

Salogra

Introduction

On the way to Shimla near Solan, Salogra (height - 1509m) is one place where you can actually hear the wind-whispering romance when it flows gently, singing songs of passion as it assumes the force of a current. When clouds, heavy and grey, decide to loosen their knotted shapes to thirsty leaves and stems, they are accompanied by a ceaseless thunder. First, it appears as if a white haze has gripped the mountain head, then slowly it is lost in a shower from tip to toe. The sight of this bathing beauty is breathtaking. One cannot hold an impulse to walk out in the rain and feel the drops drench you through and through.

You can go crazy discovering shapes and faces in the rocks. The tall deodars seem solemn and scholarly. They sway with the wind, more at the top than anywhere else, as if nodding in an intellectual discourse.

Tourists Attractions

Krol Ka Tibba, almost 5 km away from the hamlet of Salogra, beckons you. Climb up the mountain right behind the quaint Salogra railway station. Walk up past the cottages until you are 50 m above. First, the fields accost you questioningly. A goat track, past fields and craggy rocks takes you beyond numerous villages en route. You climb gradually and the sites left behind appear tiny and insignificant. The comfort of bricks and curtains is lost in the comforting presence of the green mountain ahead. There is space only for footsteps as you go round a mountain. For the not so adventurous, it is safer to go up across the middle of the mountain and cross, instead of skirting round the edges. Ahead, the rocky mountains rise with authority and disdain to their fellow accomplices. More than half of their rise is straight and clear. The effect of a drawing on canvas is created. The remaining portion of the

mountains is covered with a dense growth of trees. The wooded head stands as a magician in front of its restless audience. The trek takes one into layers of foliage till the gurgle of a gushing stream is heard, which pours forth from the womb of a mountain and gives life force to people below. A room has been built on top of the stream to protect the source from being polluted. Pipes run from this place to the thirsty hamlet below. A similar stream is close by that creates a rippling sound to fill the space. The water at this spring source is sweet and satisfying. The devout can take a walk on the highway towards Barog, barely a kilometer away, and discover a temple dedicated to Lord Shiva. This is also the beneficiary of a mountain rivulet and, sitting here, partaking in hymns, one can experience that elusive peace. The walk back to Salogra discovering the bulbul's (wren) proudly raised ponytail crest, the squirrel's frightened run, the raven's alarmed caw-caw, and the village girl's feeble attempt to climb a crooked fruit-bearing tree clad in a faded skirt, all bring the environment close. To the right are six folds of mountains rising one after another till they fade and merge into the sky.

Nightfall at Salogra is particularly charming. As dusk approaches, a blue haze falls on the mountains and gradually sucks up the silhouetted sharp mountain lines. Far ahead, straight as the crow flies, is a high mountain. In distance, those are the city lights of Shimla—a cluster of radiance. The passionate moon only breaks this reverie.

The journey back to Kalka, however, in the evening can be charming. The twists and turns of this vintage railway take one through dark tunnels and thick foliage. The mountains around are lit at random.

Connectivity with life is established again at Kalka but not without memories of solitude and the freedom of mountain breeze.