WAYFARER

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EDITOR'S DISPATCH

For most of India, the monsoon is not a season for travellers to avoid, but one that arrives whether we are ready or not. It brings relief, and sometimes trouble. This month we have tried to write about it the way people who live with it do: with respect, with some planning, and with a little patience.

You will find a good deal of practical advice in these pages: what to carry, which places to avoid when the rain is at its heaviest, and why a flexible booking is worth more than a cheap one. We have also tried to say plainly where the rain makes travel risky. Landslides, floods and flooded roads are real, and an official alert is worth more than any travel blog.

- Gitanjali Gautam

LEAD STORY



The monsoon is a season, not a problem: Kerala

The south-west monsoon reaches India through Kerala, usually in the first days of June. For travellers who plan for it, it is one of the most rewarding times to be there.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Meghalaya in the rains: root bridges and rules of the road
The Khasi Hills are among the wettest places on Earth, and the living root bridges grow best in the wet. How to visit them without harming them.

The Konkan and the Western Ghats, slowly, in the rains
A coast that closes its beaches for the monsoon, and a mountain range that does the opposite. How to enjoy both without fighting the weather.

Bali in June: the dry season, and the quieter coasts
A calendar correction first: Bali's rains are in the cooler months, and June is the start of high season. Here is how to enjoy it without the crush.

Midsummer in Sweden: maypoles, herring and the longest light
Sweden's Midsummer Eve falls on 19 June this year. Here is what to expect, and why the best place to be is a village.

The Rainy-Season Travel Kit
A one-page list to save, print or share: what to carry, and what to check.

Prices, timings, permits and visa notes are approximate - please verify before booking.

COMING UP (DATES APPROXIMATE - VERIFY)

Hemis Festival
Hemis Monastery, near Leh, Ladakh · 24–25 June 2026 (set by the Tibetan lunar calendar)

Dree Festival
Ziro Valley and Apatani villages, Arunachal Pradesh · Village rituals 4 July, main celebration 5 July, concluding 7 July 2026

Rath Yatra
Puri, Odisha · 16 July 2026 (main chariot procession); return journey on 24 July

Nehru Trophy Boat Race
Punnamada Lake, Alappuzha, Kerala · August 2026 (traditionally the second Saturday of August; confirm the exact date)

ONE PRACTICAL TIP

In the monsoon, treat every closure as final and every alert as real. A day lost to rain is cheaper than a day lost to a landslide.

YOUR TURN

What is the best rain you have ever travelled in? Reply and tell us — we may feature your answer.

Read the full issue: travaah.com/magazine/2026-06/