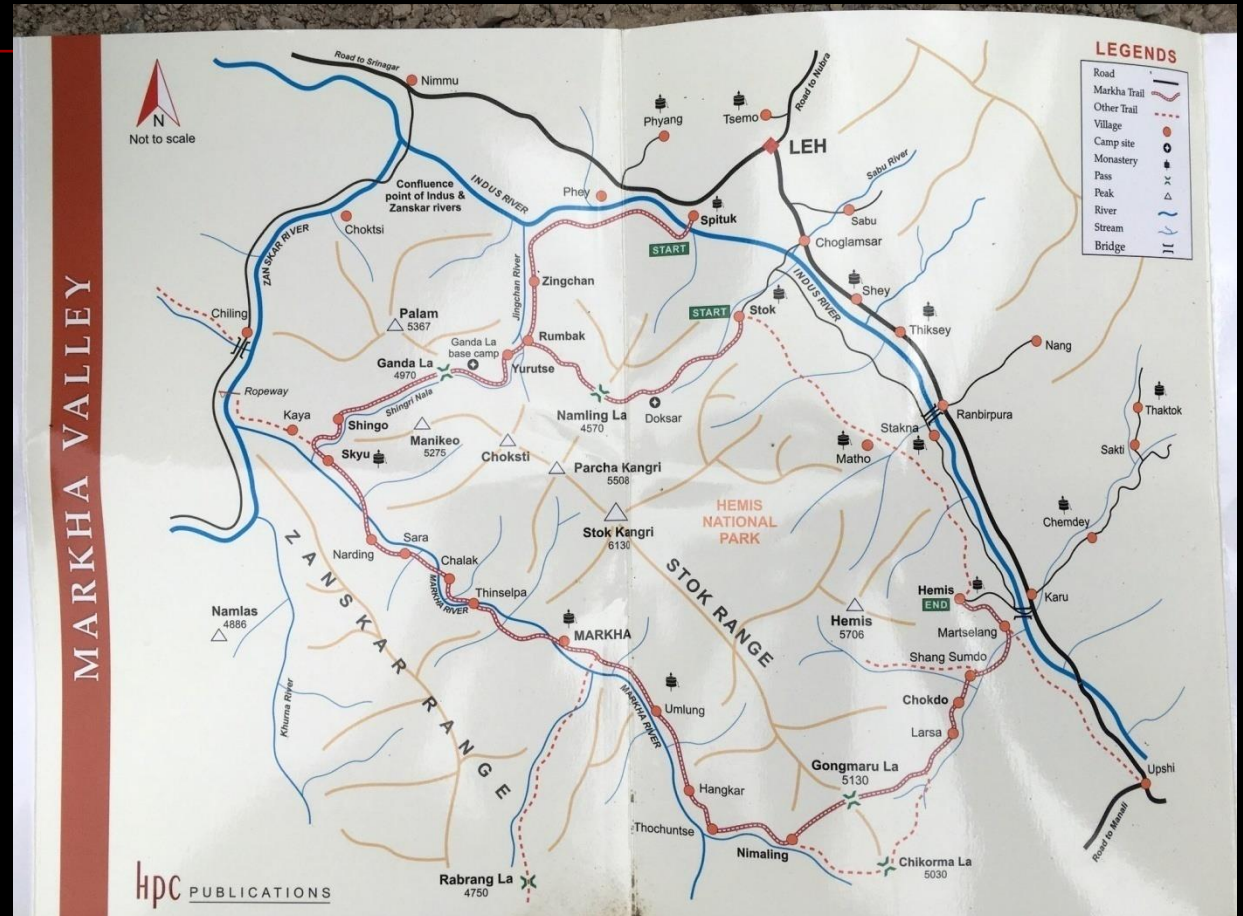




The Markha Valley Trek

- The Markha Valley is one of the most popular treks in Ladakh. It is relatively short, located close to Leh, the walking is mostly below 4000 metres with night stops around 3500 metres and has the best of Ladakh thrown in: Sculpted canyons and fantastic rock formations, medieval villages, Buddhist gompas and snow-peaks.
- When approached from Rumbak there are two passes to cross the Ganda La 4800 m and the Kongamaru La 5200m which makes it a fairly challenging trek.



The Markha Valley Trek 10 days (Delhi to Delhi)

- The nine day trip (Delhi to Delhi) has been carefully designed to provide proper acclimatization so as to ensure the least discomfort for the trekker.
- The costs of this trek will be updated soon. Exclusions apply For details please check page 7



The Markha Valley Trek Itinerary 1

- **Day 01 Delhi to Leh**
We take the spectacular one hour flight over the Himalayas to Leh. Be prepared to sit on the left hand window seat for the best views. The rest of the day is spent acclimatizing in Leh.
- **Day 02 Acclimatization day in and around Leh**
We take the opportunity to visit some of the splendid monasteries in and around Leh like Shey, Thikse, Hemis etc.
- **Day 03 Leh to Rumbak 3800m by road 2.5 to 3 hours and walk to Yurustse 4000 metres 4-5 hours**
We leave Leh in the morning after an early breakfast and then drive to Rumbak in around 2.5 to three hours. We meet our pony man and support team in Rumbak. From Rumbak we start our 3 to 4 hour walk to Yurustse and reach by late afternoon.



Copyright Sujoy Das 2021 / www.sujoydas.com

The Markha Valley Trek Itinerary 2

- **Day 04- Yurutse to across Ganda La 4800 metres and descend to Shingo 3800m 6 to 7 hours**

The climb from the base camp to the pass is a slow ascent of about 2.5 to 3 hours. From here the trail drops steeply to Shingo 3800m in about 3 hours which is our night stop.
- **Day 05 Shingo to Skiu to Markha 3750m (7-8 hours)**

We drop further from Singo to Skui in about two hours where our jeeps will meet us. We drive from Skiu to a bridge before Sera in about 1.5 to 2 hours. After lunch here we start the walk to Markha which will take about 4 hours. The trail is mostly flat following the Markha river
- **Day 06 Markha to Umlung to Hanker 3900 metres 5-6 hours**

From Markha the trail climbs gently to Umlung in about 2 hours - from Umlung the trail initially followed the river valley and then contoured around some mani walls and chortens from where finally Hanker could be seen. The final walk to the village took around an hour as there were sections which had to be carefully navigated near the river where the path was nonexistent and a slight lapse of concentration would send you into the water. Hanker is 2.5 hours from Umlung.



Copyright Sujoy Das 2021 / www.sujoydas.com

The Markha Valley Trek Itinerary 3

- Day 07 Hanker to Taughutse to Nimaling (4720 meters) 7 to 8 hours
- From Hanker the trail climbs up to the grazing settlement of Taughutse in about 2 to 2.5 hours. From here the trail climbs to Nimaling passing a small campsite near a lake which is reached in about 2.5 hours. From here another 2/3 hours in Nimaling which is a large valley where yaks, sheep and goats are grazed by the villagers of Markha. It is beautiful campsite but can often be cold and windy!

Day 08 Nimaling to Kongmaru La 5100 meters - 3 hours and then down to Chukirmo/Chokdo 4050 meters 5-6 hours - drive to Leh **LONG DAY start early by 6 am**

The trail then climbs to the pass of Kongmaru La from where there are good views over the Zaskar mountains and the peak of Kang Yaze. From the pass the trail drops steeply and then Chokdo from where we drive to Leh.

Day 09 - Buffer day

Day 10 Leh to Delhi

We can avail the morning flight from Leh to Delhi and be back in civilization in an hour! In case you wish to stay on in Leh further please do inform us for hotel bookings and onward reservations.



The Markha Valley Trek Costs 2024

- The cost is per person for Leh to Leh (9days) as per the itinerary given earlier
- Costs given above are at current rates of 2024 and may change without notice . Changes if any will be notified 3 months before the trek.

Costs include:

- Transfer by four wheel drive vehicle from Leh to Rumbak (start of trek) and pickup from Chogdo to Leh at the end of the trek.
- All accommodation in tents and meals on trek for five days (day 3 to day8) as per itinerary; breakfast, lunch and dinner.
- Cost of guides/cook/helper/ponyman and ponies as needed for the trek.
- Cost of Hotel Omasila two nights on the way in and one night on the way out double occupancy with breakfast.

Costs not included

- Flight Costs from home country to Leh and back.
- Accommodation and All meals in Leh not covered.
- Airport taxes if any.
- Client travel and medical insurance of any kind. Emergency evacuation costs if needed.
- Bottled drinks; boiled, filtered or bottled water; alcohol; snacks etc
- Personal clothing and equipment; sleeping bag; duvet /down/ goretek jacket, medicines for personal use etc.
- Tips to guides/cook/helper/ponyman at the end of trek

Special Information on the Markha Valley Trek

- The Markha Valley trek is a full support camping trek with ponies, guide, cook, helpers. As requested we will provide one lead guide and two assistant guides as requested.
- It is not a lodge or tea house trek though there are some tea tents in the season where basic refreshments like noodles, tea, soup etc may be available.
- Tents with mattresses will be provided every night. Quilts and blankets will not be possible. You will need a warm sleeping bag at least three season.
- We will have a team of one cook and two helpers who will cook all meals. Food will be basic like porridge, cornflakes, some eggs, chapattis, rice, dal, vegetables, noodles, soup etc. All food will be carried from Leh.
- Our bags and luggage will be carried by ponies supervised by a pony man.
- Toilets will not be available on the trail. - we will provide toilet tents for the trek.
- There are river crossings on the trek for which you need sandals to wade into the water - our guides will help you on the trek.



The Markha Valley Trek FAQ #1

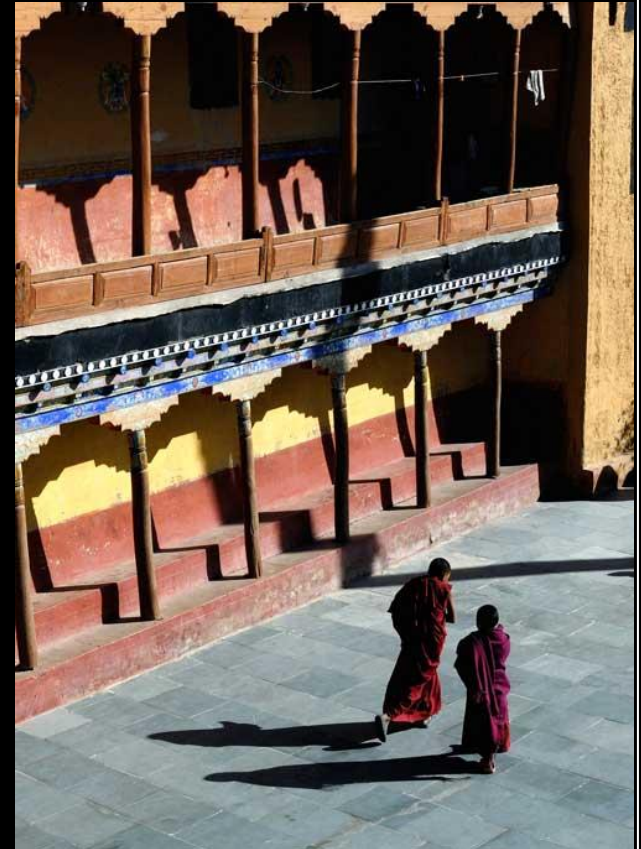
How fit do I have to be to do a trek? Whilst you do not need to be super-fit, you need to be fit enough to comfortably walk for 5-6 hours per day in the mountains on reasonable trails. You will definitely need to walk for around an hour at least every day to get fit. If you can spend some time in the gym it would help. Walking uphill/stairs etc also helps a great deal.

What is a typical group? Will I fit in? Groups range in size from 8 up to 12, and typically comprise a range of nationalities and experience. We have also had a group upto 14! So far, all of our groups have got along very well. One of the attractions of such a trip is the chance to meet people with different backgrounds and personalities.

Do I need to buy special equipment? Usually our clients simply bring their existing clothing and equipment and if necessary supplement this with some extra items purchased cheaply in Leh.

I am a single trekker. How does this work? Normally single trekkers have no problems fitting in with a group. Normally single trekkers share rooms or tents with other trekkers of the same sex, but if we have an odd-number we ensure that a room or tent is organized accordingly.

Will I be able to deal with the high altitude? Our itineraries are designed so that our clients ascend at a sensible and safe rate. The effects of altitude are felt by everyone, even the guides and Sherpas, but most people find that gentle acclimatization allows them to reach their high point without any problems. We will be monitoring this closely on the trek and in the event of any problems we will ensure that there is no compromise on safety. For details on AMS visit http://www.ismmed.org/np_altitude_tutorial.htm#prevention



The Markha Valley Trek FAQ #2

Where do we stay on the trek? Tents are provided with mattress on this trek. You need to bring your own sleeping bag.

Where do we eat our meals? As this is a camping trek meals will be cooked by our crew and served at camp. Lunch will be usually given packed in the morning to have during the day. You are encouraged to bring chocolates, nuts, energy bars etc with you.

Where do we get water during the trip? It is our suggestion that in order to save money, trekkers carry iodine tablets or lugols solution or chlorine with them so that they can purify the water every day. You can also carry water filters/steripen for purification.

What type of shoes or boots should I wear? The proper foot wear depends on the trek. The Markha trek should be done in boots with firm ankle support. Having said that you will find locals and porters trekking in sneakers! Shoes and boots are best purchased before your arrival for the trek with proper break in.

What will the weather be like? Ladakh is in the rain shadow so the days are likely to be warm and the nights cold. Temperatures in the day can range between 20 and 30 Celsius while nights in Leh would be between 8 and 12 Celsius in August/September. Higher up the temperatures will be less and being summer snow is not likely though a freak snow storm on a pass cannot be ruled out! Passes around 5000 metres are likely to have sub zero temperatures at night.

How should I give my gear to the pony man ? Ideally the gear should be given to the pony man in a duffle bag locked and this will be returned to the client in the evening. As you may not be able to access the duffle bag during the day please carry the essentials like water, jacket, camera, sweets etc in your daypack.

Terms and Conditions # 1

CANCELLATION POLICY

- The cancellation policy and refunds available are given below:
- 0-7 days before the start of the trek = 75%
- 8 -15 days before the start of the trek = 50%
- 16-30 days before the start of the trek = 35%
- 31-45 days before the start of the trek = 25%
- 46 days and above = 15%

IN CASE OF LEAVING THE GROUP

- If due to illness or any other reason a client has to leave the group and go down or wait at a campsite for the group to pick him/her up on the way back, all expenses including lodging, fooding and any porter/guide related expenses if any are to be borne by the individual client over and above the trek fees paid for the trek. There are also no refunds for leaving a trek before completion.

HIRING OF PONIES ETC

- In the eventuality of a client needed the services of a pony to come down to lower altitudes, the cost of hiring the pony will be paid by the client.

Terms and Conditions # 2

CAMPsites ON THE TREK

- The choice of campsites to be used on the trek will be decided by South Col and clients will have to stay at these designated campsites. Clients are not permitted to choose their own campsites on the route.

TREK ROUTE

-
- The trek route and day wise schedule will be fixed by South Col and will have to be followed by the client.
-

RISKS AND LIABILITY

- The trek is in a remote mountain area and has certain additional dangers and risks, some of which include: physical exertion for which the client should be prepared; weather extremes subject to sudden and unexpected changes; remoteness from normal medical services; evacuation difficulties.
- In the event of injury or illness South Col Expeditions (Sujoy Das) or its Staff can, at the clients cost arrange any medical treatment and emergency evacuation service as it or they deem necessary for the health and safety of the client. Waiver of liability form as per link attached to be signed by the client.
<http://www.southcol.com/waiver-of-liability-release/>

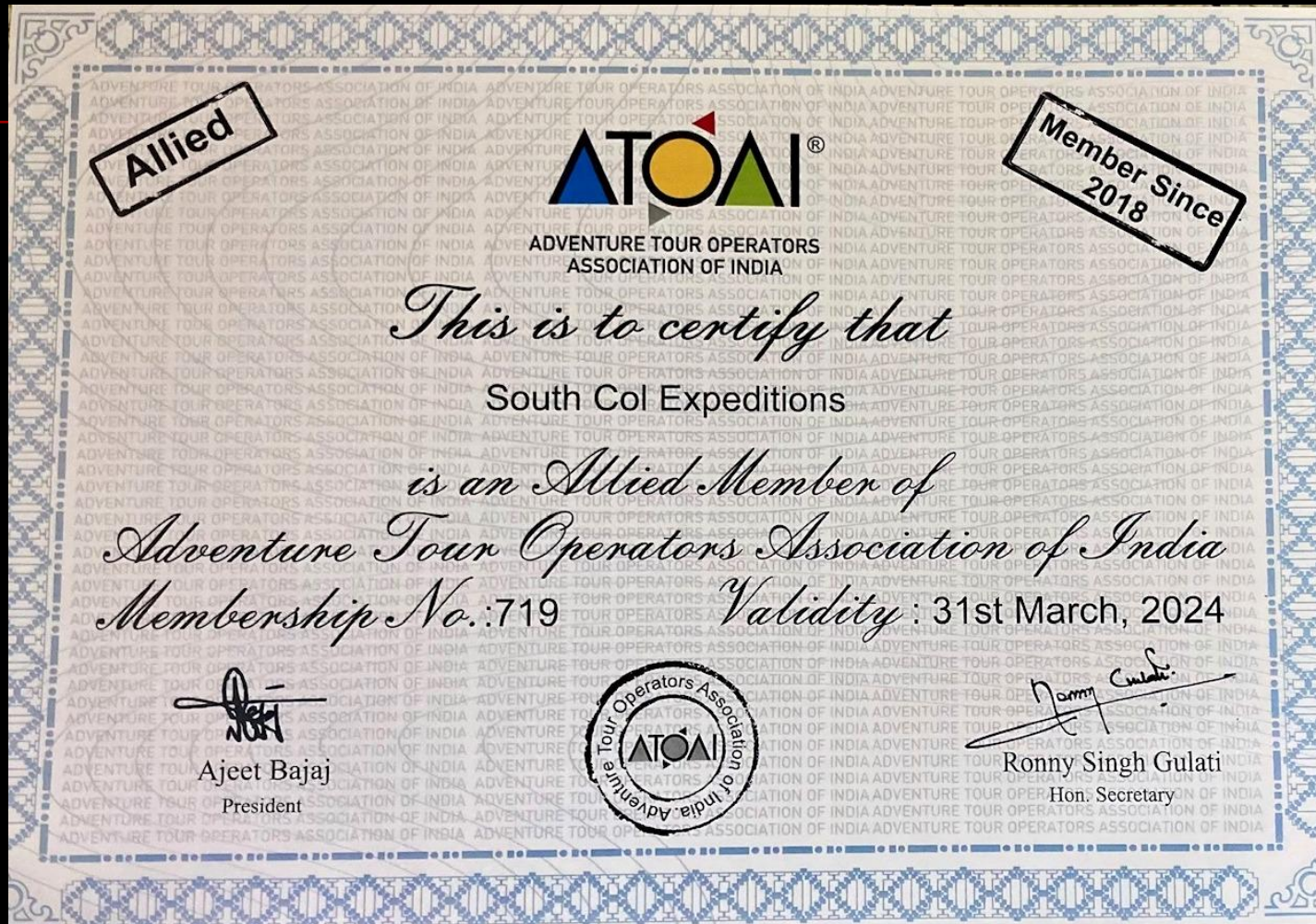
-

Why trek with South Col?



- . South Col is a small, personalized firm specializing in treks in the Himalayan region. We have more than 15 years of Ladakh experience in all seasons.
- We are keenly aware of the fragility of environment and cultures in which we trek and recognize our responsibility in maintaining them. "Take pictures, leave only foot prints" is our motto.
- Trekkers get personalized attention both in the planning stage as well as during the trek itself.
- Support team of guides and porters as needed are personally selected by Sujoy to ensure that the clients are comfortable and well looked after.
- Sujoy has intimate knowledge of the trekking trails so can advise on the best stops for photographs and local culture etc.
- Lodges for night stops and camping sites if needed are selected to ensure the best views, food and comfort.

Membership



South Col Founder Profile

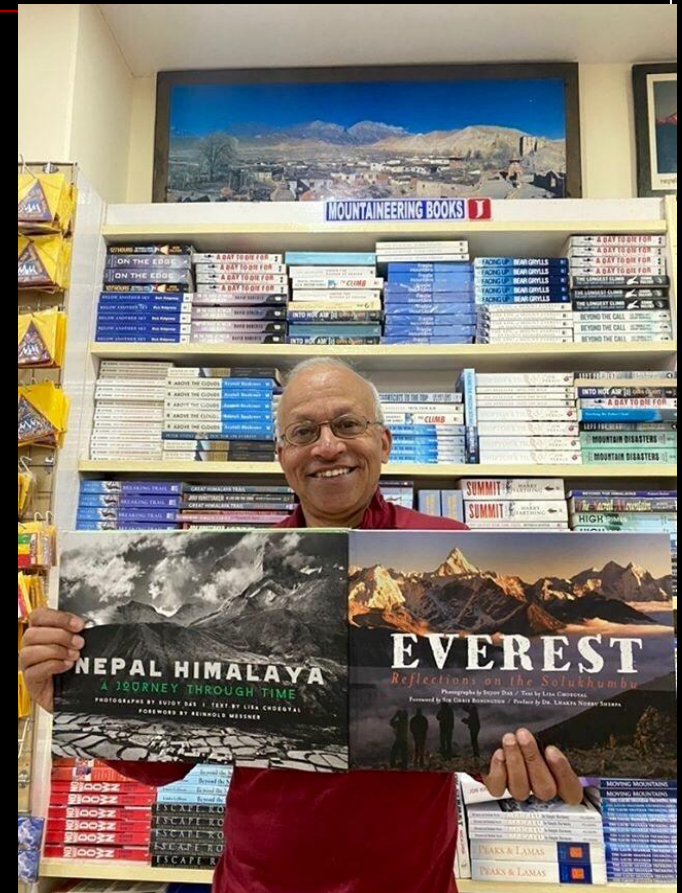
Sujoy Das has been trekking and photographing in the Himalayas for more than forty years covering Nepal, Sikkim, Ladakh, Bhutan, Spiti, Garhwal and Kashmir. His notable treks include: Winter ascent of Kala Pattar peak (Everest region) Dec 2003; Everest Base Camp 18,500 feet (2001); Thorung-la pass/Annapurna Circuit 17,746 feet (2000); Annapurna Base Camp 14,300 feet (1999); Gokyo Ri peak Everest region 18,275 feet (1998); Rupkund Lake, Garhwal 16,200 feet (1996); Kangchendzonga Base Camp North and Green Lakes 16,875 feet (1987); Dorji La peak North Sikkim 18,644 feet (1986); crossing of Lhonak-la pass North Sikkim (1987).

He has visited the Annapurna region more than a dozen times including two visits to the Base Camp and the entire circuit of Annapurna. He has trekked in the Everest region more than fifteen times including the winter of 2003-04. In the Eastern Himalaya he has trekked the Singalila ridge of Sandakphu and Phalut six times and made six visits to the alp of Dzongri in West Sikkim. In September 2009 he trekked across seven passes in Ladakh from the monastery of Lamayuru to Padum in Zaskar.

He has been an invited speaker at the Mussoorie Mountain Festival 2017 and Mountain Echoes – the Bhutan Literary Festival 2019.

He is the joint author and photographer of a number of books like Sikkim- A Travellers Guide, Nepal Himalaya – A Journey Through Time, Everest Reflections on the Solukhumbu, Lonely Planet – Nepal for the Indian Traveller. His essays and photographs have been published in books and magazines worldwide. To view his photographs of the Himalaya please visit

www.sujoydas.com. He can be contacted at sujoyrdas@gmail.com



Om Mani Padme Hum!

Hail to the Jewel in the Lotus

