

A Guide to Himachal

This 10-day circuit traces the spiritual and scenic spine of Himachal — from the ancient temples of Hatkoti and Sarahan to the apple orchards of Rohru and the panoramic ridges of Narkanda and Hatu Peak. It's a journey through quiet villages, forested climbs, and colonial echoes, perfect for those who seek depth, beauty, and offbeat immersion.

Trip Overview

Duration: 10 Days

Best Season: March to November (*Hatu Peak accessible; apple season peaks Aug–Oct*)

Total Distance: ~850–900 km

Vehicle Type: SUV / High Clearance (*small cars possible but not ideal for Hatu stretch*)

Difficulty: Moderate (*steep climbs, narrow roads, remote stretches*)

Permits: No permits required

Mobile Network: Jio/BSNL in towns; patchy or no signal in Sungri, Hatu Peak

Fuel Planning: Reliable pumps in Solan, Rohru, Rampur, Narkanda, Shimla

Day-by-Day Itinerary

Day 1: Solan → Hatkoti

- **Distance/Time:** ~130 km | 5–6 hrs
 - **Highlights:**
 - Drive through Chail and Kharapathar
 - Visit **Hatkoti Temple Complex** — ancient Shakti shrine
 - **Adventure:** Riverbank walk along Pabbar
 - **Stay:** Hatkoti guesthouse
 - **Tip:** Temple photography restricted inside sanctum
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Day 2: Hatkoti → Rohru

- **Distance/Time:** ~25 km | 1 hr
- **Highlights:**
 - Apple orchards, riverside charm
 - Visit **Shikru Devta Temple**
- **Adventure:** Short hike to **Larot ridge** (*optional*)

A Guide to Himachal

- **Stay:** Rohru homestay
 - **Tip:** Try local red rice and siddu
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Day 3: Rohru → Sungri

- **Distance/Time:** ~40 km | 2–3 hrs
 - **Highlights:**
 - Forested climb to **Sungri Ridge**
 - Panoramic views of Pabbar Valley
 - **Adventure:** Sunset walk along the ridge
 - **Stay:** Sungri cottage
 - **Tip:** Carry snacks; limited food options
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Day 4: Sungri → Rampur–Bushahr

- **Distance/Time:** ~80 km | 3–4 hrs
 - **Highlights:**
 - Drive along Satluj River
 - Visit **Padam Palace** in Bushahr
 - **Adventure:** Evening walk along Rampur ghats
 - **Stay:** Rampur hotel
 - **Tip:** Explore Bushahr's wooden architecture
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Day 5: Rampur → Sarahan

- **Distance/Time:** ~40 km | 2 hrs
- **Highlights:**
 - Climb to **Sarahan** — gateway to Kinnaur
 - Visit **Bhimakali Temple** — fusion of Hindu-Buddhist styles
- **Adventure:** Temple architecture walk
- **Stay:** Sarahan guesthouse

A Guide to Himachal

- **Tip:** Modest attire required for temple entry
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Day 6: Sarahan → Narkanda

- **Distance/Time:** ~100 km | 4–5 hrs
 - **Highlights:**
 - Forested descent to **Narkanda**
 - Visit **Stokes Farm** (*seasonal*)
 - **Adventure:** Apple orchard walk
 - **Stay:** Narkanda
 - **Tip:** Try Himachali thali at a local dhaba
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Day 7: Narkanda → Hatu Peak → Theog

- **Distance/Time:** ~60 km | 3–4 hrs
 - **Pass:** Hatu Peak (3,400 m)
 - **Highlights:**
 - Trek or drive to **Hatu Temple**
 - Views of snow-capped ranges and cedar forests
 - **Adventure:** Hatu Peak trek (*7 km one way*)
 - **Stay:** Theog
 - **Tip:** Start trek early; carry water and snacks
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Day 8: Theog → Kufri

- **Distance/Time:** ~40 km | 2 hrs
- **Highlights:**
 - Colonial-era charm, yak rides, ridge views
 - Visit **Himalayan Nature Park**
- **Adventure:** Short hike to **Mahasu Peak**
- **Stay:** Kufri

A Guide to Himachal

- **Tip:** Avoid weekends for crowd-free experience
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Day 9: Kufri → Shimla

- **Distance/Time:** ~20 km | 1 hr
 - **Highlights:**
 - Visit **Jakhu Temple, The Ridge, Mall Road**
 - Optional detour to **Annandale Army Museum**
 - **Adventure:** Sunset walk on The Ridge
 - **Stay:** Shimla
 - **Tip:** Book café dinner with valley view
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Day 10: Shimla → Solan

- **Distance/Time:** ~50 km | 2 hrs
 - **Highlights:**
 - Scenic descent through pine forests
 - Return to Solan (*trip end*)
 - **Tip:** Stop at **Barog station** for heritage photo
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Essentials to Carry

- **Documents:** DL, RC, insurance, ID proofs
 - **Clothing:** Warm layers, rain jacket, trekking gear
 - **Footwear:** Hiking shoes, sandals for temple visits
 - **Health:** Basic meds, ORS, insect repellent
 - **Gear:** Power banks, torch, offline maps, camera
 - **Misc:** Sunglasses, SPF 50+, lip balm, reusable water bottle
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Permits, Fuel & Checkpoints

- **Permits:**

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- No permits required for Indian or foreign nationals
 - **Fuel:**
 - Reliable pumps: Solan, Rohru, Rampur, Narkanda, Shimla
 - Top up before Hatu Peak leg
 - **Checkpoints:**
 - Occasional forest check near Hatu and Sungri
 - **Timing Tips:**
 - Hatu Peak best trekked before noon
 - Temple visits close by 6 pm
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Insider Tips

- **Best season:** March–June for bloom; Sept–Nov for clear skies
 - **Photography:** Hatu Peak panoramas, Bhimakali Temple architecture, Sungri ridge views
 - **Local eats:** Try siddu, red rice, and apple chutney in Rohru and Sarahan
 - **Eco-ethic:** No littering on trails; respect temple zones
 - **Road caution:** Sungri and Hatu stretches require slow, careful driving
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Route Map Overview (Text)

Solan → Hatkoti → Rohru → Sungri → Rampur–Bushahr → Sarahan → Narkanda → Hatu Peak → Theog → Kufri → Shimla → Solan