



JOURNEYS *with* MEANING

2012

We travel light - our backpacks & our minds free of unnecessary baggage... :-)

'Ring out the old, and ring in the new', goes the old saying. And that is precisely what **Journeys With Meaning** is doing in 2012.

We'll never stop **inspiring** you. But this year, it's going to happen with a LOT more excitement, FUN, intensity, and adventure.

The spectacular forests of Meghalaya & Assam will be the first to welcome us in March. And since we don't believe in sibling rivalry, we'll be paying a visit to at least 2 more of the Seven Sisters - Arunachal Pradesh & Nagaland, followed by Sikkim, but a little later in the year.

No year can be complete without our annual pilgrimage to Ladakh - the land of picturesque villages, glowing mustard & barley fields, and pristine glacial streams.

Dwarfing these are the towering sentinels of the Himalayas that we will have to traverse on our journey to magical Leh - mountain passes with evocative names like Baralacha La, Tanglang La and Lachulung La that spear the skies with their snowy peaks at altitudes of 15,000 feet and more... one of which (the mighty Khardung La at over 18,000 feet) you'll be hurtling down on a mountain bike if we have our way! And if cycling is not your cup of tea, there's the other option - rafting the rapids on the rather turbulent Zaskar river. We're not joking. :)

Holding your breath already? Wait... there's more. A week-long visit to Kashmir, or Kashir as it is known in local parlance, is an experience guaranteed to leave you reeling.

Be prepared to deal with the insistent questions that will inevitably come up in your minds - about the meaning of identity, the nature and meaning of democracy, and the conflicts within the human mind which have enabled needless violence to persist for decades. Is there a permanent solution to this imbroglio? Well, you'll just have to join us on this journey to find out!

And to lighten things up, we have visits to organic farms around India coming up. Spend time sitting under a tree pondering over the wonder that is Nature. Eat fresh organic produce straight from the kitchen garden. In fact, help to harvest it with your bare hands, a heart bursting with happiness and a cheerful song on your lips.

On each of these journeys, you can also look forward to engaging in stimulating conversations with your fellow travelers and the inspiring people we meet - about learning to live the earth-friendly ways of life, traveling responsibly, and about successful alternatives to conventional notions of success, education, work, etc.

Welcome to Journeys With Meaning!



identity
awareness
FUN meaning
CULTURE
CONVERSATIONS
treks
photography
music **LOCAL** **INSPIRATION**
new **FRIENDS** **FOOD** **homestays**

Itineraries :

LADAKH | ARUNACHAL PRADESH | KASHMIR | MEGHALAYA & ASSAM | NAGALAND |
SPITI VALLEY | ORGANIC FARMS | WEEKEND VISITS | CUSTOMISED TOURS



Ladakh - April & June



Meghalaya - March



Kashmir - April & June



Nagaland - December



Spiti Valley - July



Arunachal - November

These trips could change the way you view the world

Journeys with Meaning gives travellers a taste of reality, the way locals experience it

Humaira Ansari

What's your idea of a holiday? Sightseeing, soul searching, or is it exploring places up close and personal for what they are vis-a-vis what you perceive them to be? If it's the last option that intrigues you, then 'Journeys with Meaning' could just be your thing. Brainteils of Vinod Sreedhar, 31, the four-year-old venture takes you on an exploratory expedition of Kashmir, Ladakh and the organic farms of Vidarbha.

"The focus of the trips is to not just visit conventional tourist attractions, but to interact with the locals, live with them, and try to understand their problems and share our own," said Sreedhar, a music composer and social entrepreneur.

The 'Journeys with Meaning' trips emphasise the importance of being responsible travellers, rather than just happy-go-lucky tourists. "In Ladakh, we pick up litter along the trekking path," said Sreedhar, who wants to create more democratic spaces, a sustainable world and "deeper sense of belonging to planet Earth".

Luxury travelling and staying in fancy hotels is not an



Flight attendant Jumana Parkar on one of her trips to Ladakh

But leaving aside the one-off incidents, most travellers come back in awe of the locals. Nandini Pai, 24, senior marketing executive with a travel firm, was pleasantly surprised to see the efforts of locals in Ladakh to maintain the sanctity of the place. "Local shops do not sell mineral water. Instead, they sell filtered water so that you can refill your bottle. Laundries use herbs and plant extracts to wash clothes and not soap," Pai said.

Sreedhar feels every 'Journeys with Meaning' trip is an opportunity for self-discovery. "The idea is to simply connect with people and the place and draw inferences from one's own experiences without any preconceived notions," he said.

And, self-discovery it was for flight attendant Jumana Parkar, 28, who, after spending time at Pitane farm, an organic farm in Vidarbha, realised that she quit her job to become an urban

farm designer.

"When you see how the farmers are struggling to keep their homes and businesses running, it shakes you up," said Parkar, who thereafter visited farms in rural Karnataka and Kerala.

APDP office (Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons) with that one photograph of their lost one from Ladakh, we pick up litter along the trekking path," said Sreedhar, who wants to create more democratic spaces, a sustainable world and "deeper sense of belonging to planet Earth".

"It is heart-rending to see how mothers, wives and daughters descend to the APDP office (Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons) with that one photograph of their lost one from Ladakh, we pick up litter along the trekking path," said Sreedhar, who wants to create more democratic spaces, a sustainable world and "deeper sense of belonging to planet Earth".

There are ample opportunities to explore places too. Jewellery designer Shirin Jewley, 30, who went on a 'Journeys with Meaning' trip to Ladakh, says she was surprised to see the efforts of locals in Ladakh to maintain the sanctity of the place. "Local shops do not sell mineral water. Instead, they sell filtered water so that you can refill your bottle. Laundries use herbs and plant extracts to wash clothes and not soap," Pai said.

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DNA | Outlook | The Telegraph | Mid-Day | Hindustan Times | Hindustan Times

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Please feel free to call or email us for more information about these inspiring journeys.

Journeys With Meaning is a 5-year old initiative by Bombay based Signposts (www.signposts.co.in). Since 2007, our journeys have taken us to places as remote as the high-altitude desert landscapes of Spiti and Ladakh. The turbulent but beautiful Kashmir Valley has also featured regularly on our travel map.

These journeys are not regular holidays. They are intended to challenge & inspire you and offer you fresh ways of seeing and understanding your world. They also help combine your desire to travel with your need to find meaning.

No rigid tour packages. No inflexible plans. Only a mind that's willing to listen and a heart that is willing to connect. Engage with the unfamiliar, and make it your own.

For now, we're located here - www.signposts.co.in. But look out for us very soon at our new website at www.journeyswithmeaning.org.

We're also on Facebook. You can find us over [here](#). And if you want to connect with me on Facebook, I'm at www.facebook.com/vinodsreedhar