



Ramble to Paradise

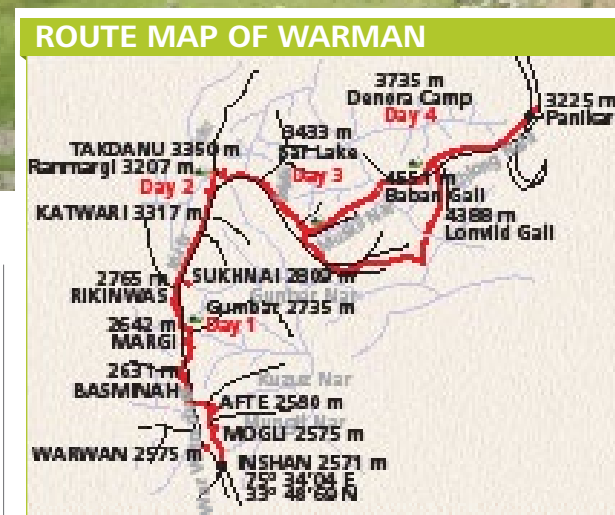
Hop on to one of the most spectacular treks starting from the lush green forest to meadows to the arid Zaskar landscape in Kashmir, says Depi Chaudhry

Warwan is a beautiful valley adjoining Dachhan, spreading from the villages of Hanzi and Inshan. The Marwah river passes through the centre of the valley, which boasts of enchanting meadows. These meadows are used for grazing cattle by the nomadic Bakarwals. The region is almost completely unexplored, at least by conventional travellers, and completely fit into my plans for my next big trek. My original plan was to enter the Warwan Valley from the Amarnath side but the rush there made me decide to do the trek backwards.

Day 1

At 10:30 am after breakfast, my porters and I set off on our 90 day trek across the Himalaya to the Nepal border. Obviously, such a long trek had to be accompanied with heavy gear. Solar panels to recharge my batteries, laptop for downloading my GPS data on a regular basis, the list is endless.

We were stopped at the police check post as they were not sure if this area permitted trekkers. This was not a common trekking path leading to the Kashmir Valley as the valley across the pass was infested with terrorists a few



ALMOST HEAVEN (L to R): A ride on the gondola at Auli presents you stunning views of the Garhwal Himalaya; A ski-instructor takes a breather on the way to-Gorson-top

years ago. They consulted some senior officials over the radio and, finally, we are given permission to depart for our trek after an entry in the register. All the formalities had taken up a lot of time and we unfortunately could cover only a short distance before finding a camp for the night.