

THE SOUND *Of Silence*

On her recent visit to the hills, Ruhhie Shahiin spent some time in The White Peaks, a private, peaceful homestay nestled among the sparkling oak forests of Nainital. Apart from a tremendous view of white Himalayan peaks, she experienced silence like never before...

Roughly 325 kms and a seven hour drive from Delhi takes you to the small village of Gagar. It is literally so small that if you shut your eyes for 2 minutes, you will miss it. A few homes and local shops is all there is to this village. But, the surprise lies in a small hike up towards the Shiv temple in the forest, which takes you

straight to this homestay with a view that will blow your mind. The white (it is covered with snow all through the year) Himalayan peaks stand tall and proud shimmering away in the sunlight.

A short walk away from Gagar is the bustling town called Bhowali, your

one-stop shop for groceries, fresh vegetables and all things local.

The Homestay

Owned by a charming couple from Delhi, The White Peaks is filled with the love of those two. You can see their beautiful journey together, while getting warm in front of the fire-

place and sipping on adrak ki chai made affectionately by the house help, Mohan, through personal photographs adorning the walls and top shelf of the fireplace.

With two intimate and comfortable rooms, this cottage can accommodate

up to four people. The best part is that you don't need to leave your pets behind. They let you bring your pets with you and have enough provisions – food and space – for them. The jewel of the property is the sun-kissed courtyard that opens up to an expansive,

NESTLED AMIDST GLISTENING SILVER OAK FORESTS ON ALL THREE SIDES, THIS CHARMING LITTLE PRIVATE COTTAGE IS PERFECT FOR WRITERS, POETS, BIRD WATCHERS OR EVEN THOSE WHO WISH TO SPEND SOME QUIET TIME OF RUN AWAY FROM THE HUSTLE BUSTLE OF BIG CITIES. THIS IS YOUR LITTLE HOME IN THE HILLS!





180-degree view of snow peaked Himalayan peaks.

Nestled amidst glistening silver oak forests on all three sides, this charming little private cottage is perfect for writers, poets, bird-watchers or even those who wish to spend some quiet time or run away from the hustle bustle of big cities. This is your little home in the hills.

Serenity



So, this is one of those places where there is nothing to do. Absolutely nothing. Zilch. Then why should one visit such a place? To do things that actually matter. When was the last time you saw millions of stars twinkling away? When was the last time you heard yourself breathe? When was the last time you detoxed from your smart phones, iPads and laptops? When was the last time you read a book without being disturbed? When was the last time you heard silence? May be never. Saying it as someone who has just recently experienced all these things in this blessing of a place, you never have.

Unlike the popular hill stations such as Nainital, Shimla, Mussoorie amongst others, Gagar is untouched by indefinite human exposure. It is still as

close to nature as a place can possibly be. Having said that, it is extremely comfortable, the house help is great and stays right there at the cottage so one can reach out to him as and when required. There is hot running water 24X7. If discussed in advances, taxis can be arranged so one can venture out and explore the neighbourhood.

Here are some of the things we suggest you do:

Gorge on some delightful, home-cooked food, sit around the cosy fire-place, playing board games with friends and family or just browse through the large collection of books that are housed in the library.

If you love the outdoors, then just step out into the courtyard, have a cup of Earl Grey or Masala chai over endless

rounds of conversations, admiring stunning vistas of the snow-capped Himalayas, beckoning you to gaze as long as you can.

The sprawling oak forests are home to innumerable species of birds and also to the elusive leopard. You could go for a day-long trek.

GOOD-TO-KNOW

Address: Mukta Niwas P.O.- Gagar, Village- Gagar District- Nainital
Website: www.thewhitepeaks.com; **Email:** contactwhitepeaks@gmail.com; **Call:** (+91)98100-50514; **Price:** ₹4,000 per person per night
By Car - From Delhi 325 km, a journey of around 7 hours from Delhi via Hapur, Gajraula, Moradabad, Rampur, Bilaspur, Rudrapur, Haldwani, Kathgodam, Jeolikot, Bhowali to Gagar.

The Stay

1. The White Peaks cottage has 2 bedrooms (that can accommodate upto 4 adults and 2 small children)
2. Extra mattress can be provided for an extra guest
3. The stay includes morning/ evening tea and coffee with cookies, breakfast, lunch, evening snack and dinner
4. Hot water bags and Heaters are available on request.
5. The cottage has a good collection of books for those who love to read.
6. They provide fresh bed linen and towels. Please carry your own toiletries
7. White peaks is a 3 minute uphill walk (from where you park your car) through a beautiful oak forest. We suggest you to carry good walking shoes.
8. Their resident staff will be happy to assist you in making your stay comfortable and will keep your room clean along with providing a turn-down service.
9. They serve simple, sumptuous, home-cooked Indian food that is made from the fresh, local ingredients.
10. They do not sell or serve alcohol.

