

TRAVEL WITH THE GIRLS

Don't have anyone to go on vacation with?

Makemytrip.com's special packages for women are here to save the day, says **Rhea Dhanbhoora**

There was a time not so long ago when women travelled without feeling as unsafe as they do now. Of course, we always had to be careful and there were certain places that were best avoided, but these days, most women think twice before they venture out on a holiday alone. But, Makemytrip.com wants to make it easier for women to travel in a safe and secure way. They're offering a range of packages that help women vacation without the hassle of arranging for flights and hotels. And, single mums don't have to worry about leaving their children behind, because they can now bring their children along. The packages currently include trips to Kashmir, Bhutan, Ladakh and the North-East. Take a look before you plan your next vacation:

>> You can make new friends with Makemytrip.com's customised group travel packages



Shutterstock

KASHMIR

They call it Charismatic Kashmir and offer standard as well as deluxe packages. Kashmir isn't high on our list of safe places for women to travel to alone, so this is a great opportunity to visit the scenic destination. The package includes one night on a houseboat in Srinagar, one night at a hotel in Gulmarg, two nights at a hotel in Pahalgam and two nights at a hotel in Srinagar. You also get a chance to go on a shikara ride, sightsee, visit an orphanage and a local handicraft center. There are several dates available in August and September, so book quickly before they fill up.

Price ₹36,999 onwards

BHUTAN

A holiday filled with sightseeing, picnic lunches and the option to try your hand at rafting — there's a lot to do and see in Bhutan and the best part is that you won't have to worry about your itinerary. They'll organise a visit to the Fertility Temple, Tiger's Nest

monastery and even squeeze in some local shopping so you don't miss out on much. With a female guide and a lesson on local dishes, as well as one on how to wear Bhutan's national attire (the Kira), the offer includes meals and airfare. If you're looking for a little extra, they also have premium and luxury packages on offer. Book in a hurry for this one, since packages are only on till July.

Price ₹37,999 onwards

LADAKH

With just one package available for this seven-night stay in Ladakh, you'll be treated to five nights in Leh, one night in Nubra Valley and one night in Pangong. With excursions, such as those to Sham Valley and meals included in your package, as well as an overnight stay at a camp near Pangong lake, we wouldn't miss out on this opportunity. There's no luxury option on this trip, but you will get the chance to have tea with a local women's organisation to learn about local life, take a Tangkha painting class, visit a local school and shop your heart out.

Price ₹39,999

NORTH-EAST

There's a lot that's been said about relaxation and beauty that you'll see once you enter the North-East, but it's not recommended you travel there without company. That's why this package is one of our favourites on the list. The seven-day getaway includes three nights in Gangtok, one night in Pelling and two nights in Darjeeling and includes meditation and spa sessions, visits to the lakes and local villages as well as a tea-tasting session.

Price ₹42,999

* The North-East, Ladakh and Bhutan trips start from Delhi while the Kashmir trip starts from either Mumbai, Delhi or Ahmedabad.

A FEW FEATURES

Here are a few of the features that make these packages tempting:

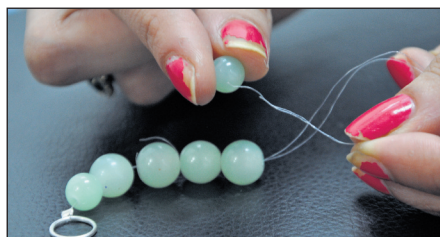
- The hotels are selected keeping in mind safety and security of women.
- All destinations have lady tour managers who will be available for all your needs.
- They take care of everything — from finding a flight to organising the most affordable hotel stay.
- You don't need to have a group ready as they can arrange that as well.

<< DIY JEWELLERY: RHINESTONE BROOCH & BEAD NECKLACE

Rhea Dhanbhoora tries her hand at the popular rhinestone brooch and bead necklace and shows you how to recreate it at home



YOU WILL NEED: Beading wire, beads in the colour of your choice, a brooch, crimp beads, jump rings, a chain clasp, wire cutters, crimp pliers, round nosed and flat nosed pliers.



STEP 1

Attach your beading wire to a jump ring and secure it with a crimp bead and jump ring, using the crimp pliers and a flat nosed plier. String beads on to your wire, making sure to measure it to the length you want first. Repeat with three more strands, so you have four strands of beads.



STEP 2

Connect the jump rings at the end of the strands, two at a time, with another jump ring. Using your pliers, seal them shut and then knot the ends to hold them securely.



STEP 3

Attach the bottom jump rings to your brooch. You can attach them at an angle or straight. Play around with it depending on what style of necklace you want.



STEP 4

Connect a lobster clasp to one end of your necklace, tighten the jump rings, trim any loose ends and you're done! We suggest wearing it at an angle.