

FROM YAMUNOTRI TO GAUMUKH

Destination: Dehradun, Yamunotri, Gangotri, Gaumukh, Haridwar

Duration: 6 days; **Distance:** Approx 700 km

For family and groups

Experience: Sightseeing and religious

Budget: Approx Rs 10,000 (per person)

Start

Day 01 DEHRADUN TO JANKI CHATTI VIA BARKOT

The day will start early from Dehradun, the capital of Uttarakhand. The roads are good and the drive is scenic. You will reach Barkot, a hamlet, by 1 pm and you can stop here for lunch. Located on the banks of Yamuna River, Barkot is a picturesque town. At around 2 pm you can get back on the road for Janki Chatti. You will reach Janki Chatti by night. The road winds through the mountains and dense forests, with snow-capped peaks in the distance. Janki Chatti is a small settlement and the midpoint of the trek to Yamunotri, which is accessible by jeeps. Situated around 7 km before Yamunotri, it is popular for thermal springs. You can stay the night here.

By road: Dehradun to Barkot is around 130 km and can be easily completed in about 4 hours. From Barkot, Janki Chatti is around 50 km and it takes about 2 hours to reach.

Day 02 JANKI CHATTI TO YAMUNOTRI

Start the next day after breakfast for a trek to Yamunotri. Before you start, you can take a holy dip in the hot springs. The trek of around 7 km is easy with several halts and you can easily reach Yamunotri at around 1 pm. You can have your lunch at Yamunotri and or head to the temple for prayers. At Yamunotri, devotees pray at Surya Kund, a natural hot water spring named after the Sun God, who is said to be the father of River Yamuna. Pilgrims bathe in the kund, and offer rice and potatoes as offerings to god.

Yamunotri is one of the Char Dham sites and is also the first place to visit in the Char Dham Circuit. Thousands of tourist visit to Yamunotri temple of Goddess Yamuna from April to October every year. After your prayers, you can trek back to Janki Chatti and then proceed towards Barkot by road. You can stay at Barkot at night.

Day 03 BARKOT TO GANGOTRI

Start around 7 the next morning towards Gangotri. On the way you can halt at GMVN rest-house at Uttarkashi for lunch. Gangotri is around 180 km from Barkot and it should take you around 6 hours to reach. One of the main religious places among the four Char Dham destinations, Gangotri, situated in Uttarkashi, is closely related to Goddess Ganga. The river Ganga originates from the Gangotri glacier and is known as Bhagirathi. The name Ganga is accorded to the river after it passes through Devprayag and merges into the river Alaknanda. The striking presence of the snow-clad mountains in the vicinity and the pure crystal clear water of the Ganges flowing around add to the sanctity of the place. You will reach Gangotri around 2 pm and you can have lunch at any of the restaurants here. After reaching the hamlet, visit the main Ganga temple. There are several other spiritual sites here and you can spend the evening exploring them. In the evening, enjoy the Ganga arti, which seems surreal as the flickering lamps reflect on the swiftly flowing river and the chants are echoed around in the high mountains. There are affordable accommodations run here by Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam (GMVN). You can stay in Gangotri for the night.

By road: The roads here are good and get busy during the Char Dham season. Gangotri is approximately 180 km away from Barkot and it takes around 6 hours to reach.

Day 04 GANGOTRI TO BHOJBASA

The next day, start easily around 5 am for your trek to Bhojbasa, around 14 km away. In-between after 9 km you will reach Chirbasa for tea. It will take you around 4 hours to reach your destination. However, remember that a permission from the district forest officer is required for this trek as the route passes through the entering Gangotri National Park. It can be obtained at Uttarkashi. You have to show your Gaumukh permits at the trek entry check-post and pay the fee if you have not already paid it online. Be careful about the number of plastics you are carrying as you can't leave any behind. The total distance to Gaumukh is around 16 km and takes about 8 hours at a medium pace. The path, at some places, is quite tricky and the last couple of kilometres is quite challenging. But the major part of the trek is easy with a few steep inclines. On the entire trek you will witness excellent views. You can halt at the camp at Bhojwasa, 4 km short of Gaumukh. You can camp for the night here. There is also a GMVN accommodation. If you reach Bhojbasa before 2 pm, proceed to Gaumukh. Or, you can start the next day.

Day 05 BHOJBASA TO GAUMUKH

From Bhojbasa, Gaumukh is at a 4 km distance. The trail from Bhojbasa starts from behind the GMVN rest house, where you climb a bit to get to the trail. From here, at most places, the trail is well marked. The path is rocky, and you may have to do boulder hopping at many places. All along, from Gangotri to Gaumukh, the Bhagirathi rivers flows along. Within a few minutes of crossing Bhojbasa, you will be able to see the grand Shivaling peak to your right, and straight ahead, the Bhagirathi group of peaks. The sight of these snow-draped peaks is a life-changing experience. It should take you around 3 hours to reach Gaumukh from Bhojbasa. Once you have reached, take in the dramatic landscape. Sit and enjoy the views before starting back. From Bhojbasa, take to the road to drive down to Gangotri and stay the night.

Day 06 GANGOTRI TO HARIDWAR

The next morning you will start your trip back to Haridwar.

By road: Haridwar is around 280 km from Gangotri and it will take you around 8 hours to reach.