



## [Glory of Bharath](#) » Bharath Darshan

This month our sojourn is to the sacred Tungnath.

### Tungnath



Tungnath is the highest Shiva temple in the world and is one of the five and the highest Panch Kedar temples located in the mountain range of Tunganath in Rudraprayag district, in the Indian state of Uttarakhand. The Tunganath (literal meaning: Lord of the peaks) mountains form the Mandakini and Alaknanda river valleys. Located at an altitude of 3,680 m (12,073 ft), and just below the peak of Chandrashila, Tungnath temple is the highest Hindu shrine dedicated to Lord Shiva. The temple is believed to be 1000 years old and is the second in the pecking order of the Panch Kedars. It has a rich legend linked to the Pandavas, heroes of the Mahabharata epic.

Cushioned in the splendid mountain range with the excellent surprises of nature is the Tungnath Temple, among the highest erected shrines of Lord Shiva, nestled at an altitude of 3,680 m. It has been magnetizing millions of Hindu pilgrims from the last five years because of its majestic setting and religious significance. Tungnath Temple, attained a second position in pact of Panch Kedar, the others are Madhyamaheshwar, Kedarnath, Rudranath and Kalpeshwar.

A mild aroma of marigold and sandalwood, a gentle puff of air, vistas of snow clad mountains and scenic exquisiteness bestow one an exceptional sort of feeling and never let him/her have a sense of fatigue or exhaustion. The temple is connected with lots of stories of ancient time. One of which is Lord Ram carrying out meditation to get released off the curse of Brahmahatya for having slaughtered Ravana. Thus, it started hailing by the name of Chandrashila since then.

Constructed in north Indian style as other temples, the interiors of the temple are made of marble with ornamented walls. At a time only 10 people can be accommodated inside the temple. A stone picture of Nandi has been placed in front of lord Shiva idol, which is at the entrance, while on the right; a picture of Lord Ganesha has been installed, which is worshipped with flowers by devotees. Moreover, there are numerous smaller temples situated around this shrine having housed images of some gods.

#### History and Legend

It is believed that after the war of Mahabharat, Pandavas wanted to seek the blessings of Lord Shiva. Thus, they marched towards Kashi, the habitat of Lord Shiva to get rid of the sins committed by killing Kauravas & Brahmins. Lord Shiva was annoyed due to the killing of Kauravas & Brahmins by Pandavas and did not want to see them. Therefore, Lord Shiva transformed himself into Nandi (A Bull) and hid in the hills of Garhwal. The Pandavas could not get Shiva in Kashi, searching him; they reached the hills of Garhwal. Bhim recognised Lord Shiva in the form of Nandi in Gupt Kashi and tried to stop by holding tail, But Lord Shiva got submerged into the ground. After that He appeared in five different forms and at five different places, in Kedarnath they found the back of Nandi, in Madmaheshwar the navel and belly, in Tungnath- arms, in Rudranath- the face and in Kalpeshwar- hair and head. The Pandavas considering the kindness of Shiva, they got constructed temples at all the five places and worshiped Lord Shiva and got rid of the sins committed by the killing of Kauravas and Brahmins.

One of the most popular treks that draw folks from wide and far to undertake the hike at any time of the year is Chandrashila Peak. While hiking, people get an opportunity of catching glimpses of splendid Chaukhamba peaks, Trishul peak, Bandar punch and Nandadevi peak. Positioned at an elevation of 13,000 ft above sea level, it factually signifies "moon rock" and according to the legend Chandra, the moon god had done penance here.

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