



THOSE LAZY-HAZY DAYS OF SUMMER

Ramgarh, the fruit bowl of Kumaon, Uttarakhand, offers some of the most stunning and untrammelled views of the Nanda Devi range in the central Himalayas. Succulent peaches, fragrant apples and juicy oranges are yielded by the rich mountain soil here, offering visitors many pleasant moments in the orchards scattered around this picturesque hill town. Delightful mountain trails lead to shady nooks in forested enclaves filled with scented breezes fresh as the morning dew straight off the mountains to soothe and calm your

city-frayed nerves. Little wonder that Ramgarh has become a favourite summertime retreat for those living in the punishing heat of the northern plains.

Nainital, one of India's most popular hill stations, continues to be a burgeoning hub of summer delights. Its iconic lake, with its pretty temple, and the flats are the major entertainment and activity hubs in town. Boat riding on the lake and taking in the cool mountain breeze and beautiful scenery is of primary interest to those who just want to chill. The more adventurous set off on hikes which reward them

with gorgeous views of snow-capped mountains, and forested trails filled with piny scents and joyous with birdsong. Shopping options include cosy woollies—shawls, sweaters, caps and beautiful Kumaoni tweeds. Fresh fruit jams, pickles, hive-fresh honey and the popular *buransh* (rhododendron squash) make for great presents for the folks back home. Nearby Pangot offers a lovely diversion for birdwatching and nature walks. If you have the inclination, the gorgeous environs of Corbett National Park are within easy driving distance. Since the game park

is open till mid-June, you might even be able to take off on a jeep safari and it's quite likely you will see a tiger; the big cats come out during the hot months to cool down and quench their thirst at the watering holes.

The historic twin towns of Mathura and Vrindavan are year-round favourites for the pious at heart. Holi marks the beginning of summer; the sleepy pilgrim towns attract visitors from all over the world for this colour- and revelry-filled annual cultural extravaganza. This is Braj Bhumi—the land of Krishna, god of love, whose devotees



are scattered around the globe. Any time of the year is good to explore its riverside environs.

TARADALE COTTAGE, RAMGARH

Set in a delightful garden, Taradale cottage in Ramgarh offers a perfect excuse to indulge in all the joys of those lazy-hazy days of summer. The homey ambience and laid-back comforts make it the ideal place for relaxing in the lap of nature—the great antidote for those polluting toxins and stress of big-city life. This is no vast sprawl of a city hotel...it's a cosy hill town cottage which cocoons you with friendly service, charming views and delicious meals. The colonial nuances of the cottage add their own bit to the intimate atmosphere of this lovely hillside retreat. The cottage still

has a charming English Attic and a Duplex Suite with Victorian fretwork. Small doesn't mean there is any compromise when it comes to hygiene, service or mod-cons. Taradale does its bit for the community too by roping in local talent while keeping the measure of its eco-friendly

agenda well in tune with the smooth running of this lovely homestay. You can enjoy meal times in the typical English cottage-styled dining room with its warm interiors, or outdoors in the courtyard with its cosy seating surrounded by lush greenery. Located off the beaten path, it affords the kind of privacy you might be looking for, yet at the same time it offers quick access to the town. Picnics and walks offer wonderful opportunities to explore Taradale's picturesque environs.

SHERVANI HOSPITALITIES

Delhi and Nainital, two popular hubs...one the capital of India, and the other a mountain retreat and 'the Queen of the Hills'. And in both you will find the name of Shervani Hospitalities. The Delhi-based Shervani Hospitalities has made its name in mid-segment hotels and the restaurant and catering business. Comfort and excellent services go hand in hand with this well-known brand wherever it ventures. The Shervani Hotel, a boutique establishment in Delhi's posh Sunder Nagar has been catering to the mid-budget tourist for decades now.

Readily accessible from both the old city and Lutyens' Delhi it continues to be an important addition to the city's portfolio of hotels. It allows quick access to the commercial, entertainment and shopping areas in both. For business travellers, the Shervani Hotel in Nehru Place makes the perfect base to conduct business, given the city's well-known traffic issues. It provides easy access to this burgeoning commercial hub and the industrial area of Okhla.

In the hill station of Nainital, the Shervani is a well-established option for those looking for a reasonably priced, clean and nicely situated hotel. For corporates it's a nice little hill retreat as well. The restaurant and catering business is another field in which the Shervani name is making a mark in its inimitable way. The group has had great success with its highly-popular Rodeos—Delhi's first Tex-Mex restaurant—located in Connaught Place, Delhi's iconic commercial and cultural hub. A new venture from the Shervani groups is ODC, which handles parties and events along with catering in the best of hospitality traditions.

