Raulane Festival Kinnaur

Delhi - Shimla - Kalpa - Sangla - Shimla - Delhi

Tour Packages

Tour Basics •

Duration: 06 Days 05 Nights	**Route:** Delhi - Shimla - Kalpa - Sangla - Shimla - Delhi

Delhi — 6D 5NShimla — 5D 4N

About This Trip •

Raulane Festival of Himachal Pradesh – A Living Winter-Spring Ritual of Kinnaur

The Raulane Festival is among the oldest surviving cultural traditions of Himachal Pradesh, deeply rooted in the high-altitude villages of Kalpa and the greater Kinnaur region. Locally known as *Raulane* or *Raulane Mela*, this sacred celebration marks the ceremonial farewell of the Saunis, mythical celestial beings believed to descend during winter to guard the community against the extreme Himalayan cold.

Celebrated at the cusp of winter and spring, the festival reflects a rare blend of spirituality, folklore, and community identity that has endured for centuries.

When and Where Is the Raulane Festival Celebrated?

The Raulane Festival typically takes place between March and April, often a few days after Holi, and continues for five to seven days. The celebrations unfold within sacred temple spaces, most notably the Santang Temple and the Nagin Narayan Temple in Kalpa.

During this period, the quiet mountain village transforms into a sacred arena of rituals, chants, and symbolic performances that feel timeless and untouched by the modern world.

Why Is the Raulane Festival Gaining Global Attention?

The festival recently caught worldwide attention after striking visuals surfaced online, masked figures draped in vivid fabrics, adorned with heavy ancestral silver and gold jewellery, dancing against snow-covered landscapes. The imagery appeared almost surreal, blending myth with reality.

What truly sets the Raulane Festival apart is its complete authenticity. Unlike many cultural events today, it remains free from commercialisation. There are no tourist stages, no curated performances, and no schedules for cameras. Everything happens organically, as it has for generations.

This raw, deeply spiritual nature, combined with enigmatic rituals, gender-transformative symbolism, and ancient customs, has sparked global curiosity.

Rituals and Symbolism of the Raulane Festival

At the core of the festival are two sacred figures:

- **Raula – The Groom**
- **Raulane – The Bride**

Men, selected through long-established customs, traditionally portray both roles. Raula appears fully veiled, using *gacchi*, a woven cloth that conceals every part of his body. Raulane, meaning “the bride,” is dressed in traditional Kinnauri women’s attire, including *doru, choli, pattu*, and layers of heirloom jewellery that can weigh several kilograms.

The bride figure gives the festival its name, Raulane.

Inside the temple, Raula and Raulane perform a slow, trance-like dance. These movements are not rehearsed; locals believe they are guided by spiritual intuition, channelled by the Saunis themselves.

Masked characters known as Zannpundulu also appear, symbolically driving away negative energies. The atmosphere fills with rhythmic traditional music, sacred chants, and the laughter of Raula, considered an auspicious sign of prosperity and a good harvest.

Villagers scatter sattu (barley flour) during processions, symbolising abundance while echoing the playful spirit of Holi.

History and Cultural Importance of Raulane Festival

According to local belief, the Sauni fairies descend from high alpine pastures during winter to protect the people of Kinnaur. The Raulane Festival serves as their formal farewell, expressing gratitude as they return to the mountains with the arrival of spring.

Beyond rituals, Raulane is a powerful expression of community identity. Families bring out ancestral jewellery preserved for generations, elders narrate folklore, and every age group participates. The festival acts as a cultural bridge, passing traditions from one generation to the next.

Is the Raulane Festival Open to Tourists?

The Raulane Festival is not designed as a tourist attraction. While visitors may observe, the celebration is deeply sacred and intended for the community, their deities, and the unseen spirits they honour.

Those who attend are expected to remain respectful, maintain silence, follow local guidance, and understand that this is a living ritual, not a performance. Its growing fame comes not from promotion, but from its timeless purity.

Stay Categories & Options •

Double Sharing	Persons: 2	INR 15,500.00	~~INR 18,500.00~~	Save INR 3,000.00
Triple Sharing	Persons: 3	INR 14,500.00	~~INR 17,500.00~~	Save INR 3,000.00
Double Sharing	Persons: 2	INR 13,500.00	~~INR 16,500.00~~	Save INR 3,000.00
Triple Sharing	Persons: 3	INR 12,500.00	~~INR 15,500.00~~	Save INR 3,000.00

Itinerary •

Day 1: Delhi to Shimla | Dist: 348 km | Time: 07 to 08 hr | Altitude: 238 to 2272m

- Your journey from Delhi will start at night, either by Volvo bus or cab.
- After a scenic 7 to 8-hour drive through the picturesque valleys of Himachal Pradesh, you will arrive in Shimla the next day.

Meals: Nil

Overnight: Journey by Volvo Bus or Cab

Day 2: Shimla to Kalpa (Arrival & Local Immersion) | Dist:230km | Time: 02 to 03 hr | Altitude: 2630m to 3280m

- After arriving in Shimla, continue your drive towards Kalpa, passing through the scenic towns of Rampur and Karcham along the way.
- Later in the evening, explore the village (temples, orchards) to soak in the pre-festival atmosphere.

Meals: Dinner

Night: Stay at the hotel in Kalpa

Day 3: Rituals & Preparations

- Observe locals, often in preparation for the festival. Witness the creation of flower garlands and the preparation of the palanquin (palki).

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Night: Stay at the hotel in Kalpa

Day 4: The Festival Day

- Experience the main events: masked men (Raula and Raulane) in traditional attire and heavy jewellery performing silent, symbolic, and ritual dances to honour the "Sauni" (fairy-spirits).
- Engage with locals, enjoy traditional Kinnauri cuisine, and witness the final, poignant, and hopeful farewell to the spirits, often held near the Nagin Narayan temple

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Night: Stay at the hotel in Kalpa

Day 5: Kalpa to Sangla | Dist: 40 km | Time: 02 to 03 hr | Altitude: 2960 m to 2276 m

- After arriving in Sangla, continue your drive towards Chitkul, the last inhabited village near the Indo-Tibetan border.
- By evening, you'll check in to your hotel.

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Night: Stay at Homestay/Hotel in Sangla/Chitkul

Day 6: Sangla to Shimla and Depart | Dist: 236 km | Time: 08 to 09 hr | Altitude: 2960 m to 2276 m

- Wake up to the stunning views of Kalpa Valley.
- After enjoying your morning tea and breakfast, begin your drive back to Shimla.
- Reach Shimla by late evening, from where you can either board your bus to Delhi or continue your journey by cab.

Meals: Breakfast

Night: Overnight Journey by Volvo Bus or Cab

Inclusions •

Accommodation will be provided on a double or triple-sharing basis, depending on the hotel or homestay listed in the itinerary.

Trip Captain included for group departures.

Daily breakfast and dinner are outlined in the itinerary.

All sightseeing and excursions will follow the planned schedule.

Driver charges, tolls, and parking fees are covered.

All necessary permits are included.

Exclusions •

Lunch, bottled water, and snacks are not included.

5% GST applies to the total package cost.

Expenses incurred if you choose to end your trip early are not covered.

Additional costs incurred due to natural events, such as landslides, road closures, or government-imposed restrictions, will be borne by the traveller.

Anything not mentioned under ‘Inclusions’ will be treated as an exclusion.

Travel insurance does not cover medical emergencies, evacuation, hospitalisation, or luggage.

Trip Captain is not provided for private/custom tours unless arranged separately.

Room heater charges, if required, are to be paid directly at the property.

Entry fees to monasteries and monuments are not part of the package.

Get in Touch •

WhatsApp: Chat Email: julley@thewanderyak.com Website: https://thewanderyak.com