

Leisure Valley

Location: Throughout Chandigarh

Highlights: Beautiful parks and gardens

Leisure Valley : Chandigarh is full of greenery, with the various theme gardens standing for the beauty and spirit of the city. Le Corbusier, the architect of the city, retained the eroded valley of a seasonal rivulet on the original site of the city and sculptured it into a linear park. Eight kilometers in length, the park starts from Sector 1 in the north and leaves Chandigarh at its southern-most edge, in sector 53. In the Master Plan of Le Corbusier, where he had planned the city analogous to a human body, the leisure valley and gardens were planned to form the lungs of the city. Out of the total area of 20,000 acres acquired for the first phase, about 2,000 acres was meant for the development of parks. These parks and gardens are collectively known as the Leisure Valley of Chandigarh. Each of the parks and gardens in the city bears a different name and boasts of some or other specialty.

Chandigarh Leisure Valley

Rajendra Park, Sector 1

The leisure valley of Chandigarh starts with Rajendra Park, which extends to about 400 acres. Started in 1954, the park is extensively used for walking, driving and horse riding. You can find trees with round canopies and evergreen foliage planted here.

Bougainvillea Garden, Sector 3

Opened in 1976, Bougainvillea Garden spreads over an area of 20 acres. The garden is full of different varieties of bougainvillea flowers. Other flowering plants are also there, though they are less in comparison to the bougainvilleas. Annual flower shows are also held here.

Fitness Trails, Sector 10

As the name suggests, Fitness Trails is dedicated to physical exercises amidst the bounty of nature. There is a Flower Garden to the south of the Fitness Trails, where seasonal flowers cover one part and the other part is filled with the sculptures by renowned artists. There are also areas for organizing cultural activities.

Zakir Rose Garden, Sector 16

The Rose Garden of Chandigarh was established in 1967. Named after India's former President Dr. Zakir Hussain, this garden is the largest of its type in Asia. It is spread over an area of 27 acres and has more than 17000 plants, which represent some 1600 varieties of roses. Along with the roses, trees of medicinal value, like bel, bahera, harar etc, are also grown here

Rose Garden also boasts of some unique species, which further increase the beauty of the garden. The annual "Festival of Gardens" is organized in the garden in the month of February and is listed in the "National Calendar of Events". The best time to visit the garden is February-March, which coincides with the blooming season of the flowers.

Shanti Kunj, Sector 16

Shanti Kunj was created with the purpose of having a completely noise-free area in the city, with natural undulations. The natural stream running through this garden divides it into five areas; with each area containing different kinds of trees, like medicinal plants, vertical shaped trees, flowering trees, trees for shade, etc, along with environmentally suitable areas.

Hibiscus Garden, Sector 36

Hibiscus Garden is situated in sector 36 and was opened in the year 1974. It covers an area of 8 acres and houses 40 different varieties of hibiscus.

Garden of Fragrance, Sector 36

Garden of Fragrance is situated to the south of the Hibiscus garden and is full of aromatic plants, like Raat ki Rani, jasmine, damask rose etc.

Children Traffic Park, Sector 23

Children Traffic Park has been constructed in the shape of roads, with traffic lights in miniature form. It serves as the learning ground for cycling, for the young children, and is designed to instill in them the basic traffic rules. There is also an exhibition hall and lecture-cum-cinema hall in the park.

Smriti Upavan, Sector 1

Smriti Upavan is reserved for planting trees in memory of the departed souls. It was inaugurated in 14th November, 1998, by planting a banyan tree in the memory of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru. Every tree in the park stands in the name of a person who has left the earth.

Botanical Garden, Sector 14

There are two botanical gardens in the city. The garden between Rock Garden and the Sukhna Lake is spread over 88 acres and its main attractions are rock formations and small lily-pools. Another garden is located in the Punjab University. Cacti, succulent, lotus, evergreen and exotic plants are its specialties. The third one, in Sarangpur, is still in the developing process and is expected to be open to the public in the near future.

Terraced Garden, Sector 33

A small valley running through the sector has been developed into the Terraced Garden, which is spread over 10 acres and was opened in 1979. It has an illuminated musical fountain to amuse the visitors and also serves as the venue for the annual Chrysanthemum Show.

Topiary Park, Sector 35

Opened in 1987, Topiary Park has the creepers shaped out into various animal shaped as its major attraction.

Rock Garden

The list on parks and gardens in Chandigarh remains incomplete without a mention of the Rock Garden, which unlike other gardens, contains rocks and boulders, instead of flowers. It consists

of the art work made from industrial and urban waste. It is located between the Capital Complex and Sukhna Lake in Sector 1.

Besides the above listed parks and gardens, Chandigarh has 3245 hectares of forest area. This areas is mostly around Sukhna Lake, Sukhan Choe and Patiali ki Rao. Kansal and Nepli are the two reserved forests in Chandigarh. Both the places have Forest Rest Houses. One can explore a vast gallery of natural beauty in these forests but of course, after getting the entry permission from the Forest Department.