



Gulmarg Powder Sessions - 2020 Session Dates & Costs

Thank you for your interest in The Adventure Project's 2020 Gulmarg Powder Sessions program. Gulmarg is a small town in northern India in the Pir Panjal range, one of 6 mountain ranges that make up the Himalayas. This is the first mountain ranges to be hit by the storms that sweep across the Indus Plains and needless to say, Gulmarg receives a ton of snow, on average 14m per year. Skiing Magazine recently called Gulmarg one of the top 10 snowiest resorts in the world.

Luckily though, there is a gondola to access all this snow and huge amounts of terrain; one of the highest in the world (topping out at 13054ft or 3,890m). From there, 4,260 ft vertical powder runs (1,300m vertical) await! A busy day on the mountain is maybe 200 to 300 people at the end of January, start of February but later in the season (end of February and into March) then those numbers to decrease to around 50 people on the mountain. With the low numbers and size of the terrain in Gulmarg, if you know where to go, you can always find untracked snow.

We have 9 days to ride as much untouched snow as possible, before heading back to Srinagar for the last night's relaxing stay on the houseboats on Dal Lake (where the Beatles used to hang out). This will be a trip like no other! Watch this video if you'd like to get a feel for what a trip to Gulmarg looks like - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llBiBVNv1aQ>.

2020 Dates

Session 1: 23rd February - 4th March 2020.

Session 2: 6th – 16th March 2020.

Custom dates can be arranged on request.

Pricing (per person, \$USD, includes breakfast/dinner)

Rosewood Hotel - Max 4 (11 day) – Single \$4,115, Double \$3,835.

Deposit

The deposit is \$500 USD per person and is strictly non-refundable. By sending us your deposit, you agree to our ***Terms and Conditions*** (see additional sheet).

Final Payment

The final balance must be paid by November 1st, 2019.

Inclusions:

- The 11-day program has 9 night's accommodation in Gulmarg, 1 night on the houseboats and 9 days of guided skiing.
- All breakfasts and dinners in Gulmarg.
- Greeting at Srinagar Airport by Adventure Project representative.
- Transfers to and from Srinagar Airport to Gulmarg.
- Comprehensive avalanche safety training and pre-departure Gulmarg weather/snowpack updates.
- 2 guides per group; 1 Adventure Project guide and 1 local Kashmiri guide per group. Max 4 guests per group.
- Final night's accommodation on the houseboats on Dal Lake, including dinner and breakfast.
- Access to deep discounts on equipment from our partners with The Adventure Project.

Exclusions:

- Airfares (you need to fly to Delhi and then Srinagar).
- Indian Tourist Visa.
- Comprehensive travel insurance (must be covered for off-piste skiing and visiting Kashmir).
- Taxi rides back to Gulmarg when skiing outside of the resort (Max \$10).
- Lunches, snacks or beverages (lunches approx \$5 USD per day).
- Weekly lift tickets (2019 prices were approx \$140 USD per week).
- Rental equipment.
- Additional tours in Srinagar or Delhi.
- Overnight accommodation in Delhi.
- Gratuities for The Adventure Project guides and staff.

Suitability

You need to be an advanced to expert skier or boarder who is comfortable riding double black terrain in variable snow conditions. We ride slopes typically in the 30 to 40-degree range in the backcountry which is potential avalanche terrain. All guests need to have avalanche safety gear (shovel, probe, transceiver, airbag or avalung) and have uphill capability (fat skis/touring bindings for skiers, splitboards or powder boards and snow shoes/ascension skis for snowboarders).

You should have a decent level of fitness and be capable of skiing and riding above 13,600ft. We might also be hiking/skinning at these same altitudes too. We will move at the pace of the group and nobody will be left behind. Please have a decent supply of water with you and energy bars or snacks are recommended.

We operate in small groups, with a maximum of 4 guests to 2 guides (1 Western and 1 local guide), in each group. We have a comprehensive avalanche safety training program that we put all our guests through, it's fun and you will learn a lot. We ensure that all guests are at a high level of preparedness before we take them into the backcountry for the first time.

Avalanche Safety Training Program

Any group operating in the backcountry needs to be responsible for self-rescue. We put all of our groups through our comprehensive avalanche safety training program. That will include: initial indoor theory session and equipment familiarization; basic transceiver usage; probing; strategic shoveling; advanced single and multiple rescuer practice; snow pits and stability tests. When we are riding in potential avalanche terrain, we follow protocols to limit group exposure to potential avalanche risk.

Logistics:

Visas

Most guests should be able to apply for the new e-Visa. This is a tourist visa that you can apply online for (only use the official Indian Government website, you should not need to use any intermediary agents, they will charge you extra!). The link to the official website is here at <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html>. This visa is now valid for 60 days and you can apply for it a maximum of 120 days prior to departure. You need a minimum of 4 days for it to be processed. Do not apply for your visa too late! It is your responsibility to check the current regulations for your passport and obtain your visa.

Flights

Fly to India via Delhi International Airport (Indira Gandhi International Airport – DEL). If your flight arrives in the evening, then you will need to overnight in Delhi. Make sure you pick up your bags in Delhi when you get off your international flight.

There are several good hotels at the new Aerocity complex about 10 minutes' drive from the airport. We have stayed at the Red Fox, the Lemon Tree and the Pullman Hotel (listed from cheapest to most expensive). All are good choices for 1 night, depending on budget.

Then you will take a short connecting flight (on the day the program starts) to Srinagar (Sheikh ul Alam Airport - SXR), the capital of Kashmir. Choose a seat on the right side of the plane for the best views of the Himalayas. Jet Airways, Air India, SpiceJet, GoAir, IndiGo, Vistara and AirAsia are the main carriers. Please co-ordinate your domestic flights with The Adventure Project first before you book them so that we can make sure that you arrive in Srinagar at a similar time to our other guests.

It is recommended that you book both the international and domestic airfares on the same ticket to reduce the chances of getting charged excess baggage rates when checking in for your domestic flights. Please be advised though that Indian airlines love to try and charge excess baggage rates even when you are supposed to be traveling on an international ticket, so be prepared for them to try and charge you excess baggage in Delhi and Srinagar. It is a constant frustration! Air India seems to be the most relaxed when it comes to excess baggage, in our experience (with Jet Airways being the worst), but we have not used all the airlines on this list.

Airport Pickup

A representative of The Adventure Project will be waiting to pick you up outside of arrivals at Srinagar International Airport (SXR). There will only be one scheduled pickup each day, so if your flight is late, then you might have to take a taxi up to the resort. It would cost around \$80 USD one way, for the ride if you have to take your own taxi. It's 58km to get to Gulmarg takes about 2.5 hours to get to the resort, depending on the traffic and snow conditions.

Hotels

Our final option for 2020 is the [Rosewood Hotel](#). This is a new luxury property near the Pine Palace/Alpine Ridge cluster of hotels, so a short ski down to get to the gondola at the start of the day. The rooms are large and very comfortable. The food is tasty and the staff friendly and attentive to your needs. The hotel does have WiFi but you might consider purchasing a SIM card if you want a stronger signal.

Laundry

The Rosewood Hotel has an inhouse laundry service that is reasonable priced.

Internet/Cell Phone

Kashmir has a different cell phone service to the rest of India so it is unlikely that your foreign cell phone will work on roaming in Gulmarg or Srinagar. If you need reliable cell phone and internet

coverage in Gulmarg then consider purchasing a SIM. JIO seems to work the best. Our local guides can help you purchase one.

Credit Cards/Cash

Most of the major purchases are already covered in your package rate, but having some cash would be beneficial (\$300 or more), to pay for lunches, extra taxi rides etc. You can change money at Delhi International Airport when you arrive or depart for Srinagar. You can also exchange money in Srinagar. There are a couple of ATM's in Gulmarg (near the market, near the gondola, in Tangmarg), but they can get depleted with notes so are not always reliable. You should normally be able to purchase your weekly lift pass with your credit card, but sometimes their machine can be down temporarily.

End of Trip

On the second to last day of your trip, we will be leaving for Srinagar and our stay on the houseboats on Dal Lake. This is a great way to unwind and finish off the trip, staying on a beautiful houseboat on a lake overlooking the Himalayas. It should not be missed! Here is a video of our favorite houseboat, the Bul-Bul which we stay on every year -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0l4zM07K5yA&feature=youtu.be>.

It is also possible to do a tour around the old city in Srinagar to really meet the locals (not included in the price) and go shopping at the many rug stores close to the lake. It is also recommended to take lunch at one of the restaurants on Dal Lake before enjoying the 10-minute *Shikara* (water taxi) ride to the houseboat. Dinner and breakfast are included.

If you want, you can get up early (around 6:30am) to take a scenic Shikara ride to the floating vegetable market where local vegetable growers trade their vegetables to marketeers. It is fun and fascinating to watch (not included in price). You can watch a quick video of the experience here at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JABPkFEd9VM&feature=youtu.be>. Then after breakfast, we will leave for the airport and departure back to Delhi.

Itinerary

Depart Home Country for Delhi (DEL), India. You will likely need to overnight in Delhi. We recommend the [Red Fox Hotel](#) (for those on a budget) in the Aerocity complex near International Airport and Terminal 3, but there are many other convenient, affordable choices in that area.

Day 1 – Depart Delhi for Srinagar International Airport (SXR) in the morning. Choose a flight that guarantees arrival at Srinagar Airport around noon. Greeting by Adventure Project staff at airport. Transfer via private transportation to Gulmarg, approximate 2.5 hour journey. Often, we stop in Srinagar

at Dal Lake for lunch which would add more time to the journey to Gulmarg. Then we check into the hotel, settle in and then indoor avalanche safety presentation after dinner.

Day 2 – On-snow avalanche safety training. The morning begins with a comprehensive outdoor avalanche safety training session, followed by skiing and the formulation of groups. For the next 8 days expect to skiing in one of the most awe-inspiring destinations you will ever see with some of the most renowned powder skiing on earth. From the endless Himalayan vistas off the top of Mount Apharwat, to the skiing the Shark's Fin, touring to the Big White or skiing some of the best tree runs to towns like Drang (descending 5800ft of altitude), Tangmarg or skiing to the Baba Reshi Shrine through one of the steeper and longer tree runs available. This trip offers an amazing cultural experience as you get to interact with the friendly people of Kashmir.

Day 3 – 9 Ski/ride Gulmarg.

Day 10 – Ski/ride or Depart Gulmarg for Srinagar and overnight on the houseboats on Dal Lake overlooking the Himalayas. Most people choose to leave early for Srinagar, so that they can get some shopping in (not to be missed!) and maximize their time on the houseboats. If you don't want to have a cultural day, then you can have an optional $\frac{3}{4}$ day of skiing instead.

Day 11 – Optional 6:30am tour to floating vegetable markets on Dal Lake (not included but highly recommended). AM departure to Srinagar airport in private transportation. Fly to Delhi. Most international flights depart Delhi either late that night or very early in the morning the next day.

Contact

If you have any questions, then please contact the owner (Matt Appleford) at matt@theadventureproject.net. For more information, please see www.theadventureproject.net. We hope to see you in the Himalayas this winter.