DISCOVER VOYAGE CHRONICLES

Kinnaur - Full Route

The sensible full Kinnaur circuit from Delhi: Shimla/Narkanda, Sarahan, Sangla, Chitkul, Kalpa and Nako - with altitude and road-time built into the plan.

9 DAYS	Best for: scenic road-trip travellers who want both lower and upper Kinnaur without racing through mountain roads.
ROUTE	Delhi → Narkanda/Shimla → Sarahan → Sangla → Chitkul/Rakcham → Kalpa → Nako → Kalpa/Rampur → Delhi

CURATED WITH CURRENT OFFICIAL TOURISM GUIDANCE + PRACTICAL ROUTING + VEGETARIAN FOOD PICKS

Research refreshed: 13 September 2026 • Always re-check opening hours, transport and local advisories before booking.

Trip at a glance

Ideal trip length	9 days / 8 nights from Delhi
Best vehicle	Reliable SUV with experienced hill driver; self-drive only if very comfortable on narrow mountain roads
Altitude strategy	Climb gradually: Narkanda/Sarahan → Sangla → Kalpa → Nako (3,663 m)
Road reality	Driving times are approximate; landslides, maintenance, snowfall and traffic can change the day
Vegetarian ease	Good in larger stops; strongest strategy is breakfast/dinner at homestays + simple veg cafés on route
Best seasons	Apr-Jun and Sep-Oct are usually the most practical; monsoon landslide risk and winter closures require extra caution

Route overview

Day	Route / Focus	Overnight
1	Delhi → Shimla / Narkanda	Narkanda
2	Narkanda → Rampur → Sarahan	Sarahan
3	Sarahan → Karcham → Sangla	Sangla
4	Sangla → Rakcham → Chitkul → Sangla	Sangla
5	Sangla → Reckong Peo → Kalpa	Kalpa
6	Kalpa → Pooh / Khab → Nako	Nako
7	Nako → Kalpa / Reckong Peo	Kalpa
8	Kalpa → Rampur / Narkanda	Narkanda / Shimla
9	Narkanda / Shimla → Delhi	—

DVC route rule: this itinerary is built around geographic flow and realistic energy, not maximum pin-count. If weather, queues or road delays hit, protect the major experience and drop the lowest-priority stop.

Day-by-day itinerary

DAY 1 • Delhi → Narkanda

Base	Narkanda
Morning	Start early from Delhi; break around Chandigarh / Parwanoo depending route.
Afternoon	Continue via Shimla bypass; reach Narkanda by late afternoon.
Evening	Short Hatu-area sunset viewpoint only if daylight and road conditions allow.
Vegetarian pick	Hotel/homestay dal, seasonal sabzi, roti, rice; ask for simple low-oil dinner.
Sleep	Narkanda
DVC note	Do not push to Sangla on Day 1. The purpose is to break the altitude and road fatigue.

DAY 2 • Narkanda → Sarahan

Base	Sarahan
Morning	Drive through Rampur side with tea / photo stops; keep the day unhurried.
Afternoon	Reach Sarahan; visit Bhimakali Temple complex and village lanes.
Evening	Early dinner and rest.
Vegetarian pick	Homestay thali, rajma-chawal, dal-rice, vegetable curry.
Sleep	Sarahan
DVC note	Sarahan is a useful scenic buffer before entering deeper Kinnaur.

DAY 3 • Sarahan → Sangla

Base	Sangla
Morning	Leave after breakfast; enter Kinnaur and follow the Sutlej to Karcham.
Afternoon	Turn into Baspa Valley for Sangla; check in, then Kamru village / fort area if time and access allow.
Evening	Walk Sangla market / Baspa-side viewpoints.
Vegetarian pick	Veg momos, thukpa, rajma-chawal, paneer / home-style thali.
Sleep	Sangla
DVC note	Road time matters more than kilometres here - keep photo stops controlled.

DAY 4 • Chitkul + Rakcham day

Base	Sangla

Morning	Drive Sangla → Rakcham → Chitkul. Chitkul is around 3,450 m; walk slowly.
Afternoon	Village walk, Baspa River views and Mathi Temple area; return via Rakcham for a calmer valley stop.
Evening	Back to Sangla before dark.
Vegetarian pick	Hindustan Ka Aakhri Dhaba / local cafés for veg rajma-rice, paratha, Maggi, momos; carry snacks.
Sleep	Sangla
DVC note	Avoid strenuous hiking on your first high-altitude day if anyone has headache or unusual fatigue.

DAY 5 • Sangla → Kalpa

Base	Kalpa
Morning	Depart Sangla; stop in Reckong Peo for fuel/cash/essentials.
Afternoon	Check in Kalpa; monastery / Narayan-Nagini Temple area and village lanes.
Evening	Kinnaur Kailash sunset viewpoint.
Vegetarian pick	Himalayan-style cafés, hotel meals, veg thukpa/momos, dal-rice.
Sleep	Kalpa
DVC note	Kalpa sits at about 2,759 m and is a good acclimatisation base before Nako.

DAY 6 • Kalpa → Nako

Base	Nako
Morning	Start early. Drive the upper Kinnaur road via Pooh / Spillow / Khab sector as conditions permit.
Afternoon	Reach Nako, check in, slow walk around Nako Lake and village monastery area.
Evening	Very early dinner; hydrate and avoid alcohol.
Vegetarian pick	Simple homestay meal: dal, rice, vegetable curry, roti, thukpa.
Sleep	Nako
DVC note	Nako is about 3,663 m. Keep activity deliberately light and monitor altitude symptoms.

DAY 7 • Nako → Kalpa

Base	Kalpa
Morning	Sunrise around Nako Lake if you slept well; then descend.

Afternoon	Optional safe roadside viewpoints only; return to Kalpa/Reckong Peo.
Evening	Relax, shop for local apple products / handicrafts.
Vegetarian pick	Homestay dinner; try siddu if available in a vegetarian preparation.
Sleep	Kalpa
DVC note	Descending after one Nako night is the safer default for travellers who are not already acclimatised.

DAY 8 • Kalpa → Narkanda / Shimla

Base	Narkanda / Shimla
Morning	Long descent via Reckong Peo, Karcham, Rampur.
Afternoon	Lunch around Rampur/Narkanda; check in by evening.
Evening	No sightseeing target - treat this as a road-transfer buffer.
Vegetarian pick	North Indian vegetarian highway / hotel food; choose freshly cooked items.
Sleep	Narkanda / Shimla
DVC note	This buffer protects your Delhi return from mountain-road delays.

DAY 9 • Return to Delhi

Base	—
Morning	Leave after breakfast and descend toward Chandigarh.
Afternoon	Lunch on the plains; continue to Delhi.
Evening	Trip ends.
Vegetarian pick	Eat a proper lunch before NCR traffic.
Sleep	—
DVC note	If you have a flight/train the same evening, add a large buffer or stay one extra night in Delhi.

Vegetarian food plan

Restaurant operations change, especially in mountain / seasonal destinations. Treat the names below as a strong shortlist, then re-check the latest hours and reservation policy close to travel.

Area	Vegetarian-friendly options	What to order / note
Sangla	Café 42 / local valley cafés / homestays	Veg momos, thukpa, rajma-chawal, paneer, paratha; confirm seasonal opening.
Chitkul	Hindustan Ka Aakhri Dhaba + small cafés	Simple vegetarian mountain food; carry snacks and water.
Kalpa / Reckong Peo	Himalayan cafés + hotel restaurants	Siddu when available, veg thukpa, dal-rice, local apples / juice.
Nako	Homestay kitchen is the safest plan	Pre-order dinner; expect a short, simple menu and early kitchen closing.

Practical planning checklist

- Warm layers even outside winter
- Rain shell / windproof jacket
- Personal medicines + basic first-aid
- ORS/electrolytes and snacks
- Cash - ATMs / card acceptance can be unreliable
- Offline maps and downloaded hotel contacts

Where to stay - quick framework

Choose location before hotel brand: prioritise a base that reduces repeated cross-city driving, has easy evening food access, and matches your earliest sightseeing starts. For road trips, secure parking / driver accommodation and a reliable breakfast can matter more than a decorative “view room”.

Booking sequence

1. Lock trip dates and intercity transport.
2. Book the hardest-to-replace experience / attraction.
3. Book hotels by neighbourhood / route logic.
4. Add local transport / guide.
5. Re-check restaurant hours, weather and local advisories 48-72 hours before each key day.

Planning notes & research sources

This guide is a curated planning document, not a live booking confirmation. Attraction timings, roads, weather, prices and restaurant operations can change. Re-check official sources close to travel.

Himachal Tourism - himachaltourism.gov.in

Official destination overview for Kinnaur, including Sangla, Chitkul, Kalpa and Nako context.

District Kinnaur, Government of Himachal Pradesh - hpkinnaur.nic.in

Official altitude, distance and place-of-interest information for Kalpa, Sangla, Chitkul and Nako; current 2026 local notices.

HRTC / local road advisories - hrtchp.com / district channels

Check live bus/road status before departure, especially during monsoon, snowfall or road works.

Save this guide, customise the hotel layer, then book the fixed-date pieces first: intercity trains / flights, high-demand attractions, and any guided mountain/desert transport.