

ROOP KUND TREK

INTERESTING PLACES AND MYTHS

Nainital

Nainital is a beautiful hill station in the foothills of the Kumaon Himalayas in the state of Uttarakhand. The name is derived from the myth as per which the eyes of the Sati Parvati fell here and formed the Naini Lake, while Lord Shiva was carrying her remains. The town receives snowfall in the winter and is famous for the magnificent vistas of the stunning Kumaon Himalayan range from the Naina Peak (8,593 feet)

Nanda Devi Raj Jat Yatra

The Nanda Devi Raj Jaat (Yatra) is held once in 12 years and begins from the village of Nauti near Karnaprayag all the way up to the heights of Roopkund and Homkund further ahead. It is the biggest festival in the Kumaon region and passes through every village that has a major shrine dedicated to Nanda Devi. The pilgrims walk barefoot all the way till they reach Homkund where the yatra ends. There is a belief that if a special four horned ram(male sheep) appears, it will be the most auspicious and blessed event.

The Roopkund Mystery

In 1942, a park ranger stumbled across hundreds of skeletons lying around the lake. On carbon dating, it was ascertained that the skeletons were from around 850 AD and seemed completely out of place, since Roopkund is not part of any trade route and it is a mystery where they were headed. Their death itself is also a mystery although the strong belief is that they were struck by huge sized hailstones that cracked their skulls and caused death.

Mt. Trishul group

Mt.Trishul is a unique peak group with its fantastic three pointed peaks that resemble a trishul (trident). Trishul I was the first 7000 metre peak to be climbed in India(1907). The group looks unbelievably beautiful at sunrise and sunset and the Roopkund trek is the best trek to view it in all its glory as it goes extremely close to the base of the range with Junargali, above Roopkund, being the last ridge facing the Trishul group.

Bedni and Ali Bugyal

Uttarakhand is famous for its fantastic high altitude meadows, known as Bugyals. They are a lush expanse of soft green grass during summers and a huge expanse of snow fields during winter, all fringed by incredibly beautiful snow capped peaks. Bedni Bugyal is the largest such meadow in Asia while Ali Bugyal right next to it is also almost as big, and together, the two make an unforgettable experience during the trek.

Bhagwabasa

Bhagwabasa is the base camp for Roopkund lake and lies just below the final ridge to the lake. It commands a spectacular view of the valley far in the distance and the snow capped massifs looking huge on the horizon. Bhagwabasa lies along the snow line and is mostly covered by snow. It is also extremely cold due to an unprotected ridge around it that brings freezing winds and lead to precipitation. The weather can also change pretty quickly, which makes this a pretty tough place to camp.

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