

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

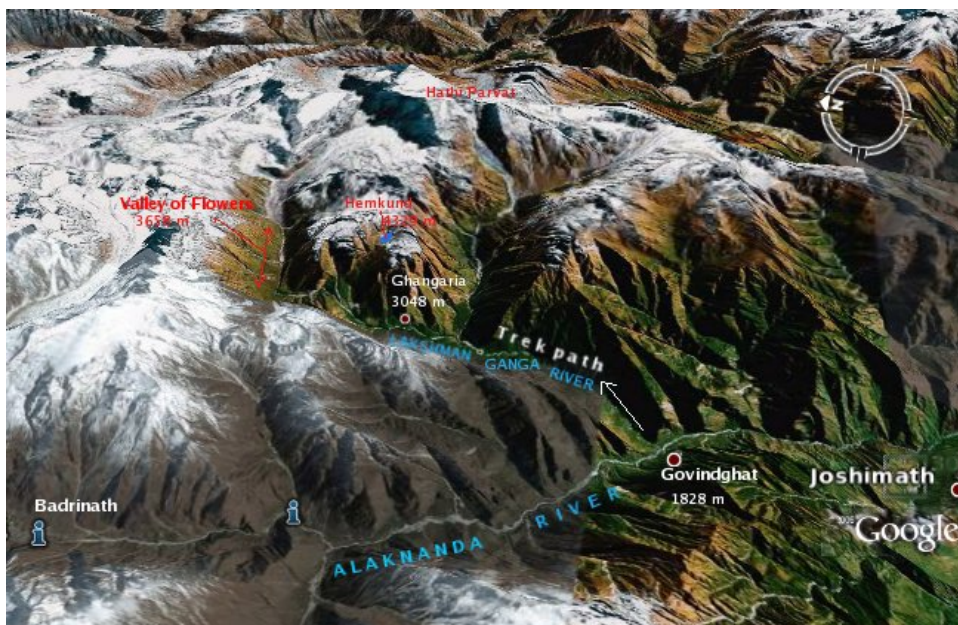
The Valley of Flowers is only open from **April** to **October** as it's covered in snow the rest of the year. The best time to visit is from **July** to **August**, when the flowers are in full bloom after the first monsoon rain.

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