

Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh is often referred to as the "**Land of Snow**" is a stunningly beautiful state nestled in the northern Himalayas of India. It is known for its great landscapes, its majestic snow-capped peaks, lush green valleys, and serene lakes. The state's name, which means "**In the lap of the Himalayas**" is a fitting tribute to its breathtaking scenery.

Dev Bhoomi



Geography

Located in the northwestern part of India, Himachal Pradesh shares its borders with the Indian states of Haryana, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir, and union territory of Ladakh, as well as with the neighboring country of China.

The total area of the state is 55,673 square kilometers.

Himachal Pradesh is enveloped by the Himalayan mountain ranges, which significantly influence its climate. The major ranges include the **Pir Panjal, Dhauladhar, and Zaskar ranges**.

The highest peak in Himachal Pradesh is **Reo Purgyl**, standing at 6,816 meters (22,362 feet).

There are several important valleys in Himachal Pradesh, such as the **Kullu Valley, Chamba Valley, and Spiti Valley**.

The state features several high-altitude lakes, including **Renuka Lake, Maharana Pratap Sagar** (Pong Dam Lake), and **Chandra Taal**.

Climate

The climate of the state varies significantly with altitude, resulting in a wide range of weather conditions across different regions.

Areas like Kangra, Una, Bilaspur, Hamirpur, and parts of Mandi experience a tropical and subtropical climate.

Solan, Kullu, Dharamshala, Palampur, and parts of Chamba enjoy a temperate climate.

Manali, Dalhousie, Kinnaur, Lahaul-Spiti, and parts of Chamba and Kullu experience a cold climate.

Himachal Pradesh State's Symbols

State Tree

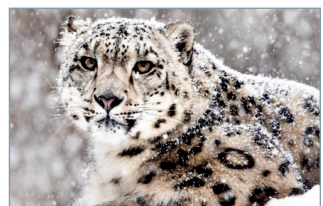
Himalayan deodar, also known as **Indian Cedar** is the state tree of Himachal Pradesh.

State Flower

Gulabi Buransh or the **Pink Rhododendron** is the state flower of Himachal Pradesh.

State Animal

Snow leopard is the state animal of Himachal Pradesh.



State Bird

Western tragopan or **jujurana** is the state bird of Himachal Pradesh.



Natural Vegetation

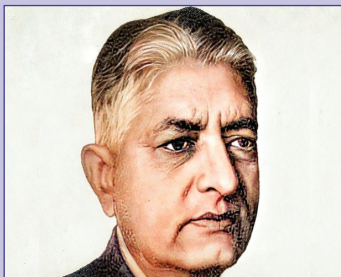
Himachal Pradesh is renowned for its diverse and rich natural vegetation. The state's vegetation varies significantly due to the wide range of altitudes, climates, and geographical features. The natural vegetation plays a crucial role in the ecological balance, supporting a wide range of wildlife and providing resources like timber, fuelwood, and medicinal plants.

Chief Ministers of Himachal Pradesh

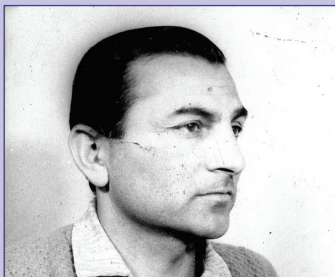
A Chief Minister is the elected head of the government in a state within a federal system of government. Here are the chief minister of Himachal Pradesh.



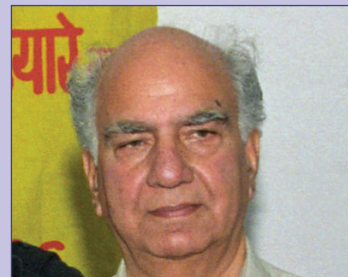
Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu
(2022-Present)



Yashwant Singh Parmar
(1952-56, 1963-67, 1967-71,
1971-72, 1972-77)



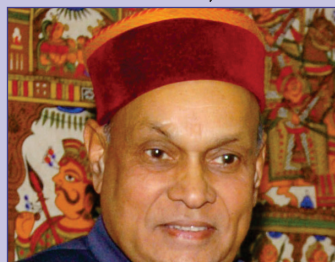
Thakur Ram Lal
(1977-77, 1980-82, 1982-83,
1996-99)



Shanta Kumar
(1977-80, 1990-92)



Virbhadra Singh
(1983-85, 1985-90, 1993-98,
2003-07, 2012-17)



Prem Kumar Dhimal
(1998-2003, 2007-12)



Jai Ram Thakur
(2017-22)

Delicacies of Himachal Pradesh

The food in Himachal Pradesh reflects the local ingredients, traditional methods of preparation, and the climatic conditions of the region.

1. **Dham** is a traditional festive meal served on special occasions like weddings and festivals. It is a vegetarian meal, usually served on leaf plates, and includes rice, dal, rajma, chana (chickpeas), and a variety of vegetables.
2. **Madra** is a popular dish from the Chamba region. It's made primarily with soaked chickpeas or kidney beans cooked in a yogurt-based gravy, flavored with spices like cloves, cinnamon, and cardamom.
3. **Siddu** is a traditional steamed bread made from wheat flour. The dough is fermented, stuffed with a filling of mashed dal or poppy seeds mixed with spices, and then steamed.
4. **Tudkiya Bhath** is a traditional pulao from Chamba, made with rice, lentils, and vegetables, flavored with a variety of spices, and often garnished with curd or lime juice.
5. **Kullu Trout** is a specialty of the Kullu region, where fresh trout fish is marinated with local spices and grilled or fried.
6. **Babru** is a type of deep-fried bread, somewhat similar to kachori. It's made by stuffing dough with a paste of black gram and frying it until crispy.
7. **Patande** is a Himachali version of pancakes, commonly prepared in the Sirmaur district. Made from wheat flour, the batter is spread on a hot griddle and cooked until golden brown.
8. **Aktori** is a festive dish prepared during special occasions, especially in Lahaul-Spiti. It's made from buckwheat leaves or flour mixed with wheat flour to make a pancake-like dish.



Musical instruments used in Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh has a musical heritage, and its traditional music is deeply connected with the culture and daily life of its people.

- ❖ **Dhol** is a double-headed drum, widely used in folk music across Himachal Pradesh. It is played with sticks, with one side producing a bass sound and the other a higher-pitched tone.
- ❖ **Nagara** is a large kettledrum, made of metal or clay, and is played with sticks. It produces a deep, resonant sound. This instrument is often used in temple rituals, during festivals, and in large gatherings.
- ❖ **Karnal** is a long, straight trumpet made of brass or copper. It has a conical bore and is played by blowing into it.
- ❖ **Chimta** is a percussion instrument consisting of two long metal rods with small cymbals attached along their length. It is played by striking the rods together, producing a rhythmic jingling sound.
- ❖ **Ransingha** also known as the Turhi, is a curved or S-shaped trumpet made of brass or copper. It is similar to the Karnal but has a distinctive curved shape. This instrument is traditionally used during ceremonial and religious events, particularly in the Kullu and Mandi regions.
- ❖ **Pawari** is a type of wind instrument made from a large horn, typically from an animal like a buffalo or ox. It produces a deep, sonorous tone.
- ❖ **Jhanjh** is a type of large cymbal made of brass. It is played by striking the two cymbals together. It is often used in religious ceremonies and folk music performances, providing a sharp, metallic sound that complements other instruments.



Folk Singers from Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh, a state nestled in the Himalayas, boasts a rich cultural heritage, including a vibrant tradition of folk music.

❖ **Narender Negi** is one of the most popular folk singer from Himachal Pradesh, is known for his soulful depiction of traditional Pahari songs. His music often reflects the culture, traditions, and social issues of the region.



❖ **Kishan Verma** is a well-known folk singer who has made significant contributions to Himachali folk music. His songs often celebrate the natural beauty and the vibrant lifestyle of the people in Himachal Pradesh.

❖ **Kuldeep Sharma** is a popular folk singer, known for his energetic performances and ability to connect with the audience. He sings in several dialects of Himachal, including Pahari and Kulluvi.



❖ **Vandna Dhiman** famous singer from Himachal Pradesh, is very popular with her voice for Bhajans, jagran, live shows etc. Her Popular baba balak nath Bhajan “Mann Moh leya Kundlan waleya” “Mandra da Najaara” and many others.

Dialects of Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh has many dialects, including Pahari dialects, Kangri, and tribal languages.

1. **Western Pahari** dialects include Sirmauri, Kiunthali, Jaunsari, Chameali, Churahi, Mandeali, Gadi, and Kuluhi. The chief Central Pahari languages are Garhwali and Kumaun.
2. **Kangri** is an Indo-Aryan dialect spoken in the Kangra, Hamirpur, Bilaspur, and Una districts, as well as parts of Mandi, Chamba, and Kullu.
3. **Tribal languages** include Sumcho, Kinnauri, and Bhoti.

Some of the other dialects are Mandiyali, Kinnauri, Khaluri, etc.

Major Cites of Himachal Pradesh

1. **Shimla** is known as the "**Queen of the Hills**" and is one of India's most famous hill stations. It served as the summer capital of British India and is renowned for its colonial architecture, pleasant climate, and picturesque landscapes.
2. **Dharamshala** is known for being the residence of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government-in-exile. It is a significant cultural and spiritual center, especially for Buddhism.
3. **Manali** is a popular tourist destination known for its stunning landscapes, adventure sports, and as a gateway to the Himalayas. It attracts tourists year-round, especially for trekking, skiing, and river rafting.
4. **Mandi** is often referred to as the "**Varanasi of the Hills**" due to its numerous old temples. Mandi is also an educational hub, home to the Indian Institute of Technology, Mandi.
5. **Solan** is known as the "**Mushroom City of India**" and "**City of Red Gold**" (for its tomatoes), Solan is an important agricultural and industrial hub.



6. **Kangra** is known for its historical significance, particularly the Kangra Fort, and its proximity to Dharamshala. The district is also famous for its tea gardens and the ancient Masroor Rock Cut Temples.
7. **Hamirpur** is known for its educational institutions and has one of the highest literacy rates in the state.
8. **Una** serves as a gateway to the state from Punjab and is an important transportation hub.
9. **Kullu**, located in the Kullu Valley, is known as the "**Valley of Gods**" and is famous for its scenic beauty and traditional Himachali culture.

Dresses of Himachal Pradesh

In Himachal Pradesh the clothing varies according to the region, climate, and community, but certain elements are common across the state.

1. **Pattu** is a traditional woolen shawl worn by women in Himachal Pradesh. It is usually draped over the shoulders and fastened with a silver or brass brooch called a “**booch**.”
2. Women typically wear a long skirt called a **ghagri** or **churidar** paired with a blouse. The churidar is usually more common in the Kullu and Kangra regions.
3. **Reshta** is a long piece of cloth wrapped around like a saree by a woman, but in a unique style.
4. Women also wear a woolen cap called a **tipu** or **thipu**, especially in the Kinnaur region.
5. **Chola** is a traditional garment worn by men, particularly in the Kullu and Lahaul-Spiti regions. It is a long woolen coat that reaches below the knees and is tied at the waist with a sash.
6. **Kurta-Pajama** is a common attire among men in Himachal Pradesh, usually worn with a woolen waistcoat during colder months.
7. **Suthan** is a type of woolen pajama worn under the chola or with a kurta.
8. The **Himachali cap, or topi**, is an essential part of men's attire. These caps vary in design across regions:

Kullu Cap is a colorful cap with a broad band, usually decorated with geometric patterns.

Kinnauri Cap is Worn in the Kinnaur district, this cap has a unique design with a border and is often paired with traditional jewelry.



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