

BAGINI GLACIER TREK

Fact & Info

INTERESTING FACTS/INFORMATION ABOUT THE PLACE

Nanda Devi National Park

The Nanda Devi National Park is situated around the Nanda Devi peak, in Uttarakhand and has been inscribed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Within the Park lies the Nanda Devi Sanctuary that is a towering ring of peaks ranging between 6,000 to 7,500 meters high. This is the legendary ring that encompasses the Nanda Devi peak and makes it extremely difficult to summit. The Sanctuary is further divided into the Outer and the Inner Sanctuary with the river Rishi Ganga flowing through a deep gorge from the Inner ring to the outer Sanctuary where it meets the Dhauri Ganga.

This virtually impassable ring can best be approached from the lower height (13,000 feet) Outer Sanctuary region in the West, which is also home to the Changabang Glacier and the Bagini Glacier.

Dronagiri Peak and Village

Dronagiri (or Dunagiri) Peak has a steep face that rises sharply into the sky with part of it looking as if it has been chopped off. There is a famous legend about the peak, associated with Lord Hanuman and his quest for the Sanjivani herb.

It is said that when Lord Hanuman was sent to search for the Sanjivani herb to help cure Lakhsman's wounds, he landed in the Dronagiri village where he met an old lady who gave him directions to the peak and where to find the herb. Hanuman found the herb but instead of only picking it up, he sheared off half of the peak, giving it the unique shape that it has now, and took it to Lanka so that there would be enough supplies to cure wounded soldiers as well. Seeing their sacred mountain being defiled in such a manner, the past residents of the Dronagiri village refused to pray to Lord Hanuman. However over time, the villagers have now reconciled and this is no longer the case. There is also a legend that every year a monkey arrives near the village inexplicably (since there are no monkeys in the vicinity) and despite attempts to find out its whereabouts, it seems to disappear again for a year.

Changabang Peak

Changabang Peak is part of the peaks that form the northeast outer wall of the Nanda Devi sanctuary and is an extremely steep and rocky peak. While it is lower in height as compared to its immediate neighbor Mt. Kalanka and also most of the peaks surrounding it, the peak immediately draws attention with its striking steep profile that makes it stand out among giants. It also has a reputation of being an extremely difficult peak to summit with all routes being quite technical.

Rudraprayag

En route to Joshimath, we come across five holy confluences (Panch Prayag) of the Alaknanda river (that later on forms the river Ganga). Among these five confluences, perhaps the most popular is Rudraprayag (where the Mandakini river joins the Alaknanda river). It is known not only in legends but also in popular English literature, having found mention in Jim Corbett's diaries about the man eating leopard of Rudraprayag. It has a number of interesting places worth visiting, a few of which are listed below

Koteshwar temple

This is a unique temple dedicated to Lord Shiva, built within the natural caves along the rocky cliffs. It literally means the temple of 10 million Gods! ("Koti" means a crore or 10 million, while "Ishwar" means God)

Rudranath Temple

Another temple dedicated to the Rudra (Lord of Music) form of Lord Shiva. Ancient mythology talks about a black rock called Narad Shila where Narad Muni worshipped Lord Shiva in order to learn music (unfortunately this rock is no longer visible as it got submerged during the 2013 Uttarakhand floods)

Shree Tungeshwar Mahadev Temple

This is a centuries old temple, en route to Chopta, that has ancient terracotta style seals and Shiva-Parvati figuring along its walls.

Basukedar

This is a very old (almost 1000 years old) temple dedicated to Lord Shiva, believed to have been built by the Pandavas. It is off the usual route, about 35 kms away from Agastyamuni and due to its secluded location, it is an amazing spot for meditation. The name Basukedar was given to the temple as it is believed that Lord Shiva stayed for a while at this location en route to mount Kailash (Kedarnath)

Tapovan

While en route to our trek start point, we will drive through Tapovan, a beautiful little wooded hamlet that literally means forest of meditation. It is 15 Kms away from Joshimath and has hot springs and a small temple. It is the one of the start/end points of the Curzon Trail.

Joshimath

The name Joshimath is derived from "Jyotir-math" where "math" can be translated as a monastery. It is the northernmost monastery among those established by the seer Adi Shankaracharya, who had travelled extensively in the Garhwal Himalayas. It lies in the Chamoli district, and is the base for a number of treks and expeditions to some of the highest and most picturesque peaks in India. It has a number of interesting temples with their associated myths, none more so than the Narsinh Temple.

Narsinh Temple

This is the main temple of Joshimath and is dedicated to Lord Vishnu in his avatar of "Narsinh", half man and half lion. As per the local mythology, if and when the right hand of this idol of Narsinh breaks (and it is currently on the verge), the mountains of Jay-Vijay en-route to the Badrinath shrine, will come together in a cataclysmic event, and the deity of Lord Badrinath in the Badrinath shrine shall disappear and re-appear from the ground as a solid black stone, 10 Kms away from Joshimath at Bhavishya Badri. This may not seem far removed from a possible disaster, since the region lies on a highly sensitive fault line and is prone to seismic events!

IndMassif.com