

# Rock Garden

**Location:** Sector 1, Chandigarh

**Built By:** Nek Chand

**Opened In:** 1976

**Timings:** 10 am to 7 pm daily (except Thursdays and public holidays)

**Highlights:** Artworks made from industrial and urban waste

**Rock Garden:** Chandigarh has a unique rock garden, with no similar edifice found in any other place in the world. It consists of the artwork that has been made from industrial and urban waste. It is located between the Capital Complex and Sukhna Lake, in Sector 1 of the 'City Beautiful'. The garden cuddles up amidst 20 acres of woods, in the form of an open air exhibition hall, theatre trove and a miniature maze, all rolled into one vast fantasy land of art and landscape. Let us explore the Rick Garden of Chandigarh in detail.

### History

Rock Garden is also known as the Nek Chand's Rock Garden, after its founder - Nek Chand. He was a government official, who started working on the garden in his spare time in 1957. He used to roam in the Shivalik foothills and pick up stones resembling bird, animal, human and abstract forms. He spent seven years collecting the materials and build up a stunning assortment of twenty thousand rocks, in amazing shapes. Gradually, he started mounting them around a hut prepared for this purpose, which developed into Rock Garden over time.

### Discovery

Rock Garden was discovered by Dr. S.K. Sharma accidentally, on 24th February 1973, almost 18 years after Nek Chand had begun working on it. By this time, it had grown to a 12 acre complex (49,000 square meters). The authorities took over the garden and inaugurated it as a public space in 1976. Today, it covers a total area of forty acre i.e. 160,000 square meters and has interlinked courtyards, each filled with hundreds of pottery-covered concrete sculptures, of dancers, musicians, animals, etc.

### Features

Rock Garden has a magnificent entrance, which welcomes the tourist to have an unusual experience. There are number of winding paths inside, providing the perfect complement to Le Corbusier's design for the civic grid of Chandigarh. Inside, you find an unbelievable gallery of rocks, boulders, broken chinaware, discarded fluorescent tubes, broken and cast away bangles, building waste and even hair gathered from barbers.

All the raw materials have been artistically molded into figures of almost everything that one finds on earth. The finishing is so perfect that you are left to wonder if they are actually made of waste or some refined raw material. To add to the beauty of the place, there are waterfalls, pools, an open-air theatre and a vast pavilion, with proper stage setting. Several cultural programmes are held at the theatre, with beauty of its own.

### **Impression Of Being In A Kingdom**

The layout of Rock Garden gives the visitor an impression of being in a kingdom. At the entrance, there is a small door where one has to bow to get through. This is symbolic of royal ambience and humility. As you go inside, you find a number of doorways, archways, vestibules, streets and lanes of different scales and dimensions. There is a wide display of courtyards and chambers as well, with an air of surprise engulfing the garden completely.

In the true spirit of make-believe kingdom, this garden consists of fourteen different chambers, like the main court (Darbar), poet's and musician's chamber, swimming pool for the queen, etc. Teej festival is celebrated at the Rock Garden of Chandigarh, with great pomp and show. It has been attracting tourists since long time. The garden is open to tourists daily from 10 am to 7 pm, except on Thursdays and public holidays.