Auli; A heaven on the earth

Auli is one of the most beautiful places in Uttarakhand. India's mini Switzerland "Auli" is seen spreading its beauty in a different colour all the time. Auli is one of the favourite Himalayan destinations of India. This place is surrounded by snow-capped Himalayan hills, oak and tall deodar trees from all sides. Auli, located in the Chamoli district of Uttarakhand, is one of the most famous skiing destinations in the country and has been attracting tourists and adventure lovers for a long time. Apart from skiing, you can also see mountain ranges like Mana Parvat, Nanda Devi, and Kamat. When the golden rays of the sun fall on these snow-covered hills, then seeing that sight is seems as a dream comes true.

## History:

It is believed that Adi Shankaracharya visited this place in the 8th century. This place is also called Bugyal, which means "Field of grazing land". In 1942, English Deputy Commissioner Berneday reached Auli and was so impressed by the supernatural beauty of this place that every time he came to Auli. The Indian Institute of Mountaineering and Skiing was established here on 25 March 1978.

Auli was opened for tourism. When Uttarakhand was a part of Uttar Pradesh, the government operated the ropeway in the year 1993 for its development in terms of tourism. This ropeway is the longest in Asia. Not only was this, after the formation of a separate state of Uttarakhand, the organization of skiing games started to give recognition to Auli all over the world. For this, special machines were also imported from France, which could make ice artificially when there was a shortage of snow.

# When to go, Auli?

Auli is a place that can be visited both in summer and winter. The best time to plan a trip to Auli is between April to June or October to February. If you also want to go to Auli for skiing, then the time between November to March will be the best. Due to heavy snowfall, the climate remains very cold between December and February, while the weather between May and November remains cool. If you want, you can relax by engaging in outdoor activities.

# Famous food:

Dining options are limited in the city, so resorts and hotels tend to be the most convenient options. Here you will get a chance to taste Garhwali food at some places. Garhwali cuisine includes a variety of pulses, leafy vegetables and rice. Local delicacies include Kacholi(for non-vegetarians), Bal Mithai (a popular local sweet), Singhori. Small cafes serving tea, coffee and instant noodles line the roadside.

# How to reach Auli?

Auli is well connected by road. Located on the Badrinath-Rishikesh road, Joshimath, the nearest largest human population, is only thirteen kilometres away from Auli. Joshimath also has a helipad.

The best way to reach Auli is to take a bus from Delhi to Rishikesh. It is an overnight journey. From Rishikesh, you can either take a private taxi to Auli (9 hrs) or a shared cab to Joshimath (8 hrs). You can also take the second longest cable car in India from Joshimath to Auli. This cable car is 16 km long, takes 22 minutes. Remember that cab/bus operators do not drive after sunset on the roads between Rishikesh and Joshimath.

Cable cars are one of the most popular modes of transport in Auli. Buses are also available, but randomly. You can also book cabs from other cities to travel around Auli.

# Fun Activities & Tourist Attractions in Auli

### Skiing:

Skiing in Auli offers beautiful views of peaks like Nanda Devi Kamet, Mana Parvat, Bithratoli, Neelkanth and Nar Parvat. Surrounded by evergreen coniferous and oak forests and the snow-clad hill station of Auli is an ideal place for skiing in India. Moreover, Auli in the Gorson Reserve Forest is home to some of the rarest Himalayan wildlife widely seen while skiing.

The snow-capped slopes of Auli, which once offered a training ground for paramilitary forces, were declared the best skiing grounds globally by French and Austrian experts. It is highly recommended to practice skiing with a professional and learn to ski. The average cost of skiing in Auli ranges between Rs 20,000 to Rs 50,000, depending on the duration of the stay. It is an ideal season for skiing as there is ample snowfall from November to February.

### ****Cable Car:****

Auli has the longest cable car gondola in Asia and the highest in the world. Along with this, there is also a chair lift and ski lift. Auli's ropeway connects it with Joshimath. It takes 25 minutes to reach Auli from Joshimath via this ropeway. The ropeway has a total of ten towers. The one-way fare for the ropeway is around Rs 250.

### ****Trekking:****

 Auli is not only famous for skiing. Apart from this, trekking is also another option for tourists. Many trekking routes start from Auli. These treks pass through charming untouched mountains, lush green pastures and snow-white valleys. Some treks are short, while others may take a week or more to complete. For example, Aali-Gorson Bugyal (7 km), Gorson-Talli Lake (6 km) and Khulara-Tapovan (9 km) are treks that can be completed in a day. Apart from this, there is also a long trek completed in a week, the Quarry-Pass trek.

# Places to visit in Auli:

## Saildhar Tapovan:

Saildhar Tapovan of Auli is a beautiful tourist attraction. The hot water fountains running here are worth seeing. It is said that tourists who are mentally and physically strong can easily visit this place. But tourists need to be very careful to go here.

## Artificial lake:

This lake with a capacity of 25 thousand kiloliters was created in 2010. The view of the Nanda Devi mountain range is made from this lake. In winter, when there is less snowfall than required, artificial ice is made using this lake. French machines are used to make artificial snow. This lake has been used to make ice for cold sports competitions. Snow games are also organized here every year.

## ****Joshimath:****

It is a town in the Chamoli district of Uttarakhand state. Situated at an altitude of 6150 feet, it is the gateway to many Himalayan mountaineering expeditions, trekking trails and pilgrimage centres like Badrinath. Joshimath serves as an important religious centre for Hindu pilgrims and is located adjacent to one of the four 'monasteries' founded by Adi Guru Sri Shankaracharya in the 8th century. This 'Math' is dedicated to Atharvaveda, the holy book of Hindus. If you want to explore religion, spirituality and adventure in one place, then it is a good decision to go here.

One of the major attractions here is a temple dedicated to the mighty Narasimha, who is believed to be an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. The government has also started the winter Char Dham Yatra to turn Joshimath into a major winter travel destination. Overlooking the confluence of the Alaknanda and Dhauliganga rivers at Vishnu Prayag, Joshimath is also the winter home of Lord Badri as the idol is shifted from Badrinath to Joshimath during winters.

## ****Chhatarkund:****

Chhatarkund is another lake that is the main attraction of Auli. This lake is situated at a distance of just 4 km from Auli. It is at a distance of 1 km from Gursaun Bugyal. Surrounded by deodar, oak trees, the beauty of this lake is made on sight. The view of sunrise and sunset time is made from here. Tourists flock to this lake early in the morning to see the orange, red sun so that their cameras can capture beautiful pictures.

## Gurso Bugyal:

Gurso Bugyal is a picturesque broad meadow in Uttarakhand, also known for its lush green pasture land, surrounded by huge coniferous and oak trees. This heavenly trespasser provides a spectacular view of all the nearby and important mountain ranges like Nanda Devi, Drona and Trishul. The 360-degree view of the Himalayan peaks and the beautiful cities in-between visits Gurso Bugyal a memorable experience.

During spring, the white snow sheets melt and leave space for herbs and shrubs to grow. The land turns into a natural park with infinite varieties of plants, trees and flowers. A 3 km trek from Auli will take you to this beautiful place. You can also head towards Chattarkund, which is just 1 km away. A small tract of land with an etheric water body known to hold freshwater. Gurso Bugyal to Chattarkund is the best possible trek.

## ****Chenab Lake:****

This lake is built in the middle of lush green forest, oak and deodar. Although to see the beauty of this beautiful lake, you will have to reach there by walking, but the beauty of this lake will not disappoint you, you will have to trek some distance. The view you will get to see after trekking will not be less than an expensive gift. The beauty of this lake is made in the spring season. This lake is located just two km away from GMVN Guest House. Chenab Lake looks like a natural lake, but it is an artificial lake that has been made according to tourism.

## ****Trishul Parvat:****

This mountain situated above is a famous tourist destination of Auli. The name of this mountain is derived from the trident of Lord Shiva. Apart from being a popular skiing destination, it is also a training ground for the Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force soldiers.

## ****The magnificent temple of Hanuman ji:****

When Hanuman ji came to the Himalayas to take Sanjeevini herb, he stood on a mound in Auli and saw Dronagiri mountain from Auli; he saw the divine light of Sanjeevini herb. So full of medicinal properties, Auli is also called "Sanjeevani Shikhar". And on this "Sanjeevani Shikhar," there is a grand temple of Hanuman ji.

## Snow sports venue

This tourist located in Uttarakhand, Auli is also famous worldwide for winter snow sports (skiing). The first South Asian Winter Games were organized here in the year 2009, and after that, the traffic of tourists to this place increased significantly. Tourists in Auli come from far and wide to see the natural beauty of this place. Auli covered with snow looks very beautiful. This winter sports venue of Auli is so famous that people from all over the country and abroad come here to take training in skiing. The snow-capped slopes of Auli have been compared by experts to the best skiing grounds globally and have been recognized as one of the best. From this snow sports site of Auli, a panoramic view of the ranges of mountains like Dunagiri mountain, Hari Parvat, Mana Parvat, and Neelkanth etc., is visible. If tourists want to enjoy skiing by coming here, they can enjoy this game by paying Rs 500 - 1000 (according to the season).

## Kwani Bugyal

This place is located at an altitude of 3380 feet, 12 km from Gurso Bugyal; Kwani Bugyal is a very popular destination among trekkers. Offering panoramic views of snow-capped mountains like Nanda Devi and Dunagiri, it is a favourite camping spot. It is one of the best Auli tourist places. Kwani Bugyal is well connected to most of the important towns and cities of Uttarakhand.

The trekker’s services are provided at Joshimath Base Camp for hires like porters, guides, camping equipment and kitchen. From here, trek to Auli and then trek for 13 kms to the lush green pastures of Gurso Bugyal. The place is a popular destination among tourists during the summer months when hundreds of people flock to the area for trekking.

## Bhavishya Badri-

From Tapovan to Bhavishya, Badri can be reached on foot. This place is situated amidst a dense forest. Situated 2744 meters above sea level, this place is one of the five Badri pilgrimages. Badrinath, Yogadhyana Badri, Adi Badri and Vriddha Badri are other pilgrimages. According to the beliefs, it will not be possible to reach the Badrinath shrine in future due to bad weather. Hence it is believed that this place will be worshipped as an alternative to Badrinath. An idol of Narasimha and an incarnation of the Hindu god Shiva is enshrined in a temple located here.

Nandprayag is located in the Chamoli district of Uttarakhand. It is situated at the confluence of the Alaknanda and Mandakini rivers. Many devotees take a dip in this confluence to wash off their sins. According to the Puranas, Nandprayag was the capital of Yaduvansh. Vishnuprayag, Karnprayag, Rudraprayag and Devprayag are the other Prayag. Nandprayag is famous for its beautiful views of the snow-capped mountains. Many devotees from all over the country come to visit the Gopalji Temple located on the banks of the river Alakhnanda.