

Sondai Fort Trek 2026 | Beginner Trek near Karjat

8 hours

Overview

Sondai Fort Trek 1-Day Beginner Trek near Karjat, Mumbai

Sondai Fort is one of the best forts near Karjat for a quick one-day escape — lesser known, less crowded, and genuinely rewarding. Located just 9 km from Karjat railway station near Chowk Phata, Sondai Fort Karjat sits at 1,200 feet (366 metres) in the Matheran mountain range of Raigad district, roughly 70 km from Mumbai.

Historically, Sondai Killa served as a watchtower to guard ancient trade routes passing through the Sahyadris. Today, it draws trekkers with its panoramic summit views of Morbe Dam, Prabalgad, Irshalgad, Rajmachi, Songiri, Karnala Fort, and the sweeping Matheran range — especially spectacular during the monsoon season.

The Sondai Fort trek start point is Sondewadi village, one of two base villages along with Wavarle. Sondewadi sits at roughly one-quarter the height of the fort, making the initial approach straightforward. The Sondai Fort trek distance is 1.5 km one-way, with a typical Sondai Fort trek time of 1.5 to 2 hours to reach the summit. The trail passes four water cisterns — two of which hold potable water — and rock-carved steps leading up to the Sondai Devi temple at the top. For the steepest section, iron ladders have been installed, making the climb safe for first-timers and devotees alike.

The Sondai Fort trek difficulty level is easy to moderate — a great first fort trek in Maharashtra. During monsoon, rock steps can get slippery, so trekking shoes with good

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grip are essential. Just 1 km from the parking area, Changewadi Waterfall is a bonus monsoon attraction worth the short detour.

The Wavarle route offers a more challenging alternative, cutting through dense forest, suited for those wanting a harder climb.

We run the Sondai Fort trek from Mumbai with bus pickup from Borivali, travelling to Sondewadi and back. It's one of the most popular one-day treks near Karjat for beginners, and an excellent choice for corporate treks near Mumbai — the entire event wraps up within a day with no overnight stay required. Explore more on our Karjat treks page.

Sondai Trek Event Details

- Base Village: Sondewadi village (Sondai Killa base)
- Region: Karjat, Raigad District, Maharashtra
- Best Time to Visit: June to September (Monsoon)
- Sondai Fort Height: 1,200 feet (366 metres) above sea level
- Sondai Fort Trek Difficulty Level: Easy to Moderate
- Sondai Fort Trek Distance: 1.5 km one-way from base village
- Sondai Fort Trek Time: 1.5 to 2 hours to reach the summit
- Total Event Duration: 6 hours (including travel within base area)
- Trek Route: Well-marked trail with iron ladders at the steep sections
- Changewadi Waterfall: 1 km from the parking area (monsoon only)
- Sondai Fort Distance from Mumbai: 70 km
- Sondai Fort Distance from Pune: 115 km
- Karjat Railway Station to Trek Start Point (Sondewadi): 10 km
- Sondai Fort Trek Photos: Available in the photo gallery above

Sondai Fort Trek Cost

Option	Price	What's Included
Without Transport From Karjat	₹799 per person	Trek + breakfast + trek leader + e-certificate. Reach Sondewadi base village on your own.

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Option	Price	What's Included
	₹1,099 per person	Everything above + local vehicle from Karjat station to Sondewadi and back.

Sondai Fort Trek Itinerary

Option A — By Train from Mumbai

Catch the CSMT–Karjat local at 05:46 am. Board from any station along the route:

Station	Time
Mumbai CSMT	05:46 am
Byculla	05:53 am
Dadar	05:59 am
Kurla	06:06 am
Thane	06:25 am
Dombivli	06:41 am
Kalyan	06:50 am
Karjat	07:43 am

Trek Day — Train Batch

Time	Activity
08:00 am	Meet trek leader at Karjat railway station near the ticket counter
08:15 am	Depart for Sondewadi base village by local vehicle
08:45 am	Reach Sondewadi — breakfast stop
09:15 am	Begin ascent
11:00 am	Reach summit — explore Sondai Devi Temple and fort
11:30 am	Begin descent

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Time	Activity
12:30 pm	Reach Sondewadi — depart for Karjat by local vehicle
01:30 pm	Reach Karjat railway station — disperse

Option B — Self Drive from Mumbai / Pune

How to reach Sondewadi base village:

From Mumbai (70 km | ~1.5 hrs)

1. Take the Eastern Express Highway or Sion–Panvel Expressway towards Khopoli
2. Take the Khopoli–Karjat road towards Karjat
3. At Karjat Chowk Phata, turn towards Borgaon Phata
4. Follow the road along Morbe Dam — Sondewadi village is signposted from here
5. Park at the designated parking area near the base village

From Pune (115 km | ~2.5 hrs)

1. Take the Mumbai–Pune Expressway towards Khopoli exit
2. From Khopoli, follow Khopoli–Karjat road towards Karjat
3. At Karjat Chowk Phata, turn towards Borgaon Phata
4. Follow the road along Morbe Dam to Sondewadi village
5. Park at the designated parking area near the base village

Meeting point for self-drive guests: Purva Pan Shop, Sondewadi village. Arrive by **08:45 am.** No pickup is provided for self-drive guests — you must reach Sondewadi independently.

Trek Day — Self Drive Batch

Time.	Activity
08:45 am	Reach Sondewadi — meet trek leader at Purva Pan Shop
09:00 am	Breakfast
09:15 am	Begin ascent

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Time.	Activity
11:00 am	Reach summit — explore Sondai Devi Temple and fort
11:30 am	Begin descent
12:30 pm	Reach Sondewadi — trek concludes
01:30 pm onwards	Return to Mumbai / Pune by your own vehicle

Dates and Rates

15 Nov, 8:00 AM 8 Hours	Without Transport	₹ 799
15 Nov, 8:00 AM 8 Hours	By Train Karjat	₹ 1,099
22 Nov, 8:00 AM 8 Hours	Without Transport	₹ 799
22 Nov, 8:00 AM 8 Hours	By Train Karjat	₹ 1,099
29 Nov, 8:00 AM 8 Hours	Without Transport	₹ 799
29 Nov, 8:00 AM 8 Hours	By Train Karjat	₹ 1,099
06 Dec, 8:00 AM 8 Hours	Without Transport	₹ 799

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06 Dec, 8:00 AM 8 Hours	By Train Karjat	₹ 1,099
13 Dec, 8:00 AM 8 Hours	Without Transport	₹ 799
13 Dec, 8:00 AM 8 Hours	By Train Karjat	₹ 1,099

Itinerary

Inclusions

- 1 veg Breakfast
- Karjat to Karjat travel by local vehicle
- Trek Leader Expertise Charges
- Guide

Exclusions

- Travel till base village and back (without transport)
- Travel till Karjat and back
- Lunch
- Entry fee for foreign nationals
- Mineral water/lime water/ purchased for personal consumption
- All kinds of Extra Meals / soft drinks ordered
- Any kind of personal expenses
- Any kind of cost which is not mentioned in the cost includes above
- All expenses incurred due to unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances like roadblocks, bad weather
- Any medical / Emergency evacuations if required

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Highlights

- 2/3 liters of water.
- Trekking Shoes provide more grip and comfort on trek.
- One Day Backpack 20 to 30 liters.
- Good Torch must with extra battery. (Must)
- Some Dry fruits / Dry Snacks / Energy Bars.
- Glucon D / ORS / Tang / Gatorade sachets.
- Sun Cap and Sunscreen.
- Personal First aid and Personal Medicine.
- Identity Proof.
- Please wear Full sleeves and Full Track Pant this will protect from Summer Sun / Thorns / Insects / Prickles.

Cancellation Policy and Charges

- 75% refund if notified via phone conversation 8 or more days prior to the event date.
- 50 % refund if notified via phone conversation 4 to 7 days prior to the event date.
- No refund if the cancellation requested is less than 3 days prior to the event date
- No show No Refund.
- Event Tickets cannot be transferred to another date against cancellation.
- Event Tickets cannot be transferred to another person against cancellation.
- If the event gets canceled we will refund "Trek Amount" only.
- If the event is canceled due to any natural calamity, political unrest or other such reasons beyond our control the same cancellation policy will apply.
- Refunds won't be issued if you cannot attend the event due to heavy rains, floods, traffic jams, car breakdowns or a personal medical emergency.
- Your booking cannot be shifted to another date if you cannot attend the event due to heavy rains, floods, traffic jams, car breakdowns, or a personal medical emergency.
- If your area is prone to flooding, traveling from a flooded area, heavy traffic, heavy rains, missing the train, or any other reason, if you cannot attend the event, we won't issue a refund or shift you to another date.
- Management won't be held responsible if you are stuck due to heavy rains, traffic jams, personal emergencies or floods during the event.

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- If you are bringing kids, please understand the possibility of getting stuck or delayed. You might have to stay back due to heavy rains, floods, bus breakdowns, and rush at the trekking destination. We won't be able to refund or shift you to another date. You will have to wait it out till the weather clears.
- Due to bad weather, floods, sudden changes in government rules, and overcrowding at the destination trek, the organizer has the right to change the trekking destination.
- During the trek , due to any circumstances seen or unseen trek leader has the right to cancel the trek for safety reason. No refund shall be issued.

Treks and Trails Event Rules

- Kindly carry one Identity proof, at least for the trek with your address.
- We all are going for an adventurous and exciting trekking expedition; please Do Not misinterpret it as a PICNIC or LEISURE TOUR.
- The leader's decision will be final, and all the members should abide by it.
- We do not destroy or dirty the archaeological, historical monuments, natural habitat on the trek.
- Swimming is not allowed in the lake or water tank on the forts. Locals use that water for drinking.
- Putting your feet in water tanks or on the canon is not allowed on our treks.
- Any addiction is strictly prohibited, e.g. drinking, smoking, chewing tobacco anyone caught doing it will have to exit the trek without a refund and travel back on own expense.
- People caught smoking or drinking alcohol will be asked to exit the event on an immediate basis.
- Please do not carry or wear any valuables, ornaments, jewellery, etc. If carried, then we Do Not take any liability for the same.
- Rock Climbing, Rappelling, Trekking, or any adventure activity is potentially risky. For all these events, you are at your own risk. Organizers are not responsible for any accident or compensation in whatsoever manner.
- We should strictly follow the code of conduct to avoid troubling our fellow trekkers or other people from our group or outside.
- Listening to music on earphones or Bluetooth speakers is not allowed while trekking.
- Bluetooth speaker not allowed inside the homestay or camping tents.

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- Drinking/smoking,/eating is not allowed inside the tents.
- If you damage the tent, break the tent poles, you will have to pay us for the whole new tent on MRP.
- If you are late for the bus pickup and are not reachable on the phone during your bus pickup, the trek leader will leave without you, and we will provide no refund.
- Please check things to carry and wear trekking shoes on our treks.

Pickup point

View on Google Maps →

Activity	Trekking
Destination	Maharashtra
Duration	1 Day

Frequently Asked Questions

Attractions on the Sondai Fort Trek

- **Changewadi Waterfall** — A seasonal waterfall 1 km from the parking area, flowing only during monsoon (June–September). A perfect warm-up before the climb.
- **Sondai Devi Temple** — The highlight at the summit. A small but significant temple dedicated to Goddess Sondai, after whom the fort gets its name.
- **Panoramic Summit Views** — From the top, enjoy sweeping views of Morbe Dam, Irshalgad Fort, Karnala Fort, Prabalgad, Rajmachi, and the entire Matheran mountain range.
- **Ancient Water Cisterns** — Four rock-cut water cisterns on the fort, two of which still hold potable water — a glimpse into the fort's self-sustaining design.
- **Iron Ladder Climb** — The steep final section features fixed iron ladders, making the summit accessible for beginners while adding a fun adventure element.
- **Sondewadi Waterfall** — An additional seasonal attraction near the base village, accessible subject to local authority permissions during monsoon.

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Important Notes for Sondai Fort Trekkers

- **Wear trekking shoes** with good grip — the rock steps get slippery during monsoon.
- **Arrive 10 minutes early** at your pickup point. Late arrivals will be left behind with no refund.
- **Train batch:** You may board from any convenient station along the CSMT–Karjat route. Missing the train means missing the trek — no refund will be issued.
- **Coming directly to base village:** Make your way to Sondewadi village independently. The meeting point is Purva Pan Shop, but no pickup is provided from there — you must reach Sondewadi on your own.
- **Date change requests:** If you booked the wrong date or batch, a transfer fee of ₹200 per person applies for changes requested within 3 days of departure.
- **Itinerary timings are indicative.** Delays can occur due to traffic, weather, road conditions, or group pace. Keep a buffer in your return plans.
- **Transport availability** depends on the number of confirmed participants for that batch.

Frequently Asked Questions — Sondai Fort Trek

General

Q. What is Sondai Fort and why is it called Sondai? Sondai Fort gets its name from the Goddess Sondai Devi, whose temple sits at the summit. Historically, Sondai Killa served as a watchtower to guard trade routes passing through the Sahyadri ranges in the Raigad district. The fort is part of the Matheran mountain range and stands at 1,200 feet above sea level. Unlike large forts like Raigad or Pratapgad, Sondai is a small hill fort — compact, accessible, and ideal for a quick one-day experience.

Q. When was Sondai Fort built and what is its history? Sondai Fort is believed to have been constructed during the 17th century as a strategic watchtower to monitor trade routes through the Sahyadri ranges. Unlike large administrative forts, Sondai was a surveillance post — compact by design, positioned for maximum visibility over the surrounding valley, Morbe Dam reservoir, and neighbouring forts including Prabalgad, Irshalgad, and Rajmachi. No standing fortification structure remains today — what

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survives are the rock-cut water cisterns, carved stone steps, and the Sondai Devi temple at the summit, worshipped by locals to this day.

Q. How far is Sondai Fort from Mumbai? Sondai Fort is approximately 70 km from Mumbai, roughly a 1.5 to 2 hour drive via the Eastern Express Highway or Sion–Panvel Expressway. By train, you can reach Karjat station in about 2 hours from CSMT, followed by a 10 km local vehicle ride to Sondewadi base village.

Q. How far is Sondai Fort from Pune? Sondai Fort is approximately 115 km from Pune, around 2.5 hours by road via the Mumbai–Pune Expressway to Khopoli and then onwards to Karjat.

Q. What is the Sondai Fort trek distance and how long does it take? The trail from Sondewadi base village to the summit is 1.5 km one-way. It takes 1.5 to 2 hours to reach the top at a comfortable pace. The total event duration including travel, breakfast, and descent is approximately 6 hours.

Difficulty & Suitability

Q. Is Sondai Fort Trek good for beginners and first-time trekkers? Yes — Sondai Fort is one of the easiest fort treks in Maharashtra. The trail is well-marked, the climb is short, and iron ladders are installed at the steep sections making it safe for first-timers. No prior trekking experience is required.

Q. Is Sondai Fort Trek suitable for kids and families? Sondai Fort is one of the best treks near Mumbai to introduce children to trekking. The short trail (1.5 km), manageable elevation, and fixed iron ladders make it safe and exciting for kids. The Sondai Devi temple at the top and the seasonal Changewadi Waterfall add to the experience for families. We recommend children be at least 7–8 years old and accompanied by a parent or guardian throughout.

Q. Is Sondai Fort Trek good for corporate groups? Absolutely. Sondai Fort is one of our most popular corporate treks near Mumbai. The entire event wraps up within a single day with no overnight stay required, making it easy to plan without disrupting work schedules. The manageable difficulty means all fitness levels can participate together, and the shared experience of reaching the summit works well as a team-building activity. We

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regularly organise customised Sondai Fort treks for corporate groups — get in touch to discuss group bookings.

Q. Is the Sondai Fort Trek safe for solo travellers and women? Yes. Our trek leaders are present throughout, the trail is well-marked, and iron ladders are in place at the technical sections. We run group departures so solo travellers are always part of a team. Standard safety precautions and first aid are carried on every batch.

Monsoon & Best Time

Q. Is Sondai Fort the best monsoon trek near Mumbai? Sondai Fort truly comes alive during monsoon (June to September). The hillside turns lush green, Changewadi Waterfall flows 1 km from the parking area, and the summit offers misty panoramic views of Morbe Dam and the Matheran range. The rock-carved steps and iron ladders make the climb manageable even in wet conditions, though trekking shoes with good grip are essential. It is consistently one of our most booked monsoon treks near Mumbai every year.

Q. Can we visit Sondai Fort outside of monsoon? Yes, Sondai Fort can be trekked year-round. However, the experience is best during monsoon (June–September) when the landscape is at its greenest. Post-monsoon (October–February) offers clearer summit views. Summers (March–May) are hot and dry — start early and carry extra water.

Logistics & How to Reach

Q. Where is the Sondai Fort trek start point? The trek starts from Sondewadi village, the base village of Sondai Fort, located 10 km from Karjat railway station. Local vehicles (autos/tumtums) are available from Karjat station to Sondewadi. If driving, parking is available at the base village at your own risk.

Q. How do I reach Sondai Fort by train from Mumbai? Catch the 06:10 am CSMT–Karjat local from Mumbai CSMT. The train stops at Byculla, Dadar, Kurla, Thane, Dombivli, and Kalyan — board from whichever station is convenient. Reach Karjat by 08:08 am and meet the trek leader near the ticket counter. A local vehicle will transfer the group to Sondewadi base village.

On the Trail

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Q. Is food available on the Sondai Fort Trek? Breakfast is included in your trek cost and is served at Sondewadi base village before the climb. There are no food stalls on the trail or at the summit. A few small local dhabas operate near the base village but availability is not guaranteed — carry dry snacks, energy bars, and fruits for the trail. Lunch is not included; plan your meal after returning to Karjat.

Q. Is water available on the Sondai Fort Trek? Carry at least 2 litres of water per person from the base village. There are four rock-cut water cisterns on the fort — two typically hold water — but do not rely on these as your primary source. No water is available on the trail between the base and the summit.

Q. Are there any shops on the Sondai Fort Trek route? A few locals occasionally set up small stalls near the base village selling water, nimbu pani, and light snacks — but this is seasonal and not guaranteed. Carry everything you need from the base village.

Q. Is there phone network connectivity on the Sondai Fort Trek? Yes, mobile connectivity is generally good for most networks throughout the trek, including at the summit. Signal may briefly dip in the forested sections of the trail.

Q. Do we need to remove shoes at the Sondai Devi Temple? Yes. The summit area is considered sacred by locals. Trekkers are requested to remove footwear before entering the Sondai Devi temple. Keep this in mind when packing — avoid overly complicated lacing systems.

Safety & Rules

Q. What should I wear on the Sondai Fort Trek? Wear full-sleeve clothing — it protects against sun, thorns, insects, and scrub on the trail. Avoid jeans or heavy cotton as they stay wet and heavy during monsoon. Trekking shoes with good grip are essential. Carry a cap and light rain cover during monsoon months.

Q. Is smoking or drinking alcohol allowed on the Sondai Fort Trek? No. Smoking and alcohol are strictly prohibited throughout the event. Anyone found violating this rule will be asked to leave immediately without a refund.

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Q. Is cash payment accepted on the day of the trek? No. All bookings require full payment in advance via UPI, NEFT, or the online payment gateway. Spot or cash payments are not accepted on the day of the trek.

Reviews