

Old Rajpur Road

Distance: 9 kilometers Total Ascent: 0 feet Total Descent: 2965 feet
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Description:

Rajpur, a small town south of Mussoorie, was once on the main road from Dehra Dun to Mussoorie. The auto road with its lesser grade now bypasses the town. Rajpur is known for its retreat centers, its large Tibetan population, and Tibetan products.

The hike to Rajpur follows the crest of the ridge that drops steadily southward from Mussoorie toward Dehra Dun. This ridge is the watershed between Rispana Rao, the Song River, and the Ganga to the east and Tons Nadi, the Asan River, and the Yamuna to the west. Much of the hike follows the historic roadway through small villages and past two of Mussoorie's well-known schools.

Begin at the junction of the old Rajpur Road with the Mussoorie Bypass Road. This is at the southern point of a ridge just west of Wynberg Allen School and the 2 Km marker. Follow the cemented road steeply down to Barlowganj, the Jaypee Hotel, and St. George's College (1 K). Continue on the main road as it more slowly descends to Oak Grove School (3 K). Here the auto road has a switchback and begins a steep descent to the west to join the Mussoorie road. At the switchback, continue south on a smaller cemented road. This road steadily deteriorates until it can no longer carry auto traffic but makes a fine trail. At 4 K, the trail comes to a T-junction. The right (westward) branch is the larger and descends to the Dehra Dun road and the village of Kolhukhet. The left (southeastward) branch is the less traveled, but it continues to follow the old Rajpur roadway.

The old roadbed, once well maintained with cement crossties to stop erosion, is now poorly maintained with fallen rock here and there partially blocking the trail. With its southern treeless exposure, the trail is quite sunny and warm as you pass the 4000 foot elevation mark. The road ends abruptly where it has fallen away due to a large landslide many years ago. A steep user path with much loose rock connects this point with a better trail a hundred feet below (6 K).

Follow the trail south until it connects with an even better trail (7 K). A short way down this trail, the old Rajpur road is picked up once more and followed past a temple and the old tollgate into town. For the main part of Rajpur, follow the road east and south. One can return to Mussoorie by the same trail or take a taxi from the taxi stand (9 K).

