

SERAJ VALLEY; LONG WEEKEND SHORT GETAWAY; SOJHA, KULLU DISTRICT

OCT 2- 6, 2014;

4 NIGHTS 5 DAYS



Enjoy this long weekend in Seraj valley near Kullu. The thickly wooded mountainside, densely populated with conifers, deodars and toosh characterize the beauty and uniqueness of Sojha. With unending slopes of emerald forests, verdant and pristine, nature is at its most alluring. Located in Seraj valley, Sojha at 8700 ft. is a breathtakingly beautiful place. Nature lovers can enjoy thick wooded hill slopes starting from bottom as far down or up or sideways or deep as one can look. From Sojha, one can drive up to Jalori Pass. The metal road from Jalori pass leads down to Sainj and Shimla. The place abounds in hypnotic ambience. The lake is small but in a beautiful location. Cradled by rolling- meadows on all sides, high up in the mountains, it is an idyllic location for a private cottage.

We spend 4 fun filled days of exploring the forested hillsides and of leisurely walks, lazy evenings, sumptuous food and beautiful mountains views.

Dates:	Oct 2-6, 2014
Dist. from Delhi/ Chandigarh	480/ 240 kms
Start from:	Chandigarh
End at:	Chandigarh
Distance covered:	600 kms
Maximum altitude reached:	Jalori pass (10800 ft)
Best time to Visit:	Mid- June to Mid- October
Meals:	Lunch on day 1 to lunch on day 5
Min/ Max group size:	8-20

Day 1: Chandigarh- Sojha- 8-9 hrs drive

Reach Chandigarh by 1100 hrs by train/ flight or bus. We pick you up from Chandigarh and drive to Sojha. Reach Sojha a little late in the evening for a late dinner. Settle into your rooms. Evening around bonfire.

Day 2: Sojha

Raghupur fort hike- 10 kms drive and 3.5 hrs hike

In the mountains, if you want to be rewarded well by nature in its full glory, have must make an early morning start. The same is true of this hike to Raghupur Fort meadows that overlook the Tirthan Valley in Kulu district in the West and Shimla district in the East. This five kms uphill drive will test your car as well as your mountain driving skills! From Jalori, it is a level walk in the open for about hundred meters towards Sutlej Valley before it heads straight into the forest on a well-defined trail. Half a kilometer later, a short steep climb takes one to a small meadow that offers a photo-op. A short rest and off you go into the Oaks and Rhododendrons forest slowly climbing up and then shifting gear for a final steep climb of 15 to 20 minutes. Here the tree line finishes and we move into a lush green meadow. A little up and we are rewarded with a 360 degrees view of The Himalayas, Dhauladhar and Kinnaur

ranges, all of them in one sweeping glance. All around you are swathes of lush green meadows that gently descend into the oak and blue fir forests.

Keep strolling and in a while we end up at the dilapidated Raghupur Fort. The local people believe that an erstwhile king of Mandi province got this fort constructed hundreds of years ago. Theories abound as to why this fort was constructed on a ridge where scarcity of water was a perennial issue. One of them will have us believe that this retreat was made in case the king had to retreat in to the mountains in case his kingdom was attacked by the enemy forces from the plains. Yet another popular belief is that the fort was constructed for the pleasure of the king away from the prying eyes of his family and subjects. Whatever the truth, the King could not have chosen a better location. One look and you would not want to go back.

Back to retreat in the afternoon. The more adventurous ones can also hike up to a small waterfall in the afternoon if they wish. Evening around a bonfire. Night stay in retreat.

Day 3: Sojha

Spend the day in village

The most leisurely day of your trip. Spend the day in Sojha village. The locals make colourful shawls and Puleh (a kind of footwear). Watch them weave these. Lunch in a local house. Back to retreat by late afternoon. Local dance in the evening. Rest of the evening around a bonfire. Night stay in retreat.

Day 4: Sojha

Serolsar lake hike- 10 kms drive- 12 kms hike

Himachal Pradesh, with most of it lying in the lap of Himalayas, has an abundance of lakes. One such lake is in Tirthan valley (Kulu District). Located 11 kms (5 by car from our retreat to Jalori Pass and 6 kms from there to the lake) from Banjara Retreat in Sojha, it is one of the better hikes for the families. A drive to Jalori pass will take 15-20 minutes from the retreat. From there a well defined trail takes one to the lake. Few hundred meters on the trail and then you get in to the Oak forest. The sun rays filtering through the tree cover, the blue of the sky through the foliage, the up and down of the trail, an occasional sight of a bird, a clearing showing the huge green vistas cascading down to the Sutlej valley, all of this and more will keep you an enchanting company all the way to the lake. The lake makes up in crystal clear clarity what it lacks in size. The local belief is that no one has ever found a leaf floating in the lake though leafy trees surround the lake itself. Nearby is a small temple beyond which the meadows start. A couple of teashops regularly come up between April-October. They have also some local sweets and savories- worth trying. During summer a lot of Gujjars come with their buffaloes and cows to these pastures. It won't be unusual if you bump into some carrying Khowa and paneer to the local market.

To spend more time with the chirping birds, we carry a lunch hamper for you to enjoy an al fresco lunch on the banks of the lake. Back to retreat early evening. Evening around bonfire.

Day 5: Sojha- Chandigarh- 8-9 hrs

Wake up early in the morning. We leave for Chandigarh after an early breakfast. Reach Chandigarh between 4 and 5 pm. Catch evening train/ flight to onward destination.

Cost per person (stay in retreat): INR 20000/-

Cost per person (stay in cottage): INR 25000/-

Cost includes:

1. Stay in Banjara Retreat and cottage on twin share basis.
2. All meals from lunch on day 1 to lunch on day 5.
3. Services of a guide for walk.
4. A local dance evening.
5. Transport from Chandigarh to Sojha- Chandigarh.
6. All taxes.

Cost does not include:

1. Any beverages except those served on buffet table.
2. Any En route/ personal expenses.
3. Any air/rail fares.
4. Bottled mineral water (Aquaguard purified water is served free of cost at all our properties).
5. Any expenses incurred due to factors beyond our control like a natural calamity/ man-made calamity.

TOUR NOTES

Accommodation:

Sojha: Banjara Retreat Sojha

Food & Hygiene:

Food is a mix range from vegetarian/ non- vegetarian meals to good food with a choice of Indian, Continental & Chinese food. All meals are buffet meals. There is no room service.

Fitness:

You should be in decent health if you wish to hike. We advise jogging and breathing exercise. Please note that you will have to climb down about 130 odd steps to reach the retreat.

Tipping & Porterage:

We charge a service charge of 5% for the rooms. Tipping/ service charge is already taken care of in this trip. Our staff will carry your bags down to retreat and back up to car on day of departure.

Photography:

The retreat is at 8700 ft. and we will travel up to about 11000 ft. If you plan to take photos then please keep sunlight according to this altitude in mind. Please ask your guide before taking photographs inside any temple and if you plan to photograph any locals, please take their permission before doing so. You could charge your camera at the retreat.

Medicine:

There is a doctor in the town. We also keep a first aid kit. It would be anyway a good idea to bring your own basic first aid kit with medicines for motion sickness, nausea, some painkillers etc. Please carry sun block and chapstick. Keep your face, feet and hands well protected. Request your doctor to prescribe effective medicines to cover the following: Fever, Body and joint pains, Cold, Cough, Sore throat, Headache, Acidity, Stomach cramps, Vomiting, Dysentery, Loose motion, Constipation, Diarrhea, Swelling, Muscle Pulls & Sore eyes. We do carry a first aid box though. In case you have any illness of any sort, please do inform us in advance so that we can take necessary precaution. You could also carry vaseline, Band Aid, Cotton, Badge roll, Dettol, Mouth freshener, Nose inhaler, Cough drops, Lip balm, Vicks, Elastoplasts, Adhesive tape, 4" crepe bandage.

List of things to bring:

1. Duffel bag (avoid suitcases if you can)
2. A small day backpack to carry water, food, jacket and camera
3. Hiking shoes- you need good traction in shoes and these should be at least water resistant. Forclaz 500 is a good. Your shoes should be well broken-in and not new. Otherwise, your regular sports shoes will also do.
4. 2 pairs of lowers.
5. 4-5 full sleeves T-shirts
6. A fleece jacket
7. A full sleeve thick jacket
8. Underclothing
9. 1 pairs of thermal inners
10. 2-3 pairs of sports socks. 2 pairs of woolen socks
11. Woolen cap/ balaclava that covers the ears
12. Gloves
13. Sun glasses
14. Lip balm
15. Cold cream and sun screen lotion (SPF 40+).
16. Water bottle.
17. Flash light
18. Personal toilet kit.
19. Personal medicine
20. Small repair kit consisting of safety pins, needle, thread and string.
21. Camera, memory-cards, batteries etc (carry enough spare batteries. Electricity is not available on the slopes.

PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU MAY NOT HAVE TO USE A LOT OF WOOLENS LISTED ABOVE BUT, WEATHER IN THE HIMALAYAS CAN BE RATHER UNPREDICTABLE HENCE, BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY.

BOOKING, PAYMENT AND CANCELLATION POLICY

CONFIRMATION:

100% advance to confirm booking.

CANCELLATION CHARGE:

Minimum : 20% of full amount.
Less than two weeks of arrival date (or tour start date) : 50% of full amount.
Less than one week of arrival date (or tour start date) : Full amount.

PAYMENT MODES & METHODS:

1. ONLINE TRANSFER into our **current** accounts in Axis Bank or Standard Chartered Bank
2. DIRECT CHEQUE DEPOSIT into our **current** accounts in Axis Bank or Standard Chartered Bank at any branch/ ATM in India
3. DIRECT CASH DEPOSIT, into our **current** account at any branch in India
4. By CASH or CHEQUE handed over personally (or by your rep) AT OUR DELHI OFFICE
5. OUTSTATION CHEQUE payments are acceptable **only if** they are delivered (or we get a scan of the bank deposit slip) at least 4 working days before the payment due date.
6. OUTSTATION PAYMENTS by a **Payable at Delhi** DD sent to our Delhi Office by courier/post.

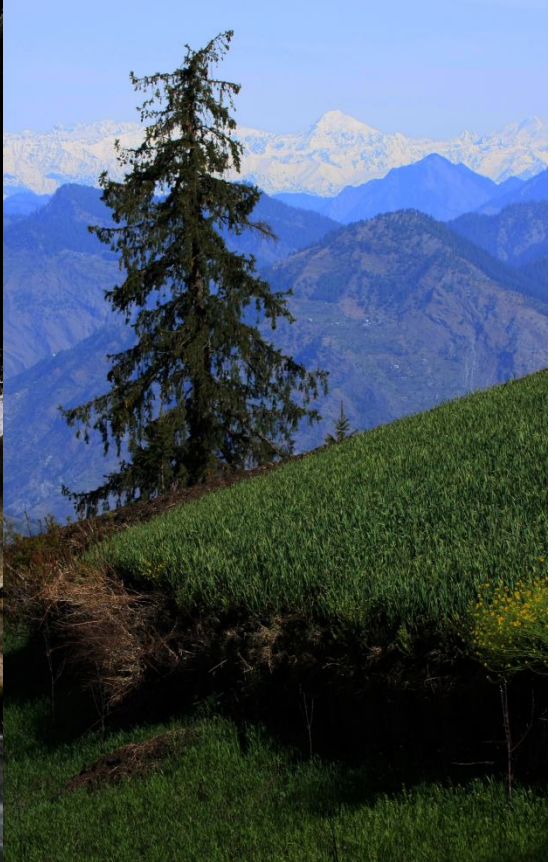
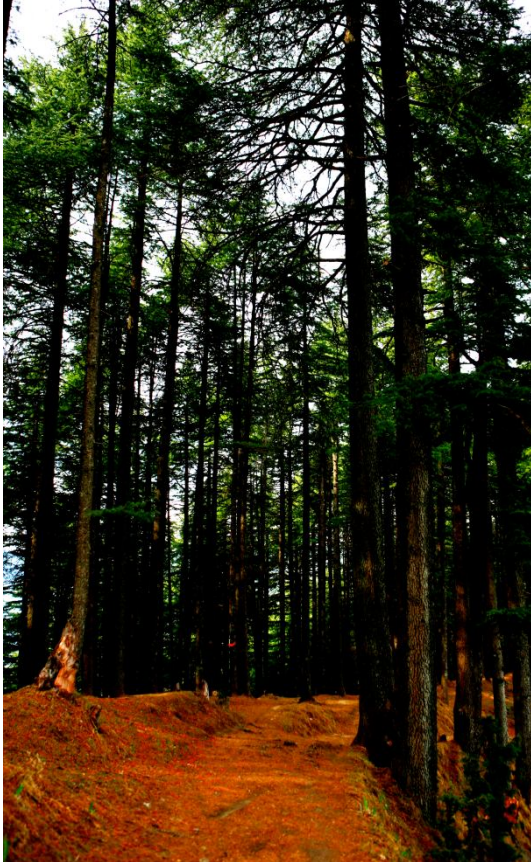
IMP: CHEQUE / DD to be made in **favour of "Banjara Camps & Retreats Pvt. Ltd."**

AXIS BANK:

- A/c name : Banjara Camps & Retreats Pvt. Ltd.
- A/c no. : 015010200017806
- Branch address : K-12; Green Park Main; New Delhi – 110016
- Branch Code : UTIB0000015 (for direct cheque deposit)
- IFSC Code : UTIB0000015 (for online transfer)

STANDARD CHARTERED BANK:

- A/c name : Banjara Camps & Retreats Pvt. Ltd.
- A/c no. : 525-0-509-319-3
- Branch address : 10 Sansad Marg; New Delhi – 110 001
- Branch Code : SCBL0036027 (for direct cash/ cheque deposit)
- IFSC Code: : SCBL0036027 (for online transfer)







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