

ALI, BEDNI BUGYAL TREK ROUTE

Destinations: Rishikesh, Lohajung, Ghairoli Patal, Ali Bugyal, Bedni Bugyal

Distance: 510 km from Rishikesh

Duration: 6 days

Experience: Moderate trekking; For group and family

Budget: Rs 10,000 (per person)

Start

Day 01 RISHIKESH TO LOHAJUNG

Lohajung (2,316 m), a sleepy hamlet, is a popular base camp for several treks, including the one to the two prettiest alpine meadows (bugyal) of Uttarakhand, Ali and Bedni. Folklore says, it was here that Goddess Parvati had a war (jung) with the demon Lohasur. Hence, the name, which translates to 'a war with Lohasur'. Lohajung offers fantastic views of the beautiful Nanda Ghunti peak, that turns every shade of the rainbow during sunset. Try and reach Lohajung before sunset to enjoy one of the most memorable sunsets.

By Car: The road from Rishikesh to Lohajung, especially after you cross Nainital, is beautiful, weaving through mountains and lush forests, and you will enjoy the 11-hour-drive, covering around 260 km. You can also travel by bus if you want, but hiring a private taxi is the most convenient option.

By Train: The nearest rail head is Kathgodam (220 km)

By Air: The nearest airport is Jolly Grant airport, Dehradun (300 km). You can take a taxi from here or ride a bus to reach Rishikesh and then Karnprayag. From Karnprayag, you can get jeeps to Tharali, Debal and then to Lohajung.

Day 02 LOHAJUNG TO DIDNA

Next morning, you start your trek. A well-marked trail that starts from just behind the Lohajung bus stand passes through forest patches to take you to Raun Bagad, an iron bridge, close to Didna village (2,495 m). Raun Bagad comes up in about 2 hours. This is a grassy patch and a great camping spot. Once you cross the bridge, the trek goes uphill and you should be able to reach Didna in about 3 hours. This stretch is an easy trek of around 5 hours covering approximately 10 km. You walk through rhododendron bushes, with the swiftly flowing Wan river as a companion. Wan is the last inhabited village on this route. You can also walk along the main road and reach Kulling village, about 6 km from Lohajung. As you camp at Didna, enjoy the night under the clear mountain sky and twinkling stars, with the lullaby of the rippling stream.

Day 03 DIDNA TO ABIN KHARAK/ KHOBAL TAAL VIA ALI BUGYAL

The next day you have to cover about 8 km and it should take you about 6 hours of trekking through dense forests. Start your day by walking through an oak forest towards Tolpani, a cluster of huts, around 3 km away. Under your feet will spread out a thick brown carpet of leaves. The route almost takes an U-turn at a ridge as it turns towards the bugyals. After another 3 km, the forest opens up to a clearing and the rolling Ali bugyal (3,354 m) starts. Stepping out of the shade of the feres and onto the smooth green carpet of the meadow is a magical feel. For as far as you can see, the velvety carpet stretches, ending at the foot of the formidable sentinel, Mt Trishul, silhouetted against the blue sky. It's almost seems like a fairytale land, with wild horses grazing, and their foals galloping around. Take off your shoes and sink your feet into the cool and soft grassy carpet. From here, the walk to Bedni Bugyal is exhilarating, with Trishul and Nanda Ghunti, keeping you company. As you climb to the highest point in Bedni bugyal, the imposing Chaukhamba range appears. The Bedni Kund (3,561 m), a crystal clear lake with Mt Trishul being reflected in its water, is a picturesque stop and is considered sacred by local residents. The campsite for the night is at Abin Kharak (2,495 m), a spot in the meadow.

Day 04 BEDNI BUGYAL TO WAN THROUGH GHAIROLI PATAL

The next morning, you will start your descent to Wan through the forests of Ghairoli Patal. As you walk through dry leaves rustling and crackling under your feet, enjoy wind whistling through the trees and the chirping of birds. You will trek through groves of walnut and pear, and bushes of wild Himalayan roses, and other flora. The views of Mount Trishul will stay with you till Ghairoli Patal and leaves you once you descend further down to Neel Ganga.

Day 05 On this day, you will come down to Lohajung after an easy downward walk. It's a smooth trek and use the time to enjoy the pristine natural surroundings.

Day 06 Start early to reach Rishikesh by the evening, ending your trip.
For booking: Indiahikes.com