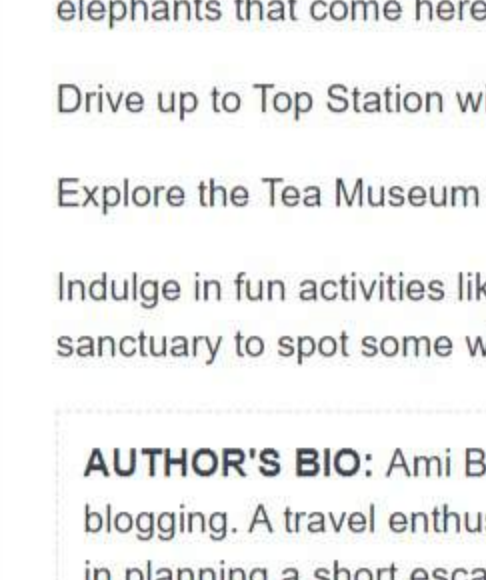
AUTHOR'S BIO: Ami Bhat is senior marketing professional, currently on a break to pursue full-time travel blogging. A travel enthusiast, who loves sports, photography and dancing with equal passion, Ami believes in planning a short escape for every long weekend that can come up through the year. And when she cannot travel physically, she travels virtually through words on her travel blog. More on: <http://www.thrillingtravel.in/>



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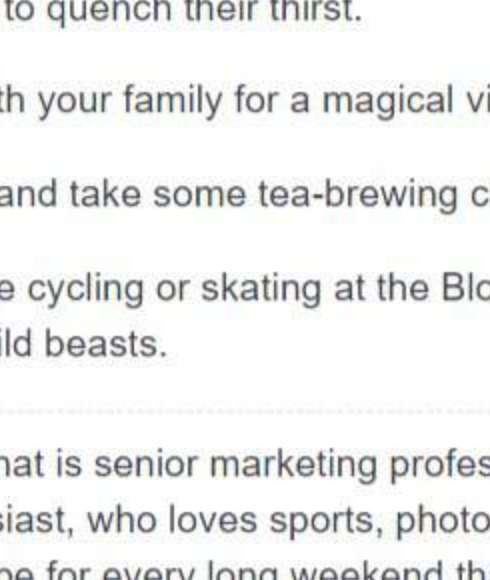
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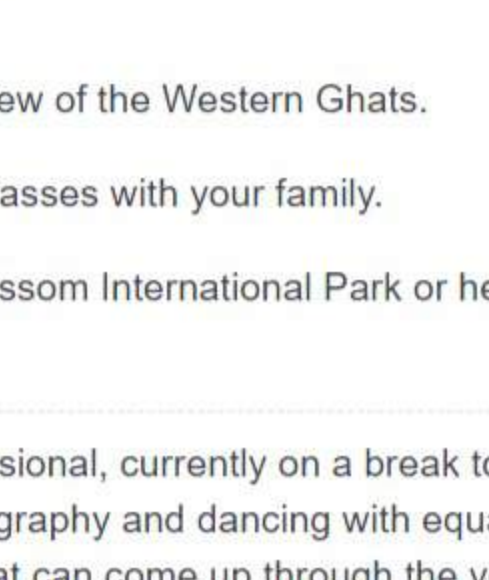
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When it's time for Durga Puja (25 – 30 September 2017) the atmosphere around many cities is infused with excitement and



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2 Comments



Vyjay Rao

April 24, 2016, 9:38:00 am

All lovely places to beat the heat and keep the kids engaged in Summer, I remember many years ago, Bangalore used to be a summer getaway for us during vacations. Those days Bangalore climate was as good as that in any hill station. What a pity that things have changed so drastically today and the famed Bangalore weather has gone for a toss.

+1 Reply



2TravelDads

April 24, 2016, 10:05:00 am

Snorkeling will also always be in our top five too, no matter where we are (if it's warm enough).

+1 Reply

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