

## Trek To The Valley Of Flowers, Himalayas, India (June-October)



The Magical Valley Of Flowers

### The Valley of Flowers

The stunning landscape of **The Valley of Flowers National Park** in northern **India's** state of **Uttarakhand**, bordered by **Nepal** and **Tibet**, comes alive with the monsoon rain. This high-altitude **Himalayan** valley has around 300 different varieties of alpine flowers, which appear as a bright carpet of colour against a mountainous snow capped background.

The park is spread over 55 square miles, and was declared a national park in 1982. It's also a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. The main **Valley of Flowers** is a glacial corridor, around 3.1 miles long and 1.2 miles wide.

**The Valley of Flowers National Park** has an altitude that varies from 10,500 feet to 21,900 feet above sea level.

### Getting to The Valley of Flowers

The nearest airport is in **Dehradun**, 183 miles away, and the nearest railway station is at **Haridwar**, near **Rishikesh**, 170 miles away. A one night stay at **Rishikesh** is essential.

You travel to **The Valley of Flowers** by leaving early morning from **Rishikesh** (elevation 1168ft) to **Joshimath** (elevation 6200ft) (8 Hours +) for a stopover night. The road travels through precipitous mountain roads with sheer drops following the valley of the **River Alaknanda** all the way.

Buy supplies and eat plenty of energy foods at **Joshimath** for the trek that begins next day!

Leaving **Joshimath** very early next morning, it is possible to journey by road another 21 miles (1 Hour) until **Govind Ghat** is reached. The road is narrow, sometimes just a makeshift track, after landslides, with the **River Alaknanda** thundering along down below.

At **Govind Ghat**, plastic sheet raincoats are essential purchases at the local market. Here the services of mule-waals and / or porters (called **Pitthoo**) are required to carry luggage further up the trail.

From **Govind Ghat** it's an 8 mile trek along a steep, narrow, but well defined mountain trail to base camp at **Ghangaria**. This will take between 4 to 8 hours, depending on your fitness! The path moves along the **Lakshman River** which flows down below. There are tea and snack stalls along the way, which serve tea, "maggie" noodles, chips etc.



Flowers Along The Path To The Valley

**Ghangaria** is a small village by the side of the **Lakshman River** which acts as a base camp for people going to **The Valley of Flowers** and **Sikh** pilgrims travelling to the holy lake at **Hemkund**. A stopover night is required at **Ghangaria**.

Next morning you trek further to the start of the main valley, where all the flowers are, a further 1.8 miles from **Ghangaria**.

Location	Accommodation	Schedule
Delhi - Rishikesh	Hotel Great Ganga	Option 1 = By Train From Delhi To Haridwar Option 2 = By Internal Flight To Dehra Dun Airport Delhi – Rishikesh: 155 Miles
Rishikesh - Joshimath	The Chardham Camp	By Jeep To Joshimath (6200ft) Rishikesh – Joshimath: 155 Miles 8 Hours On Spectacular Mountain Roads
Joshimath – Ghangaria	GMVN Guest House	By Jeep To Govind Ghat (5998ft) Joshimath – Govind Ghat: 21 Miles 1 Hour Trek To Ghangaria (10000ft) Govind Ghat – Ghangaria: 8 Miles 4-8 Hours
Ghangaria	GMVN Guest House	Trek To The Valley Of Flowers (10998ft) Ghangaria – Valley Of Flowers:1.8 Miles 1 Hour
Ghangaria	GMVN Guest House	5 Km Steep Trek To Hemkund Lake (14202ft) Ghangaria – Hemkund Lake:4 Miles 2 Hours
Ghangaria - Joshimath	The Chardham Camp	Return Trek To Govind Ghat Ghangaria – Govind Ghat: * Miles 4-8 Hours Return By Jeep To Joshimath Govind Ghat – Joshimath: 21 Miles 1 Hour
Joshimath - Rishikesh	Hotel Great Ganga	Return By Jeep To Rishikesh Joshimath – Rishikesh: 155 Miles 8 Hours On Spectacular Mountain Roads
Rishikesh - Delhi		Return To Delhi By Train From Haridwar Or By Internal Flight From Dehra Dun Airport

## Explore The Valley of Flowers

The vast expanse of the valley is beautiful, and there are meadows of flowers with big stretches of **Himalayan Balsam**, which is the most predominant flower of the valley. The sheer number of certain flowers is so large that sometimes one has to wade in knee-deep flowers to reach an area which could have flowers of a different kind.

Another alluring plant, which is touted as the most beautiful one in the valley is the **Himalayan Whorlflower**. It adds charm to **The Valley of Flowers**, and grows in abundance. Further on, you are greeted with a captivating sight - low on the ground, masses of woolly white **Edelweiss** flowers, which are seen in the **Alps**.



Valley Of Flowers In Bloom

## When to Visit The Valley of Flowers

The **Valley of Flowers** is only open from **April** to **October** as it's covered in snow the rest of the year. The best time to visit is from **July** to **August**, when the flowers are in full bloom after the first monsoon rain.

## Valley of Flowers Opening Hours

To prevent trekkers and livestock from taking too much of a toll on the park, access to **The Valley of Flowers** is restricted to daylight hours (from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.). The last entry to the park is at 3 p.m. You'll need to go from, and return to, **Ghangaria** on the same day.

## Valley of Flowers Travel Tips

- Mules and porters are hired at **Govind Ghat** for the trek to **Ghangaria**.
- Cheap plastic raincoats are essential.
- **The Valley of Flowers** requires a strenuous hike but you'll feel on top of the world in this magical and enchanting place. Exotic flowers and foliage can be found all along the route from **Ghangaria** to the main valley.
- Make sure you pack plenty of clothes in case you get rained on (which is most likely), and carry some food with you for the hike.
- Accommodation at **Govind Ghat** and **Ghangaria** gets quite crowded from **July** to **September** with **Sikh** pilgrims on their way to **Hemkund**, so it's a good idea to book this trek many months in advance.



Valley Of Flowers Satellite Map



Beautiful Himalayan Flower Inside the Park

## Side Trips

**Hemkund**, with a spectacular setting of a glacial lake surrounded by seven peaks, is a popular pilgrimage site for **Sikhs**. It is located in the **Himalayas** at an elevation of over 15,000 ft (4,600 m). You can ride mules right up to **Hemkund**.

The holy **Hindu** town of **Badrinath** is only 14 kilometers (8.6 miles) from **Joshimath** and can easily be visited on a day trip from there. The town features a striking temple dedicated to **Lord Vishnu**.



Along The Trekking Route To The Valley Of Flowers