

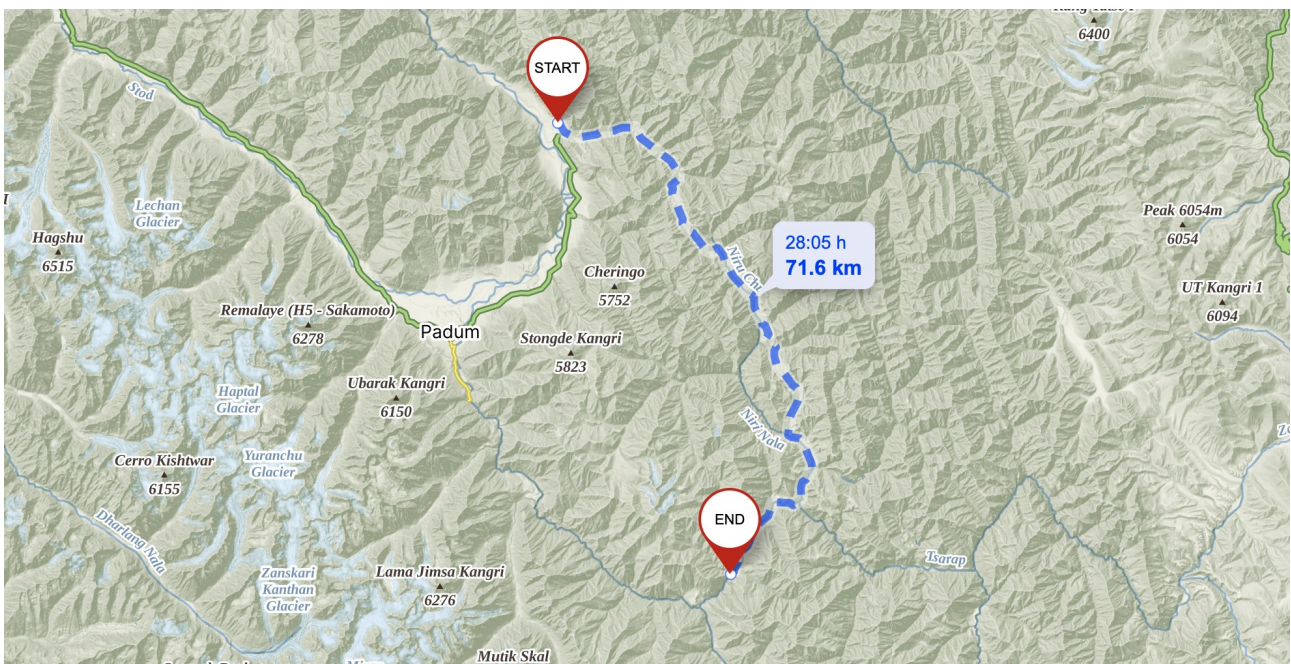


## Trekking Zangla - Phuktal

Duration: 6 days

Season: July – September

Difficulty: medium - difficult

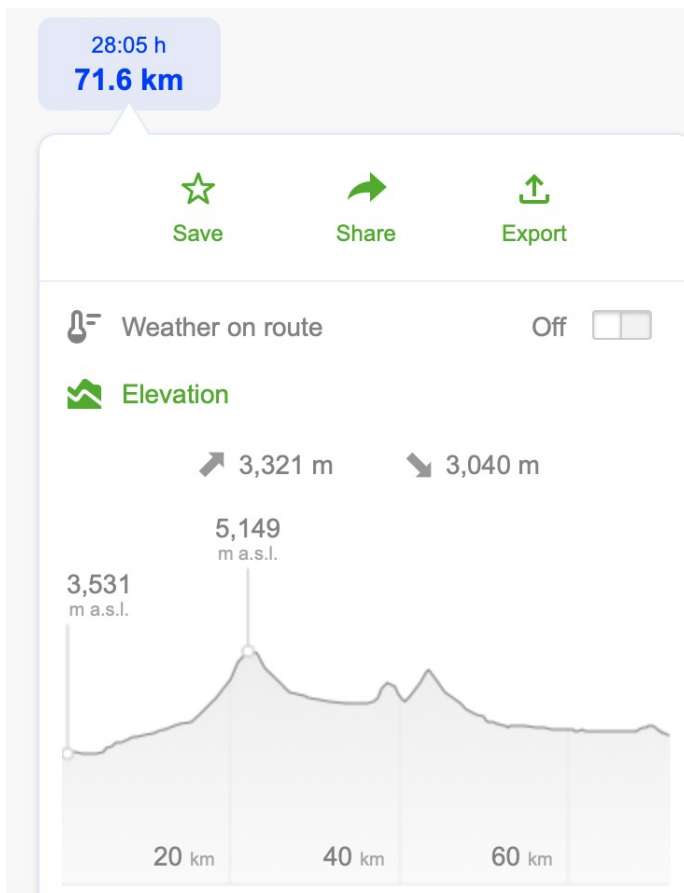




Far away from any roads, this trek takes you through wild mountain scenery to one of the most remote villages in Zanskar — Shade — and to the most stunning monastery in the whole region — Phuktal. In between: mountains, mountains, mountains — and maybe some livestock with their herders.

The later in the year you start this trek, the easier the river crossings will be.

Elevation, time, and distance profile according to Mapy:



### Day 1

#### Zangla – Zangla Sumdo

Start: 3.540 m

Finish: 3.790 m

Distance: 8,5 km

up: 560 m

down: 310 m

estimated hiking time: 4 hrs.

You start in the village of Zangla, where you can visit the old royal palace and a nunnery beforehand. Leaving the village, you follow a gentle climb into an impressive gorge carved out by the Zangla stream, flanked by colorful rock formations and rugged cliffs. The trail winds along the stream, which you'll need to cross several times as the valley gradually narrows. At a wide river junction — Zangla Sumdo — you'll find the campsite.



## Day 2

### Zangla Sumdo – Niri-la Basecamp

Start: 3.790 m

Finish: 4.820 m

Distance: 11,5 km

up: 1.030 m

down: -

estimated hiking time: 5 hrs.

From Zangla Sumdo, the trail continues up the valley in a northwesterly direction, with the landscape gradually opening up and becoming more barren. The path climbs steadily, winding through wide scree fields and across small streams, with occasional glimpses of snow-capped peaks in the distance. Vegetation becomes sparse, and eventually the trail leads onto a broad high plateau, where you set up base camp below the Niri La — a windy but scenic spot. The stage is technically easy but demanding due to the increasing altitude.

## Day 3

### Niri-la Basecamp – Niri-la – Shade Pullu

Start: 4.820 m

Finish: 4.300 m

Pass: Niri-la 5.149 m

Distance: 16,5 km

up: 530 m

down: 1.050 m

estimated hiking time: 6 hrs.

Early in the morning, the climb up to the Niri La begins. The rocky path steadily leads you up until you reach the windy pass. The descent first takes you through scree fields before you reach a remote high valley with a stream fed by meltwater, which you'll have to cross several times. After that, you hike through a wide, silent landscape until you reach the high pasture of Shade Pullu. There the tent will be pitched — surrounded by complete solitude and stunning nature.



#### **Day 4**

##### **Shade Pullu - Shade**

Start: 4.300 m

Finish: 4.230 m

Passes: Lar-la 4.660 m + Gautang-la 4.875 m

Distance: 10,5 km

up: 950 m

down: 1.020 m

estimated hiking time: 7 hrs.

From Shade Pullu, the trail first runs flat through a wide high-altitude valley before winding its way up in switchbacks to the first pass of the day, the Lar La. After crossing it, you continue through a gently rising side valley before a steeper climb leads you to the Gautang La — the higher of the two passes. Both passes offer impressive views of the remote highlands of eastern Zanskar. The descent down to Shade is rocky, but at the bottom you're rewarded with the small village of Shade — a green oasis with fields and a handful of stone houses.

#### **Day 5**

##### **Shade – Yatah Sumdo**

Start: 4.230 m

Finish: 3.910 m

Distance: 10 km

up: 200 m

down: 520 m

estimated hiking time: 3,5 hrs.

Thanks to the short trekking day, you'll still have plenty of time to spend in Shade with the villagers. From Shade, the trail first heads down the valley, following the stream until it meets the larger river you left the day before. You cross it and then continue with gentle ups and downs until you reach the campsite by the Tsarap Chu river.

**Day 6**

**Yatah Sumdo – Phuktal – (road)**

Start: 3.910 m

Finish: 3.810 m

Distance: 14,5 km

up: 500 m

down: 600 m

estimated hiking time: 6 hrs.

In a series of ups and downs, the trail follows the Tsarap Chu, at times clinging to steep mountain slopes, all the way to the impressive Phuktal Monastery, which you can explore in detail. From there, it's about another hour's walk to reach the (gravel) road.

