

## **Let's wander where the WiFi is weak**

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I am glad to share the experiences of my first Himalayan trek, The Hampta Pass Trek.

Dated From: 25<sup>th</sup> July 2021-29 July 2021 (5 Days and 26 Kms) at an altitude of 14,100 feet above sea level.

Hampta Pass is a dramatic crossover trek where the scenery keeps changing as it starts from the lush greenery of the Kullu region and ends in the arid desert of Spiti. This is an all-in-one trek where we go through the alpine forests of (Maple, Birch, Oak, Deodar) and enter the wide meadows and once we reach the start of the snowline it's a steep ascent to the pass. We are treated to a unique variety of exotic mountain wildflowers all through the trek.



The trek lies in the Pir Panjal range of Himachal Pradesh and falls in the bracket of an easy to moderate grade trek. The usual temperature is between 10°C to 18°C during the day and falls between 0°C to 5°C during the night

There would be no mobile network throughout the trek, and we will be trekking next to flowing streams there were a couple of rivers and stream crossing during the trek.

Hampta is the best spot to enjoy during the monsoon season to experience the snow, glaciers, and when the lush green parts of the mountains are at their best.

The last day we reach Chandratat lake, I was completely blown away by the sheer beauty of the lake. Pristine blue water keeps changing its hues throughout the day. The crystal-clear turquoise waters of the lake radiate and paints a new picture. Chandra Taal or Lake of the moon gets its name due to its crescent shape.

I had booked this trek through a well-recognized trekking organization known as '**Trek the Himalayas**'. We were a group of 16 people with different age groups across different States of Our country and we had three trek leaders to guide us. Located in the beautiful Himalayas, this trek has given me a lot of memories and learnings.

### **Day 1: 25<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

We started from Manali at noon to our base camp Jobra which was a two-hour drive from Manali. From our base camp, we left for our first campsite. The path was so beautiful, and the sight was refreshing that overlooks a lush green meadow strewn with small rocks. The view looks exactly as if taken out from a fairy tale. After a 3- hour trek we reached our first campsite CHIKA at 5 in the evening. It was not as steep as I had expected for the 1<sup>st</sup> day and could reach the first campsite without much strain.



### **Day 2: 26<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

After some exercises, stretching we started to our next campsite around 8 in the morning. The trail on 2<sup>nd</sup> day led us through a slope of boulders and rough terrain. There was not much steepness but still with the bags on, we took short breaks in-between to enjoy the scenic and beautiful views and continued the trek.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> day, there were quite a several streams to cross. The biggest challenge was the river crossing, the flow of water was heavy and was cold. A rope was tied across the river by our trek leaders, and they were present the whole time helping us cross the river.

After a 7-hour trek covering 9kms we reached our 2<sup>nd</sup> campsite BALU KA GHERA



### **Day 3: 27<sup>th</sup> July 2021(The Summit Day)**

We started early around 7 in the morning as it was summit day. The riverside trails took us further to the base of Hampta and then the actual climb of Hampta pass starts. Steep, steep every step, I took. We encountered glaciers on this day and walking in the glacier is an art, we must place our foot 90° to our usual way of walking to have a firm and steady grip over the glacier ice.

We made it to the summit at an altitude of 14,100 ft spend some time there and started our journey to descend. The descend was trickier than the journey to the pass. After an hour and a half of descent which included falling and skidding over the glacier ice, we reached the base of the valley which led to our next campsite SIAGORU. After a 10-hour trek, we reached around 5 in the evening covering a distance of 7kms. The most beautiful of all the campsites, located by the riverside. Luckily there were just mild showers and no heavy rains till we reached our campsite.

On this day I had pushed myself to my extreme capability. There was a feeling of contentment and a sense of achievement



#### **Day 4: 28<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

We started at 8 in the morning at our last campsite. We started the trek with river crossing where the water current was 10 times stronger and colder compared to the 2<sup>nd</sup>-day river crossing. The trail on the 4<sup>th</sup> day was by the side of the river valley between the mountain ranges.

It was a gradual descent (not very hard) with few slippery areas. It was the most relaxed day of the trek. Our last campsite CHATRU is the most spectacular one which is the consensus of three important and beautiful passes Hampta, Rohtang, and Spiti. After a 6-hour trek, we reached around 2 in the afternoon covering a distance of 7kms.



#### **Day 5: 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

A 45km drive from base camp (Chatru) to Chandratal lake (Spiti valley). The view we drove through was picturesque and still etched deep down at the back of my head. Chandratal Lake (also known as the moon lake). The sheer blue color of this lake adds a stunning effect to its surroundings.



We were provided with simple, healthy, tasty, and energy-boosting food for all three meals. We carried enough water to replenish fluids and electrolytes to keep ourselves hydrated.

I learned that the Trek is no easy thing, and it requires a lot of balanced physical & mental fitness and courage. On the day of the summit, I knew my extreme and it just felt like if I could do this, I could do anything.

It was a thrilling and memorable experience like sleeping in tents in the middle of the jungle, walking on a lonely planet, foot crossing streams, humming & sounds of unseen creatures, understanding the life of local folks, making new friendships & relationships, and a lot more.

Coming back home I was carrying tonnes of memories and tales because carrying a bag of 10kgs and more on our shoulders and climbing the steep snow-clad mountains requires a lot of endurance, willpower, and determination