

CHAR DHAM YATRA

Destinations: Haridwar, Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath, Badrinath

Duration: 10 nights, 11 days

Distance: Over 2,000 km from Delhi

For Family and Group Travel

Experiences: Trekking

Budget: Approx INR 35,000 (per person, by road)

Start

Day 01 DELHI TO HARIDWAR

Start from Delhi as early as possible so that you reach Haridwar by afternoon. Check into your hotel take some rest and in the evening, visit Har Ki Pauri Ghat to enjoy the serene Ganga aarti (a divine ritual). Walk around the temple and enjoy the evening breeze, the tolling of bells and holy chants. Retire to bed early.

Car: Haridwar is connected to other parts of India with a wide network of roads. From Delhi, the distance is around 220 km and it takes about five to six hours by road. There are several refreshment stops on the way and it's a smooth drive.

Train: Haridwar Railway Station connects to a lot of cities across India.

Airport: Jolly Grant Airport is 37 km from Haridwar. It connects to all major cities in India.

Day 02 HARIDWAR TO BARKOT

Have breakfast and leave early for Barkot. You will take the route via Dehradun and Mussoorie. En route, stop at Kempty Falls and then continue the drive to Barkot. Keep about an hour extra in hand to explore Kempty Falls and the several beautiful stops along the way to click photographs. Once in Barkot, check into your hotel. Have dinner and rest.

Car: Barkot is around 210 km from Haridwar and it takes about eight hours to cover the route. The drive is smooth as you will be driving alongside the Yamuna river. Stop lunch at Mussoorie, where there are a lot of options available.

Day 03 BARKOT TO YAMUNOTRI

Have an early breakfast and start the drive towards Janki Chatti, which is the last village on this route before Yamunotri. It is said that the winter abode of Goddess Yamunotri is in a village Kharshali, around one km away from Janki Chatti. A hot spring in Janki Chatti is also popular. From here starts the 6-km-trek to Yamunotri. You can also opt to go on a pony or a doli (palanquin). The trek route is clearly marked and though steep, it takes about 2 to 3 hours to complete on foot. After offering prayers at the Yamunotri temple, trek back to Janki Chatti. Drive back to Barkot and rest.

Car: Barkot to Janki Chatti is about 42 km and it should not take you more than 2 hours to cover.

Day 04 BARKOT TO UTTARKASHI

Have a leisurely breakfast and leave for Uttarkashi. The route is beautiful and passes through forests and offers great mountain views. Once you have reached Uttarkashi, check into your hotel. In the evening, visit the Kashi Vishwanath Temple. The temple is beautiful and it offers spectacular views of the Bhagirathi river and the surrounding mountains. Stay overnight at Uttarkashi.

Car: Barkot to Uttarkashi is about 100 km and takes about 4 hours to cover.

Day 05 UTTARKASHI TO GANGOTRI

Pack your breakfast and leave early for Gangotri. En route at Gangnani, take a holy dip in the Rishikund hot spring and then continue your journey via the beautiful Harsil Valley, famous for its natural beauty and majestic views of mountains and deodar forests. Keep about 2 hours in hand for your Gangnani halt.

On arrival at Gangotri, take a holy dip in the Ganges, called Bhagirathi here, before walking up to the adjacent Gangotri temple to offer prayers. While the temple is dedicated to Goddess Ganga, the origin of the holy river is at Goumukh, set in the Gangotri glacier, a 19-km-trek from Gangotri. After offering your prayers, relax for some time in the lovely surroundings of the temple before driving back to Uttarkashi. Have your dinner and sleep early.

Car: Uttarkashi to Gangotri is about 100 km and it would not take less than 4 hours to reach. It's a hilly terrain with beautiful winding roads. There are several refreshments places near the temple.

Day 06 UTTARKASHI TO GUPTKASHI

Start early for the drive to Guptkashi via Moolgarh and Lambgoan. En route, you can see the beautiful Mandakini river at Tilwara. The river flows from Kedarnath and will accompany you till Guptkashi. Once you reach Guptkashi, check into your hotel. If you have time, visit the Ardh Narishwar Temple here. Stay overnight at Guptkashi. From Guptkashi enjoy clear views of the Chaukhamba massif, a group of four peaks, among which Chaukhamba 1 is among the highest Himalayan peaks in India.

Car: The drive from Uttarkashi to Guptkashi is about 210 km and should take you around nine hours. You can stop for refreshments at Ghansali.

Day 07 GUPTKASHI TO KEDARNATH

Have breakfast and drive to Gaurikund, from where the 16-km-trek to Kedarnath starts. You can either walk or choose to ride a pony or a palanquin. Once you reach Kedarnath, check into an accommodation. After freshening up, visit Kedarnath temple. In the evening, you can visit the Adi Shankaracharya Samadhi behind the temple. The next day trek back to Gaurikund and start your drive to Guptkashi.

To save time and complete your Kedarnath trip in one day, you can avail the helicopter service to reach Kedarnath. There are several aviation companies offering heli-services to Kedarnath from several nearby places, including Pawan Hans (booking.pawanhans.co.in) from Phata. The others are www.utair.in, www.himalayanheli.com, www.thumbyaviation.com, and www.indocopters.com from Sirsi; and from Guptkashi, www.aryanaviation.com and www.arrowaircraft.com.

Car: The drive from Guptkashi to Gaurikund is about 30 km and should take about 2 hours. It is followed by a 16-km-trek to Kedarnath.

Day 08 GUPTKASHI TO BADRINATH

Have an early breakfast and leave for Badrinath. It's preferable to go via Rudraprayag. You can stop for breakfast at Rudraprayag, about 2 hours away from Guptkashi. You can stop for lunch at Joshimath. The road to Badrinath offers fantastic views all along. On the way you will cross Govindghat, the base camp for the trek to Valley of Flowers and Hemkund Sahib.

Once you reach Badrinath, check into your hotel and then head to the hot spring Tapt Kund for a dip. Just behind the kund is the Badrinath Temple. Visit the temple for the evening aarti (a divine ritual).

Stay over night in Badrinath.

Car: Guptkashi to Badrinath is about 200 km and it takes about eight hours to cover.

Day 09 BADRINATH TO RUDRAPRAYAG

Start early for Rudraprayag via Pipalkoti. On the way, visit the Narsingh Temple in Joshimath. A famous temple, Lord Vishnu's 4th incarnation Narsimha avatar is the presiding deity here. Continue your drive towards Rudraprayag. Check into your hotel in Rudraprayag. Stay overnight in Rudraprayag.

Car: The distance from Badrinath to Rudraprayag is about 160 km.

Day 10 RUDRAPRAYAG TO HARIDWAR

Leave early morning after breakfast and drive back to Haridwar. On the way visit Laxman Jhula, Ram Jhula at Rishikesh. You can stay overnight at Haridwar and proceed towards Delhi the next morning.

For more information on the Char Dham Yatra, you can log onto <https://badrinath-kedarnath.gov.in/>

Car: Rudraprayag to Haridwar is about 170 km and it should not take more than 6 hours drive to reach. On the way you can have lunch at one of the cosy cafes in Rishikesh. Haridwar to Delhi is about 220 km and takes six hours by road.