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Subject : Tourism

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# Rural Tourism



# Introduction

## Rural tourism

It refers to a form of tourism where visitors travel to non-urban areas, typically villages or countryside, to experience local lifestyle, culture, natural environment, and often participate in activities related to agriculture, nature-based pursuits, and traditional crafts, with a strong emphasis on community engagement and sustainable practices.

Key aspects of Rural tourism:  
Focus on local life: The core of rural tourism is immersing oneself in authentic rural lifestyle, including interactions with local people, experiencing traditional customs, and learning about their daily activities like farming, fishing, or handicraft making.

Nature-based activities & Rural areas

often boast diverse natural landscapes, making activities like hiking, trekking, birdwatching, kayaking, cycling, and camping popular attractions for visitors seeking outdoor experiences.

Agritourism: A prominent aspect of rural tourism where visitors actively participate in farm activities such as picking fruits and learning about livestock management, and even staying on a farm.

Cultural Immersion: Rural tourism provides opportunities to explore local heritage, traditions, music, and cuisine, allowing visitors to gain a deeper understanding of the local community.  
Community Involvement: Successful rural tourism should be developed with the active participation of

# Rural Tourism Overview

Meaning and definitions of Rural tourism has been defined in various ways by different organizations and authors. Few of them are:

- "Tourism that takes place in rural areas, including tourism that is based on the natural environment, culture, and traditions of rural areas." - UNWTO
- "A type of tourism that focuses on experiencing the rural way of life, including their culture, traditions and natural environment." - Compounded definition
- "Rural tourism is a type of tourism that involves visiting and experiencing rural areas, including their natural environment, culture, and traditions." - Rural tourism association.
- "Rural tourism is a sustainable tourism development approach that aims to promote economic growth, social development, and environmental conservation in rural areas." - International Ecotourism Society.

# Characteristics

Natural Environment

Diversity

Cultural Exchange

Rural Landscape

Community Based

Cultural Heritage

Sustainable

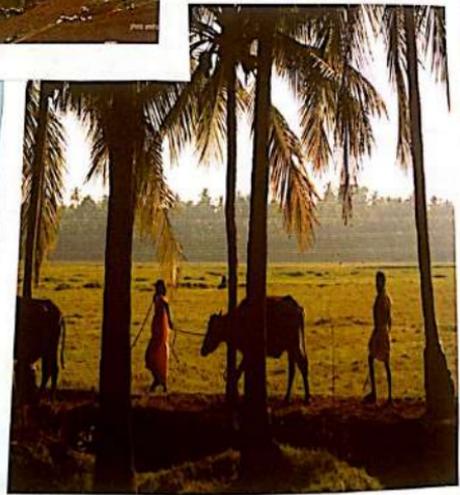
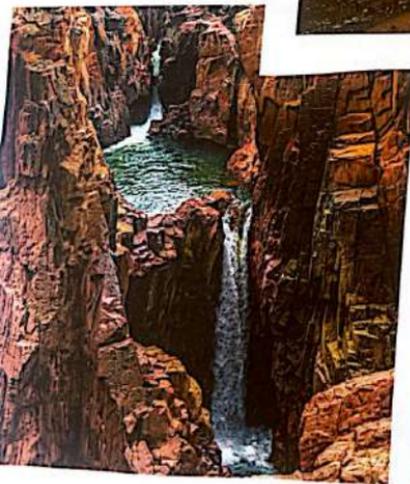
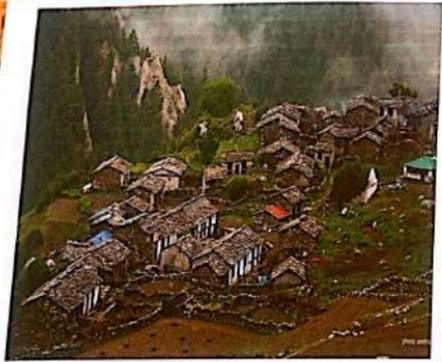
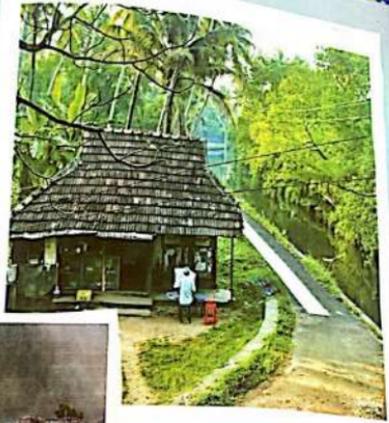
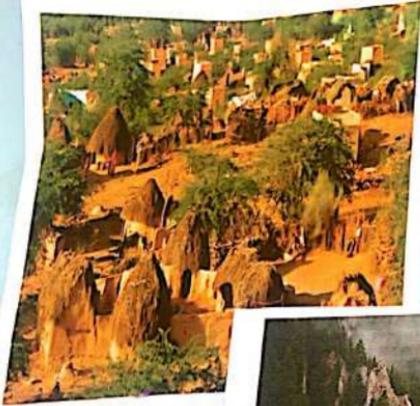
Economic Benefits

Authenticity

Small Scale

Local Ownership

Seasonality



## Rural Tourism in India: A Growing Sector with Endless Opportunities

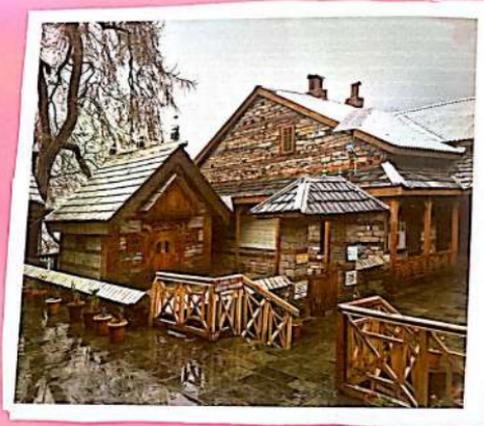
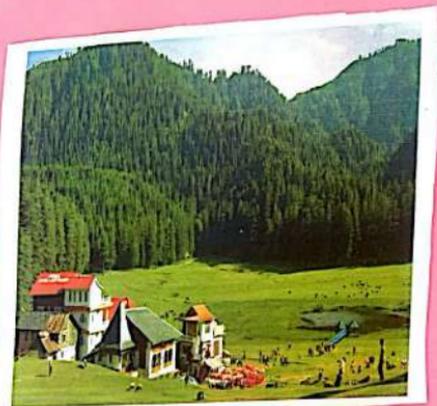
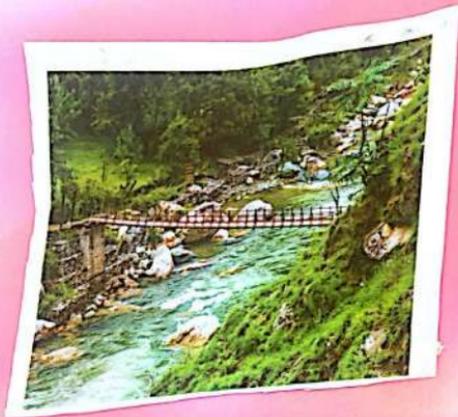
Rural tourism has emerged as a significant sector in India's tourism industry, offering a unique and authentic experience for travelers. This form of tourism involves visiting rural areas, participating in local activities, and immersing oneself in the natural beauty and culture of the region. On an Indian level, rural tourism has the potential to contribute significantly to local economic development, ~~con~~ cultural preservation, and environmental conservation.

### Benefits of Rural Tourism in India:

#### Economic Benefits:

1] Increased Income: Rural tourism can generate additional income for local communities, helping to reduce poverty and improve living standards.

2] Job Creation: Rural tourism can create new job opportunities in rural areas, helping to reduce unemployment and migration to urban areas.



Rural Tourism In Himachal Pradesh:  
A Hidden Gem waiting to be Discovered.  
Tucked away in the majestic Himalayas,  
Himachal Pradesh is a treasure trove of  
natural beauty, rich culture, and warm  
hospitality. Rural tourism in Himachal  
Pradesh is a growing sector that offers  
a unique and authentic experience for  
travelers. Imagine waking up to the  
sound of chirping birds, sipping tea made  
from fresh leaves, and experiencing the  
warm smile of a local villager. This is  
what rural tourism in Himachal Pradesh  
has to offer. By exploring the uncharted  
territories of rural Himachal, travelers can  
immerse themselves in the local culture,  
traditions, and way of life, creating unforgett-  
able memories and lifelong connections.  
Rural tourism in Himachal Pradesh has  
emerged as a vital sector for local econom-  
ic development, with 89.96% of the state's  
population residing in villages. The concep-  
t of rural tourism has been gaining momentum

Naggar Village: A Hidden gem in Himachal Pradesh

Naggar Village, located in the Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh, is a treasure trove of history, culture, and natural beauty. With a rich history dating back to the 16th century, the village has evolved and grown over the centuries, and has now emerged as a successful model of rural tourism.

A brief History of Naggar Village

Naggar Village was founded in the 16th century by Raja Sidh Singh, a local king who ruled over the Kullu Valley. The village was strategically located on the banks of the Beas River, which provided a source of water, fertile soil, and a natural defence system. Over the centuries, the village was ruled by the Kullu kings, who were known for their bravery, wisdom, and patronage of the arts. During their reign, the village flourished, and many temples, palaces, and other architectural wonders were built.

Naggar Village:

Naggar Village: A success story in rural tourism

In recent years, Naggar Village has emerged as a successful model of rural tourism. The village has been able to capitalize on its natural beauty, rich culture, and historic landmarks to attract tourists from all over the world.

Homestay Programs: One of the key factors that have contributed to the success of Naggar Village is its homestay program. The village has introduced homestay programs that allow tourists to stay with local families and experience their culture and way of life. This program has not only generated additional income for local families but has also helped to preserve the village's heritage.

Village Tourism Initiatives: The local community has developed village tourism initiatives such as guided tours, trekking, and other activities to showcase the village's natural beauty and cultural heritage. These initiatives

# Rural Tourism In Himachal Pradesh

## A success Story in Rural Tourism

have helped to create new job opportunities for local youth and have also generated additional income for local families.

Infrastructure Development: The state government has invested in infrastructure development, including roads, vaccination, and amenities, to support tourism growth.

Community-Based tourism: The village has adopted community-based tourism, which ensured that the local community benefits from tourism development and that their cultural heritage is preserved.

Impact of Rural Tourism:

The Impact of Rural Tourism on Naggar Village has been significant. The village has seen a significant increase in tourism and tourist arrivals, which has generated additional income and created new job opportunities for local residents. The village's heritage has also been preserved, and its natural beauty has been

showcased to the world. Historical landmarks of Naggar Castle: A 16th-century castle built by Raja Sidh Singh, which is now used as a heritage hotel.

1) Gauri Shankar Temple: An ancient temple dedicated to Lord Shiva, which is known for its intricate carvings and stunning architecture.

2) Toifura Sundari Temple: A 16th-century temple dedicated to Goddess Toifura Sundari, which is known for its beautiful architecture and stunning views.

3) Nicholas Roerich Art Gallery: A museum showcasing the artwork of Nicholas Roerich, a Russian artist who lived in Naggar Village in the early 20th century.

Conclusion: Naggar Village is a shining example of how rural tourism can be used to promote economic development, preserve cultural heritage, and showcase natural beauty.



# Case Study of Arki

## Arki Fort: A Gem for Rural Tourism

- Built between 1695 and 1700 by Rana Piithi Singh, Arki Fort is a symbol of history and culture in Himachal Pradesh.
- The fort reflects a blend of Rajput and Mughal architecture, surrounded by lush green hills and picturesque views.
- As a major tourism ground, the fort attracts travelers seeking tranquility and a glimpse into local traditions.
- The calm environment and rich heritage make Arki Fort a perfect destination for exploring offbeat locations.

## Geography and Climate

- Arki is located in the Solan district of Himachal Pradesh, resting in the lower ranges of the Himalayas.
- It sits at an altitude of around 1045 meters (3428 feet) above sea level, offering stunning views of forested hills and valleys.
- The terrain is a mix of rolling hills and lush greenery, ideal for nature lovers.

## Local Experiences and Activities

Arki offers much more than sightseeing - visitors can engage in local activities like:

**Nature Walks:** Early morning village trails offer stunning views of the hills.

**Farming Activities:** Tourists can join locals in farming, understanding rural practices firsthand.

and adventure seekers

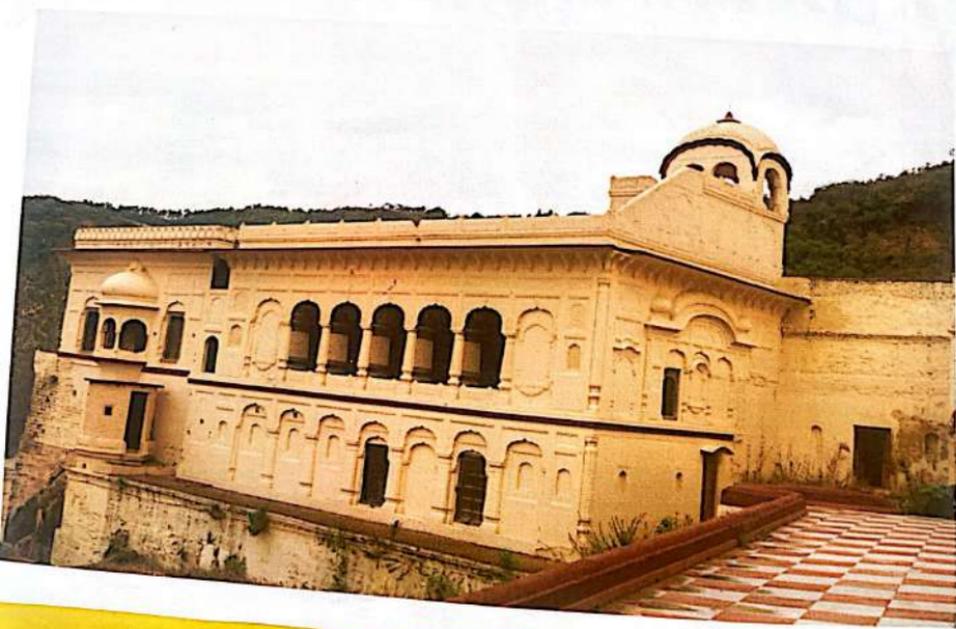
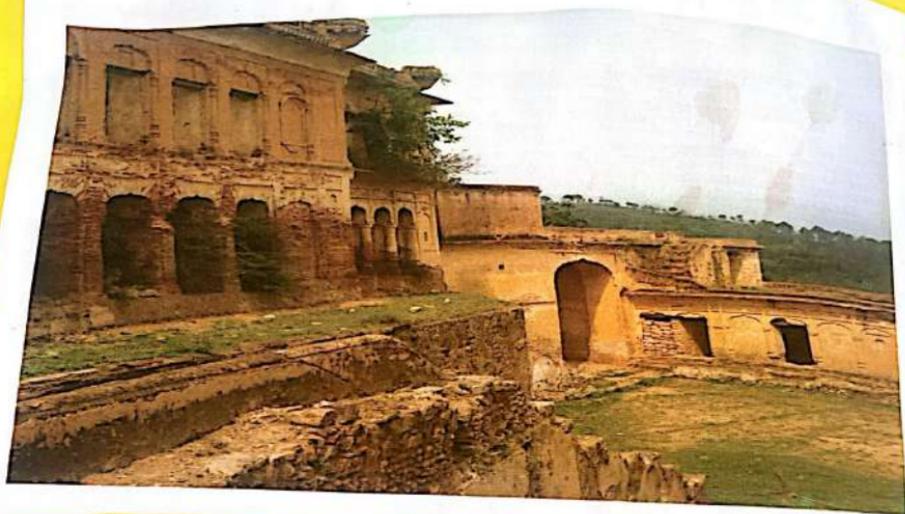
- **Climate:**
- **Summers:** Mild, with temperatures between 26°C to 32°C.
- **Winters:** Cool, with temperatures between 4°C to 8°C.
- **Monsoon:** Moderate rainfall brings freshness to the landscape.

## Architecture and Heritage

- The architecture is a perfect blend of Rajput Grandeur and Mughal Elegance.
- **Grand Entrance:** Intricate carvings adorn the gateway, leading into spacious courtyards and stone walls.
- **Diwan-e-Khas:** The hall for private gatherings stands out with its elegant pillars and colorful frescoes.
- Every corner echoes the fort's royal past, offering a unique experience of witnessing centuries-old craftsmanship.

## Homestay and Hotel Facilities

- Arki promotes rural tourism through homestays and small hotels.
- **Homestays:**
- Local families open their homes, offering a glimpse of traditional Himachali life.
- Home-cooked meals are served, prepared with fresh, locally sourced ingredients.
- **Hotels:**
- Small hotels with modern amenities ensure a comfortable stay.



**Traditional Dances & Events:** Events often feature folk dances like the Nati, a slow circular dance performed during festivals and special occasions. The dancers, dressed in colorful attire, move gracefully to the beats of traditional instruments, creating a mesmerizing experience.

### Food And Hospitality

Food in Aoki reflects the warmth and simplicity of Himachali culture. Visitors can savor dishes like:

• **Siddu:** A steamed bread stuffed with filling like walnuts or poppy seeds, often enjoyed with ghee and chutney.

• **Maddo:** A rich yogurt-based dish made with chickpeas or kidney beans, seasoned with aromatic spices.

• **Sham:** A traditional Himachali feast, usually served on special occasions, featuring multiple vegetarian dishes.

A perfect spot for relaxation and reflection.

**Conclusion:** Aoki foot is more than a historical site - it's a living connection to culture, nature, and community. By visiting, staying in homestays, enhancing local crafts, and offering guided village tours, visitors can make this foot a model for sustainable rural tourism, providing locals with enriching experiences and supporting local livelihoods.

### A Gateway to Peace and Heritage

- Aoki Foot offers a peaceful escape for travelers seeking history and cultural immersion.
- The combination of architectural beauty, warm hospitality, and rich traditions creates a unique travel experience.
- Visitors leave with memories to the foot and heartfelt connections to the local community.

### How It's the Ideal for Rural Tourism & Historical and Cultural Richness:

Built in the late 17th century by Raja Pithi Singh, Aoki Foot showcases stunning Rajasthani paintings and echoes stories of a vibrant past,

offering history lovers a glimpse into Himachali heritage.

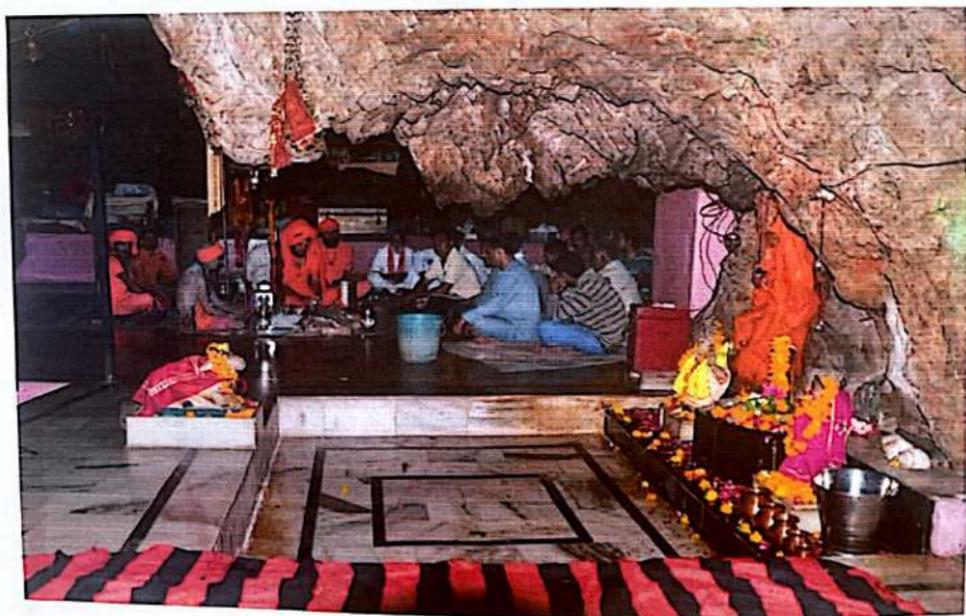
4] **Connection with Local Communities:** Visitors can stay in homestays, enjoy home-cooked meals, and engage with locals, learning about traditional farming practices and craftsmanship.

5] **Natural Beauty and Tranquility:** The foot offers breathtaking views of green valleys and pine forests, ideal for nature lovers seeking peace and quiet.

6] **Adventure and Exploration:** Nearby trails and waterfalls offer adventure through untouched nature, while exploring surrounding villages like Ashu and Darlaghat adds to the experience.

7] **Cultural Festivals and Local Events:** During festivals, the foot becomes a hub for folk dances, music, and local fairs, giving tourists a taste of authentic Himachali celebrations.

8] **Peaceful Retreat:** The foot's calm ambiance paired with the surrounding landscape, makes



## Lutru and Mutru Mahadev Temples: The Spiritual Gems of Arki

**1] Introduction:** Nestled in Arki, Himachal Pradesh, the Lutru and Mutru Mahadev Temples stand as ancient temples, symbols of spirituality and natural beauty. These twin Temples, dedicated to Lord Shiva, attract pilgrimages and nature lovers alike, offering a peaceful escape into nature through quaint village homes and dense pine forests.

### 2] History and Legend:

- **Ancient Origins:** Dating back centuries, these temples hold deep spiritual significance.
- **Mythical Connection:** Folklore says Lord Shiva created here during his Himalayan travels.
- **Cultural Heritage:** Generations of villagers

experience.

- **Guided Tours:** Learn local myths and history from village guides.
- **Village Walks:** Observe traditional farming practices and rural life.

**3] Mahashivratri Festival:** During Mahashivratri, the temple becomes vibrant hubs of devotion, with singing, dancing, and community feasts. Devotees gather to offer prayers and seek Lord Shiva's blessing.

### Village Life:

- **Agriculture:** The village surrounding these sites, including Kangri Dhar and Sewra Chandi Panchayat, rely heavily on farming. Crops like wheat, maize and seasonal vegetables are cultivated.
- **Livestock Rearing:** Cows and goats are common, providing essentials like milk, butter, and ghee.
- **Simple Living:** Daily life revolves around farming, community gathering, and cultural traditions.

have preserved these sacred traditions.

**4] Architecture:** Built in traditional Himachali style, the temples feature stone walls and sloping wooden roofs. Interiors are Shiva lingam, adorned with flowers and incense, blending simplicity with natural beauty.

**5] Geography and Climate:** Perched in the Shivalik range, the temples offer stunning views and peaceful surroundings.

- **Summers (April-June):** Pleasant, around 20-30°C.
- **Winters (October-March):** Cool, with occasional snowfall.
- **Monsoons (July-September):** Lush greenery, slippery trails.

**6] The Trek and Natural Beauty:** The trek begins in Arki village, winding through dense pine forests and rocky trails. Along the way, travelers encounter hidden waterfalls and ancient stone pathways, with breathtaking valley views at the summit.

**7] Local Experiences and Activities:**

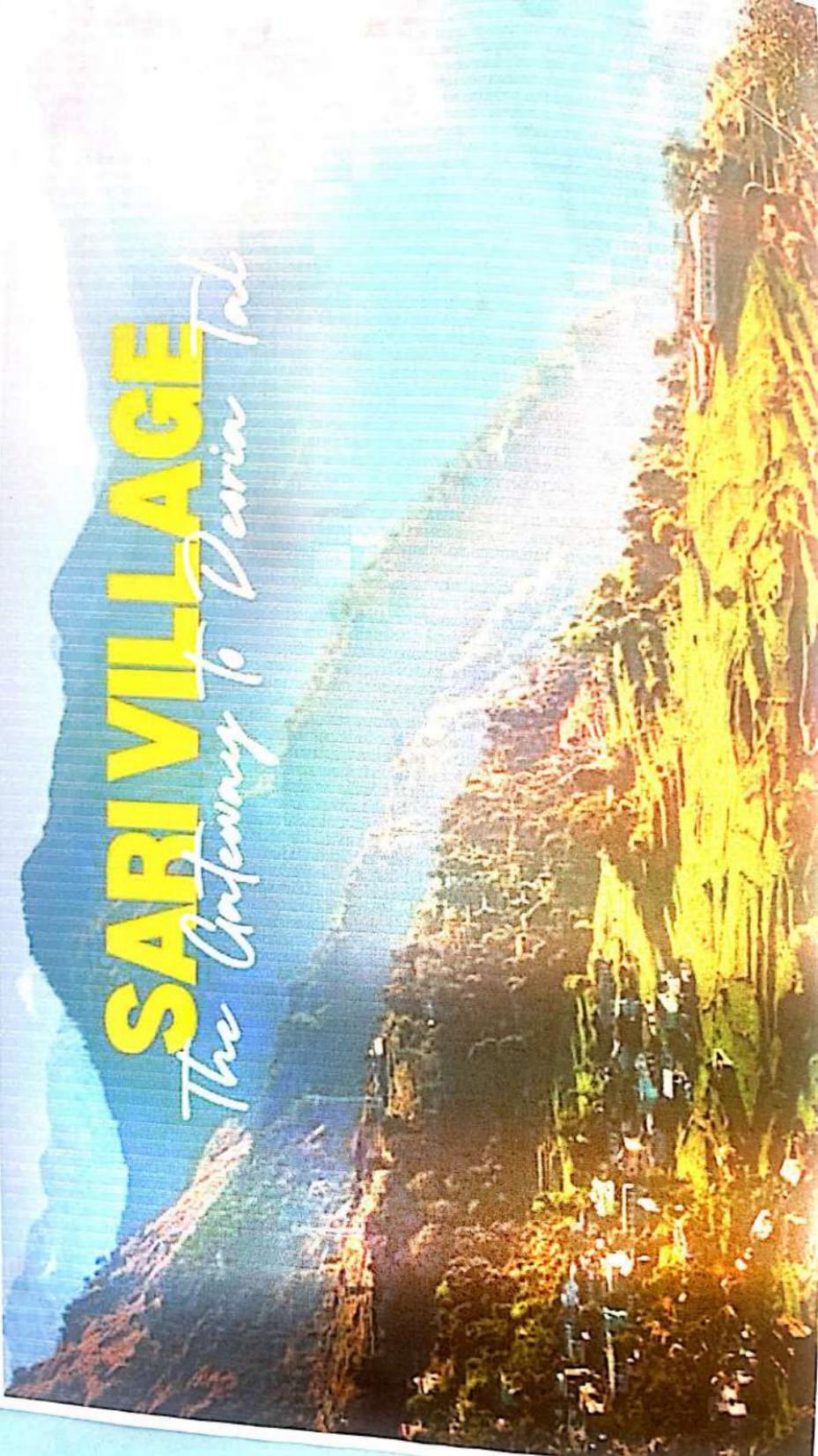
- **Homestays:** Stay with locals for an authentic

- **Community Spirit:** Villagers come together to celebrate festivals, share stories, and preserve the region's rich oral history.

- **Traditional Homes:** Houses are typically built with stone walls and slate roofs, reflecting local architecture.

# SARIVILLAGE

*The Gateway to Devira Tal*



## Sari Village: Unveiling Mysticism and Rural Life

**1] Introduction:** Sari, a quaint village in the Darlaghat Region of Solan District, Himachal Pradesh, offers a captivating blend of nature, spirituality, and mysticism. Folklore, where stories of black magic and supernatural occurrences still echo through the village lanes. The small yet sacred village temple stands as a spiritual beacon, while the villagers lead peaceful lives intertwined with agriculture, faith, and communal harmony.

Sari's unique charm makes it an ideal destination for rural tourism, offering

travelers a rare opportunity to experience traditional village life and unravel the mysteries of the village's spiritual past.

### Characteristics or Attractions of Sari Village:

- **Natural Beauty** - Surrounded by lush green forests, rolling hills, and terraced fields, Sari is a paradise for nature lovers. The Shivalik range and serene landscapes.
- **Agriculture and Livelihood** - Farming is the primary occupation, with locals cultivating wheat, maize, and pulses. Villagers also practice animal husbandry and produce local dairy products.
- **Simple Living & Life in Sari** is peaceful, with villagers following traditional practices. Daily routine revolves around tending to fields, caring for livestock, and participating in spiritual rituals.
- **Close-knit Community** & The village thrives on strong community bonds.

collective celebrations.

• **Mystical Heritage:** The village is renowned for its tales of black magic and mystical practices, which have become an integral part of local folklore.

### 3. Historical and Cultural Background:

- **Ancient Traditions:** Sari's history is steeped in spiritual practices and local beliefs. Generations of villagers have passed stories of supernatural events and protective rituals.
- **Black Magic and Mysticism:** According to the elders, Sari was once a hub for black magic rituals. Some say that ancient shamans performed secret ceremonies under the moonlight sky to control weather patterns, heal the sick, or ward off spirits.

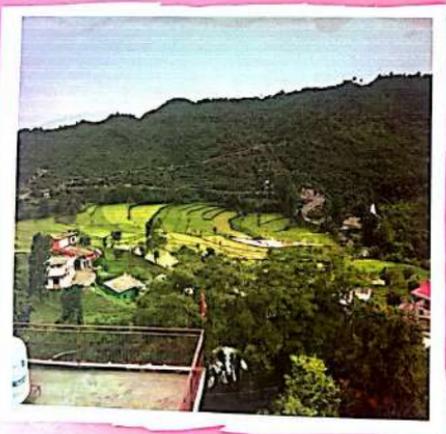
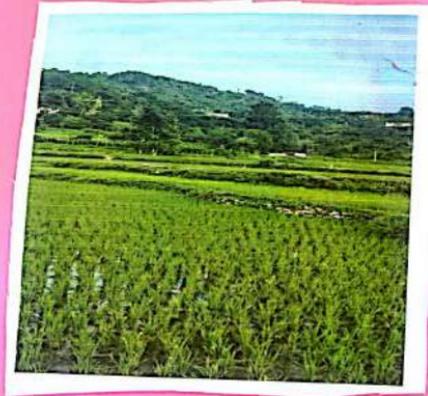
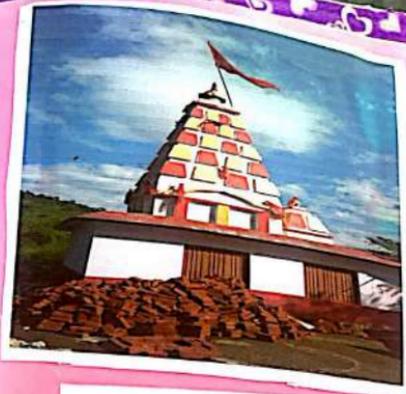
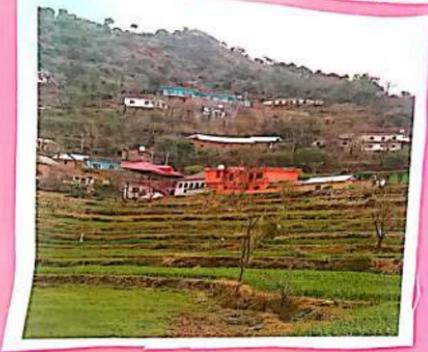
• **Personal Story:** Baba Ram Das, a respected village elder, recalls with a virtual awe as a young boy "The village would draw symbols in the soil, chant mantras and light camphor flames to ward off evil spirits."

...erily in the night wind. It wasn't just a sense of respect that touched our hearts," he said.

• **The Little Temple:** At the heart of the village lies a modest yet revered village temple. This temple serves as the spiritual center, where villagers gather for prayers, seek blessings, and perform rituals believed to protect against misfortunes.

### 4] Geography and Climate:

• **Location:** Nestled in the Shivalik range, Sari offers panoramic views of the surrounding hills and valleys.



## Climate

Summers (April-June): Pleasant, around  $20^{\circ}\text{C}$ , making it ideal for exploring.

Monsoons (July-September): The landscape transforms into lush greenery, though the trails can become slippery.

Winters (October-March): Misty and cool, with temperatures dropping to around  $5^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The fog adds a mystical charm to the village.

## Village Life

**Agricultural Practices:** The villagers practice subsistence farming, using traditional methods handed down through generations. Crops like wheat, corn, and pulses grow in terraced fields.

**Daily Life:** Mornings begin early, with farmers tending to their fields and women preparing meals over mud stoves (Chulhas). Evenings are often spent sharing stories around a communal fire.

**Community Spirit:** Life in Sari is communal. Festivals, marriages, and even farming tasks involve the participation of the entire village.

**Spiritual Tourism:** Visit the village temple, meditate amidst serene surroundings, and learn about protective rituals believed to guard against dark forces.

**Honesty Experience:** Live with local families, savor home-cooked meals, and experience the warmth of Himachali hospitality.

**Nature Walks:** Explore the lush forests and hidden trails around the village, offering glimpses of rare flora and fauna.

**Craft and Souvenir Shopping:** Discover locally made wooden clutches, handwoven baskets, and other traditional crafts.

**Role of Spirituality:** The village temple plays a crucial role in daily life, where prayers are offered not only for personal well-being but also for the prosperity of crops and protection from misfortune.

## Socio-Economic Overview

**Livelihood:** Most villagers rely on agriculture and animal husbandry. Some families earn additional income through handicrafts and local trade.

**Education and Healthcare:** Basic educational facilities exist, but students often travel to nearby villages for higher studies. Healthcare is minimal, with the community relying on traditional remedies and occasional visits from mobile health units.

## Potential For Rural Tourism

Sari Village holds immense potential for sustainable rural tourism, offering experiences such as:

**Cultural Immersion:** Tourists can participate in storytelling sessions about black magic rituals and witness ancient customs firsthand.

**Agricultural Tourism:** Engage in activities like plowing fields, harvesting crops, and learning about traditional farming techniques.

Promoting rural tourism in Sari could not only provide economic benefits to the villagers but also help in preserving its rich cultural heritage and mystical traditions. It would encourage eco-friendly practices and offer tourists an authentic experience of Himachali village life.

## 4] Infrastructure And Accessibility

### Challenges:

- Poor road conditions and limited public transport make accessing these sites difficult.
- Lack of proper signage along hiking trails and village paths.
- Inadequate parking facilities during festivals or tourist season.

## 5] Lack of Awareness and Promotion

### Challenges:

- Limited awareness about these destinations beyond local communities.
- Absence of organized tours or boards or online presence to attract travelers.

## 6] Environmental Impact

### Challenges:

- Rising leaf litter during festivals and tourist seasons leads to littering and disruption of the natural ecosystem.
- Unregulated herbivory can damage trails and surroundings like flora.

## 7] Preservation of Cultural Heritage

### Challenges:

- Risk of losing traditional stories, rituals, and architecture due to modernization.
- Inadequate measures to protect historical sites from weathering and vandalism.

## 8] Community Involvement and Economic Benefits

### Challenges:

- Local wage often not directly involved in tourism development, leading to a lack of ownership and motivation.
- Limited opportunities for visitors to benefit economically from tourism.

## 9] Accommodation and Amenities

### Challenges:

- Limited accommodation options like homestays or guesthouses, forcing tourists to stay in nearby towns.
- Absence of clean restrooms, drinking water facilities, and seating areas during trekking trails and at village sites.

# Observation

The rural tourism landscape in 'Sari Village', 'Arki Fort', and 'Lutru-1' offers a unique blend of natural beauty, cultural richness, and historical significance. These sites hold deep cultural and spiritual value, attracting pilgrims and history enthusiasts alike. Local folklore, magic practices in Sari Village, and legends surrounding Lord Shiva add mystic charm that could be further explored through guided stories and cultural events. The local community plays a crucial role in these activities, but there is limited involvement in tourism management. Villages are warm and hospitable, offering authentic rural experiences, yet they lack training to serve as tourism ambassadors. Infrastructures and accessibility are major challenges, with road conditions and trekking paths needing attention to ensure safer access. Basic facilities like signage, rest areas, and waste disposal mechanisms are scarce, affecting the visitor experience. Increased littering, especially during festivals, has led to environmental disturbance to natural environment, while conservation efforts and sustainable tourism practices are minimal. Despite these challenges, tourism has great economic potential, with opportunities for homestays, local handicrafts, and guided tours. However, limited marketing and local presence hinder wider recognition.

# Conclusion

This report, which includes a comprehensive analysis of rural tourism in Himachal Pradesh and a case study of the Arki region, encompassing Arki Fort, Savi Village, and Luty-Mutry, showcases the immense potential of tourism in driving economic growth, preserving cultural heritage, and conserving natural resources. This captivating region seamlessly blends natural beauty, cultural significance, and rural tourism infrastructure, rendering it an ideal destination for tourists. Savi Village's success as a model of rural tourism can shine as an example, boasting an array of accommodation options, transportation, and amenities, while its eco-based tourism initiatives provide visitors with immersive experiences of rural life.

The conservation of natural resources, including forests, rivers, and wildlife, is vital in maintaining the region's natural beauty and attractiveness. The historic Arki Fort stands as a testament to the region's rich cultural heritage, offering a unique glimpse into the region's past. The preservation and maintenance of this fort are crucial in safeguarding the region's cultural legacy for future generations. Luty-Mutry, a picturesque