



Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board

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SATOPANTH TREK- A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Destination: Badrinath, Laxmivan, Chakratirtha, Satopanth Lake

Duration: 7 days (5 days of actual trekking)

Experience: Trekking (Moderate; for experienced trekkers)

Maximum Altitude: 4,602 m (Approx)

Ideal time: May to June and August to October

Budget: INR 15,000 (From Rishikesh and back. Lodging & Fooding included)

Start

Day 01 HARIDWAR TO BADRINATH

On the first day, take a cab or drive from Haridwar to Badrinath. Catch the morning bus or start your car trip at dawn. The holy city of Badrinath is located at a high altitude of around 3,291 m and it is the base point for several treks. The trek route to the mythical Satopanth Tal, a glacial lake hidden in the Garhwal Himalayas, offers the flavor of high altitude trekking, walking on boulders, moraine, glacier and knife edge ridge. While the trek is exhilarating, the peak views are unbelievably mesmerising. This triangular shaped glacial lake lies above 4,000 m, hidden inside the ridge believed to be the "the road to truth" (Satya Ki Pantha). It is said that the Pandava princes from the epic Mahabharata took this challenging trail on their way to heaven.

By road: The distance between Haridwar and Badrinath is around 310 km and it takes approximately 12 hours to cover. The road is good and there are lots of stops on the way for refreshments and breaks.

By Rail: Rishikesh is the nearest railway station, which is approximately 300 km from Badrinath. Another nearby station is Kotdwara, at around 327 km from Badrinath.

By Air: The nearest airport is at Jolly Grant, Dehradun, which is around 320 km away by road.

Day 02 BADRINATH TO LAXMIVAN

The second day will be spent in acclimatisation at Badrinath. Also use this opportunity to explore this temple town, which is a part of the Char Dham Yatra. Visit the Badrinath temple, walk towards Mana, a small hamlet 4 km away from Badrinath, and the holy rock Charan Paduka, around 3 km from Badrinath, where it is believed the foot prints of Lord Vishnu are visible.

Day 03 BADRINATH TO LAXMIVAN

On the third day, start trekking early as the distance to be covered is 9 km and takes about 5 hours to be completed. From Badrinath walk to Mana village, around 4 km away. This is the last Indian village to the international border with China. From this village, the trek route turns towards the left side of the Alaknanda River. After crossing Alaknanda at Mana and around 2 km later, Vasudhara fall appears. After a 3 km walk over moraine (glacier deposits) you will reach Laxmivan campsite. This stretch is relatively easy and the campsite of Laxmivan is located on a patch of grass and perhaps the campsites are the only shades of green from here on this route.

Day 04 LAXMIVAN TO CHAKRATEERTHA

The trek to Chakrateertha, a route of around 7 km, which can be completed in about 4 hours, is slightly challenging. But it's a scenic route. Have a hearty breakfast before your start and keep water and snacks handy. The route continues along the Alaknanda river and through the grassland in the middle of the moraine of the Dhano glacier. Catch the sight beautiful Alpine flowers. A little later the peaks of Bhagirathi mountain appears. After around 5 km of trekking, appears Sahasradhara (a thousand-fold spring) – the site of limestone stalactite monoliths along which drip thousands of water streams. From here the mighty Mount Neelkanth is visible. The flat grassland of the Chakrateertha campsite is half an hour's trek from here.

Day 05 CHAKRATEERTHA TO SATOPANTH TAL AND BACK

On this day, the final leg of the trek to Satopanth Tal and the walk back to Chakrateertha campsite is completed. The trek of around 10 km (5 km one way) takes about 8 hours to complete. Keep an hour to enjoy Satopanth Tal. As you start walking, you will be greeted by the jaw-dropping sights of Mount Neelkanth and Chaukhamba.

The towering Chaukhamba ridge looms over the lake along with the Neelkanth, Balakun, Parvati and other peaks. Many believe that Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Mahesh bathe in the lake on an auspicious day. Adventurous devotees and sages visit this lake during monsoon. The final stretch towards the summit of the trek is especially steep, with nothing beneath the feet except loose moraine soil from the glaciers. Stay for a while and enjoy the peace and calm of the lake. On a clear day one can see clearly the legendary Swargarohini steps from Satopanth Tal and its surrounding, from where, it is said the Pandavas had ascended to heaven. This stretch is likely to have a lot of snow, no matter the season; so be prepared.

The Satopanth trek, passing through boulder zones, moraine debris and scree zones, is organised once or twice in a year for interested and experienced Himalayan hikers. This typical glacial moraine trail into the core of the Himalayas is indeed a delight for trekkers. This glacier valley is typically low in oxygen and trekkers must get acclimatised once reaching Chakrateertha.

Day 06 CHAKRATEERTHA TO BADRINATH

On the way back, take the same trail from Chakrateertha to Laxmivan and then to Mana. It ideally takes about 7 hours to complete the downward trek of around 17 km. If you are too tired, you can hire a cab from Mana to Badrinath.

Day 07 BADRINATH TO HARIDWAR

Take the road from Badrinath to Haridwar and end your trip. You can pick up some last-minute gift and souvenirs from either Badrinath or Rishikesh before you leave Uttarakhand.