

Renuka

The Renuka lake is surrounded by lush green forests supporting a variety of animal and bird life. Renuka lake is not only an idyllic holiday resort but also revered Pilgrim centre. Renuka lake is connected by road and lies in Sirmour district. It is 123 km from Parwanoo, 60 km from Paonta Sahib and 37 km from Nahan. With a circumference of 3214 m, Renuka lake is the largest natural lake in Himachal. It is shaped like a sleeping woman. Renuka was killed by her own son, the legendary Parsu Ram, in obedience to the orders of his father-the sage Jamadagni. After the deed was done, lake Renuka was formed surrounded by stepped fields of golden corn. Today the myth is brought to the fore when, each year in November, a fair is held to celebrate the immortality of Renuka and her son. The key-notes of the colourful fair are the festivity and devotional exuberance. It lasts for a week in which cultural programmes and folk dances are organised for the entertainment of visitors. Several idols of Parsu Ram, believed to be the incarnation of Lord Vishnu and other local deities, placed in decorated palanquins, are carried by an impressive procession to Parsu Ram Tal. Before the idols are installed in the temple, they are given a bath in this holy lake symbolising the body of the mother. The people from the surroundings areas gather here, chant praises of the two immortals, worship at the temple and take a dip in the holy water. An old ceremony takes place as the celebrants exchange turbans or caps or even a handful of water to become brothers and sister in the name of the deity. On the eve of the festival, markets spring up with stalls and amusements at which locally made wares are peddled together with home grown produce. Boating facilities are available in this lake for the tourists. The lake rests in a long valley and the surrounding slopes are covered with a variety of vegetation and thick woods. Boating is available on the lake.

Renuka : General Information

Altitude : 660 meters

Headquarter : Nahan (altitude 933 meters)

Location : in district Sirmour

Access by Air : The nearest airport in Himachal is Jubbarhatti 158 km.

Access by Rail : Nearest broad gauge line is Yamunanagar 106 km.

Access by Road : Almost each and every part of the state is linked by roads.

Distance : Nahan 36 km., Shimla to Renuka 165 km., Delhi to Renuka Lake 315 km.
Chandigarh to Renuka Lake 123 km.

Famous Places around Renuka :

The Math :- The main temple at Renuka 'The Math' was constructed by the invading Gurkhas in 1814. The temple houses an excellent image of Renuka Devi.

Mini Zoo :- A small zoological park on the banks on the Renuka lake has good collection of the local fauna.

Renuka Sanctuary :- Spread over 400 hectares of wood and grass land surrounding the sacred and picturesque Renuka lake, this Wildlife Sanctuary despite its small size, harbours several species of deer like Chital, Sambhar and Barking Deer. The threatened Kaleej pheasant and the more common Red jungle fowl are also found here.

The Renuka Lake and temple attract pilgrims from far and near. An added attraction is the lion safari. The sanctuary can be visited all the year round and is easily approachable from Chandigarh or Dehradun.

Choordhar :- Dominating the entire landscape of fields, forests and ravines is the Choordhar peak, which rises to 3,647 metres above sea level and is a trekking treat from Nahan walks. Approached by way of Dadahu, Sangarh, Bhawai, Gandhuri and Nahura it is a 50 km. trek. A less taxing journey is by taxi or car to Nahura and thereafter a walk of 16 km. The climb is difficult but rewarding. The peak offers a fine view in south of the Gangetic plains and the Satluj river and towards north the Badrinath, a well known Hindu pilgrim centre. Also seen are the hills of Chakrata and Shimla from the top. An alternative route to Choordhar is through Rajgarh an orchard country.

Wild Life Park :- Around Renuka lake there is a Wild Life Park which has a number of Sambhar, Chital, Barking Deer and Hob Deer. These animals can be seen from the machans erected at the head of grassy glade early in the morning and late in the evening. Lions can also be seen from a closed jeep.

Gayatri Temple :- On the left bank of the Renuka lake there are three Ashrams run by Sadhus

and these have inns to accommodate pilgrims visiting this sacred lake. Gayatri temple has a 1.60 meter high Panch Mukhi Ma Gayatri marble statue, marble idols of Ganpati, Lord Vishnu, Lord Shiva, Lord Brahma and Lord Indra have also been installed here. This temple is dedicated to Sri Ma Gayatri the mother of Vedas, the treasure of Hindu wisdom.