

# Hampta Pass Trek- An Experience of a Lifetime



*Apurva Sood\**

*"On earth there is no heaven, but there are pieces of it." - Jules Renard*

Ever since I was a little girl, my father would always make sure we travel to places away from the hustle and bustle of the city. He would wake us up early in the morning to show us the sunrise and we'd go on long nature walks . I have to admit, I was never happy with this early morning routine on vacation. It's only when I grew older, I understood why exploring the great outdoors was his idea of traveling. There's something so incredibly powerful and calming about being around nature, a sense of belonging that we're all deprived of in our urban life.

Thanks to my father, I grew up to be a total mountain person. After traveling extensively in India, I was never more excited as I was to go on my first trek to Hampta Pass. At 15,000 feet, Hampta Pass in Himachal Pradesh is one of the most beautiful crossings in the Himalayas. A mix of dense green valley of Kullu and rugged terrains and barren mountains of Lahaul.



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**It was my first trek where the challenges were many and the excitement even more.**

**It took some rounds of convincing but I managed to convince a few close friends too. With some notes and guidance from our trekking instructor, we started training rigorously as it was a physically demanding trek. We were given a long list of instructions. One thing particularly stood out in that list : There will be no cellular network . We were excited and nervous at the same time. All of us had never been totally cut off from the world for more than a few hours.**



**We trekked each day to a new base camp and slept in tents overnight. They were not very comfortable but definitely added to the adventure. There was so much scenic beauty around us, words cannot justify it. We spent hours looking at the mountains, valleys filled with snow, clear rivers, sunrises and sunsets.**

**The challenges came on the peak trek days. Due to rain, the terrain became very slippery and it was tough to move forward. Donned in our ponchos, slowly and steadily we used to reach our campsite and even crossed two rivers on foot.**



**The last day was the summit day. Nine hours, a lot of sore muscles and a snow storm later, we finally reached the Hampta pass. The moment we all had been waiting for. The air became very chilly and we were surrounded by glaciers.**

**After five days, our adventure had come to an end and all of us couldn't believe that we had managed to finish the trek. This sense of accomplishment and happiness made me wonder - for so many days, we were walking kilometers at stretch with backpacks, eating simple meals, had no network in our phones and yet having the best time. I thought to myself - how can someone deprived of basic necessities like a comfortable bed and well functioning restrooms be having the best time? This is when nature made me learn my first lesson of the trek - happiness is not a product of possessing things.**

**The first glimpse of the snow-clad mountains, a hot cup of tea after a tiring day, a maggi point in the middle of nowhere, a warm sleeping bag and a hot shower after coming from freezing temperatures reminded me that happiness exists in many forms. We just fail to notice it.**



***Pictures: Apurva Sood***