

Jumpstart your weekend!

If you love new experiences and crave a chance to get out of the city, **Jumpstart** is here to save the day.

Rhea Dhanbhoora finds out more about the group and their top picks for trekking in this two part series



>> The view from the Kalsubai range of mountains is breathtakingly beautiful



>> Jumpstart offers activities such as waterfall rappelling (above) and helps you meet new people. Contact: Akul: 9819726688 Dhiren: 9619793983 and Ryan: 9920263810

Tired of the same routine, week after week? Jumpstart tells us, "We believe that the monotony of survival puts us all in a rut. And the only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth." Founded by Akul Tripathi, Dhiren Talpade and Ryan Thomas, the group aims at planning a getaway every weekend from Mumbai and offer new experiences in the great outdoors. This weekend, Jumpstart will be going to Sanjay Gandhi National Park on Saturday as well as organising a waterfall rappelling expedition on Sunday. They have an open group on Facebook ('Jumpstart') and through the group you can meet people and get away from big city life and jumpstart your life with treks, trails and more.

The Jumpstart team gives us their picks of the best destinations for weekend treks...

IRSHALGAD

Difficulty: Moderate; 1 day

What: Irshalgad, also known as Irshal, Saddle Hill or Shivaji's Saddle, is often mistaken for a fort. It is in fact a pinnacle and a sister hill of Prabalgad. The ascent starts from a village known as Chowk, situated about 20km from Panvel and 12km from Karjat on the old Mumbai Pune Highway (NH4). The final ascent gets more difficult to climb unless you are equipped with proper gear and expertise.

You'll experience: The view from the top overlooks the Morbe Dam,



NH4 and the new Mumbai Pune Expressway. Matheran, Prabalgad and the Karnala pinnacle can be seen from the top.

DUKE'S NOSE

Difficulty: Easy; 1 day
What: About half an hour away from Lonavala is Kurvande village. This is the only access to the Duke's Nose. The trek is an easy one. Jumpstart last visited the Duke's Nose in June.

You'll experience: From the top you can see the Mumbai-Pune Expressway.

KALSUBAI PEAK

Difficulty: Moderate; 2 days where you reach one day prior and start climbing early the next day

What: Another place they visited in June, Kalsubai Peak is the highest peak in Maharashtra. It stands tall at about 5,400 ft above sea level. The climb is a bit steep, but there are steel ladders and railings to help you along the difficult parts.

You'll experience: The winds blowing at the top can range between 60 - 100km per hour. The MTDC at Bhandardhara nearby has a great guesthouse and the Bhandardhara dam is also worth a visit.

RATANGAD

Difficulty: Moderate to Difficult; It is ideally 2 days but can also be completed within a day
What: Ratangad Fort was captured by Maharaj Chhatrapati Shivaji and is said to be one of his favourite forts. It has grounds for trekkers to camp and the view from the fort is breathtaking. There are two caves at the top which can be used to camp.

You'll experience: The fort is set in the realms of nature. It has a natural opening and the back of the fort offers a view of the Kalsubai range of mountains, which are really beautiful.

THANALE CAVES

Difficulty: Easy; 1 day

What: The caves lie 55 - 60km west from Pune and 11km east from Pali. These caves are some of the most ancient Buddhist rock-cut temples in the whole of India. They are large caves which can accommodate a large group and there are also several waterfalls with moderately deep pools.

You'll experience: Apart from the obvious natural beauty, pools and waterfalls — if you stay for longer than a day, there is the Sudhagadh fort nearby. There is also the Pali Ganesh Temple, which is one of the ashtvinayak temples. Jumpstart visited here in June.



Photo Credit: Akul Tripathi