***MY UNFORGETTABLE JOURNEYS***

***Ooty: The Hill Station Queen***

My journey begins in the lush green hills of Ooty situated in the Western Ghats of Tamil Nadu. Commonly referred to as "Queen of Hill Stations," Ooty greets us with an invigorating climate and breathtaking vistas. On this journey, we get into Nilgiri Mountain Railway which is well known as a UNESCO World Heritage site. As you descend on winding roads through tea estates, thick woods and waterfalls, you will smell eucalyptus. We travel uphill along with it until we reach a small town called Ooty. At Botanical Gardens, we have enjoyed beautiful flowers which are amazingly colourful while at Ooty Lake; our boat sails peacefully through the silent hills around.

***Kashmir: Heaven on Earth***

From the cool climes of Ooty, we travel north to beautiful Kashmir, a place commonly referred to as "Paradise on Earth." This is like an artist’s dreamland with snow-capped mountains, crystal-clear lakes and green meadows. In Srinagar, we stayed in a typical houseboat that drifts gently on Dal Lake where awakening is accompanied by water noises and the sight of floating gardens. The Himalayas reflecting back from the lake’s face when we are rowed in shikara make us crazy. We go to Mughal Gardens with terraced lawns, and fountains falling one above another and drive up to Gulmarg where we have a thrilling ride through a gondola railway system that takes us to Mount Apharwat peak with its panoramic sights of the surrounding wilderness.

***Jaipur: Pink City***

My next journey to Jaipur, the vibrant capital city of Rajasthan also known as the “Pink City” due to its characteristic buildings painted pink in colour. Jaipur is a city full of palaces, forts, and lively markets which are all symbols of royalty. Our first stop was at Amber Fort where we rode on elephants which took us right up inside its grand entrance. The intricate mirror work and ornate architecture left us speechless once inside it. The City Palace combines elements from both Rajasthani style as well as Mughal design giving you an idea of how opulent the Maharajas lived their lives here.

***Valley of Flowers: A Wonderland for Flowers.***

It is a UNESCO World Heritage site in Uttarakhand known for its marvellous wildflowers. This valley lies hidden in the Garhwal Himalayas and can only be reached on foot. The journey will involve walking over hard stones and going up green slopes. The moment we enter it, millions of flowers that have grown to full bloom make it colourful by having many red, yellow, blue or purple shades on the land. Wildflower scents fill the air while we are around various rare and unique species that grow nowhere on this planet apart from here. The scenic wonderland is majestically guarded by the Himalayan Mountains’ peaks, bringing unparalleled beauty and peace.

In conclusion, our journey remains vivid with the memories of peaceful hills in Ooty, heavenly Kashmir, royal Jaipur and the amazing Valley of Flowers. Each place has its own story to tell as each one has its unique charm and character which together signify the diversity and mystery of India’s natural beauty.