WAYFARER

1 MARCH 2026 · VOL. 1 · NO. 3 · NEWSLETTER

EDITOR'S DISPATCH

There is a short window each year when a place is at its most photographed, and a longer one, either side, when it is at its most itself. March is a month for noticing the difference.

This issue chases blossoms, but we have tried to do so with some restraint. Blossom sites are popular for good reasons and also risk being loved to death, so alongside the pretty places you will find a short guide to visiting lightly, and stories of people whose work keeps these landscapes going: the divers of Jeju, a Sikkim farming policy, the growers behind a famous tulip garden, and the journalist who dreamed up the cherry trees of Washington.

- Gitanjali Gautam, Editor-in-Chief

LEAD STORY



Istanbul to Cappadocia: a spring route

Two cities of stone, six hundred kilometres apart. How to link them in March without falling out of love with either.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Sikkim in March: monasteries and the first rhododendrons

A small Himalayan state with big views, old gompas and a flower season that starts low and climbs.

Holi in Braj, and quieter ways to meet the spring

Holi falls on 4 March in 2026. Where to find the famous celebrations, where to find calmer ones, and how to take part with consent.

Jeju in March: yellow fields, a volcano and the sea women

South Korea's southern island is where spring arrives first. A short guide to a volcanic landscape and a living tradition.

Washington's cherry blossoms: how to see them without the crush

The National Cherry Blossom Festival runs from 20 March to 12 April 2026. Bloom is a forecast, so plan around the festival, not a single day.

Travel insurance, explained

What it usually covers, what it often does not, and what to read before you pay.

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

COMING UP (DATES APPROXIMATE - VERIFY)

Holi (Holika Dahan and Rangwali Holi)
Mathura–Vrindavan (Braj), Uttar Pradesh, and across India · Holika Dahan 3 March; Holi 4 March 2026

Hola Mohalla
Anandpur Sahib, Punjab · March 2026, usually the day after Holi (confirm with the organisers)

Chapchar Kut
Aizawl, Mizoram · Week-long from 9 March 2026; main day reported as 13 March (holiday listings vary)

Tulip Garden Srinagar
Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir · Opened 16 March 2026 per the administration; the season usually runs to mid-April

ONE PRACTICAL TIP

Treat bloom dates as forecasts. Plan a few days either side of the expected peak, and have a second place in mind.

YOUR TURN

Where have you seen spring arrive? Reply and tell us; we may feature your answer.

Read the full issue: travaah.com/magazine/2026-03/

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