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The largest province of Kashmir Valley is Leh-Ladakh, but this is the barely-known identity of this hilly town. Actually, Ladakh is famous for its unique topography and extreme climatic variations. Surrounded by some of the world's highest mountain ranges and snowy glaciers and shimmering rivers & waterfalls, this beautiful territory has a unique charm that always impresses a visitor. Alongside, tempting monasteries, which portray the interesting Buddhist cultures and inspiring religiousness, give visitors a delightful experience in Ladakh. Walk a few miles in Ladakh, and you find a monastery where monks are saying prayers, practicing yoga exertion and apportioning Buddhism.

The Buddhist cloisters have a significant impact on lifestyle and cultures in Ladakh. Almost everyone in the region is associated with a Buddhist group, and follows a life accordingly. As stated earlier, Ladakh has many monasteries all around. Some most captivating/famous among them are:

Alchi Monastery: Also known as Alchi Gompa, it's one of the earliest monasteries in Ladakh. Built on lowlands near the small village of Saspol, this rambling monastery has six main buildings with a main assembly hall and three tiered shrines. The Sum-stek, the oldest temple in Alchi Gompa, is the major attraction for visitors, surrounded by wooden pillars and engraved woodwork of mythological animals. A seated Buddha with the Green Tara (the savior) looks astonishing in the middle of the cloister. Aesthetic beauty and soothing serenity in the monastery is truly impressive.

Diskit Monastery: Well-known for its brainy murals, this 350 years old monastery is nestled in the Nurba Valley at caravan route from Leh to Kashgar. Surrounded scenery of lofty hills dazzles every visitor to this religious site. Also, the way which the visitors have to pass through to reach this monastery is full of wonders. And once you're there, the gorgeous Buddha statues, amazing architecture designs and a unique atmosphere full of tranquility and religiousness leave you spellbound. Visit Diskit Monastery to witness awe-inspiring Morning Prayer ceremony.

Hemis Monastery: This beautiful religious residence was erected by the king Singe Nampar Gyalva, a great Buddhism protagonist, in 1672. It's located in a small town Hemis, around 40km South of Leh, and is one of the richest monasteries in the Ladakh region. The king Singe Nampar filled it with golden statues, stupas and beautiful precious stones brought from different places including Tibet. The lamas in Hemis monastery are from Ladakhi Royal families. The monastery has a courtyard, 60 meters long and 18 meters wide, in the center with four poles fixed at equal distance in the ground. This is the place where Monastic dance take place during Hemis Festival in July.

Matho Gumpa: it's the only monastery in Ladakh that represents the Sakya order of Tibetan Buddhism. Situated on the top of a ridge, about 29km south of Leh, Matho Gumpa offers spectacular mountain views and an unmatched surrounding beauty. It was established in 16th century by Tungpa Dorje. The monastery has a beautifully built central courtyard, artistically designed temples and captivating murals of the guardians on the entrance verandah. The painting of the Four-Headed Sarvavid (the Teaching Buddha) at the right entrance wall looks simply stunning.

Besides the above mentioned names, Phuktal Monastery, Phyang Gompa Sankar Gompa and Thiksey Monastery are some must-visit places if you wish to explore astounding cultures of Ladakh. Take a Leh Ladakh tour package and enjoy the best of Ladakh tourism with no hassle at all.

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[Aanchal Gupta](#) - About Author:

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