

KRAIG ADAMS

K2 Base Camp Hiking Guide

12 days up the Baltoro Glacier and out over the Gondogoro La

2027 season edition · updated September 2026

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Welcome

In August 2025 I spent twelve days hiking about 100 miles through Pakistan's Karakoram range to see K2, the second highest mountain in the world. A small group of subscribers joined me, along with guides, porters, cooks, a goat, a few chickens and a caravan of pack animals carrying everything we needed. We walked from Askole, the last village, up the Baltoro Glacier to Concordia and K2 Base Camp, then went out over the Gondogoro La, a pass we climbed in the dark with crampons and fixed ropes, and down to the village of Hushe.



Me at the K2 Base Camp sign on Day 7.

It was my first time in Pakistan and one of the hardest things I've ever done. It was the longest trek I've ever done and one of the highest passes I've ever gone over. A Pakistani operator organized the whole thing: the logistics, the permits, the food and the team.

That's the big difference from my other guides. You can't do this trek the way I did Alta Via 1, alone with a few bookings. It's a restricted-zone trek: foreigners need a trekking permit, the permit and the visa go through a licensed Pakistani tour operator, and a licensed guide and porters are required. So this guide does two things. It shows you my operator trip day by day, with my GPS files, maps, notes and film links. And it tells you plainly what you have to arrange yourself.

What's inside

- Straight answers to the questions people ask me about this trek
- What my operator arranged, and what you need: an operator, the permit and park fee, a visa, porters, the flight or road to Skardu, insurance and spare days
- When to go, and a clear section on altitude, with every camp height from my GPS
- All twelve days: my notes, the trail, where to get off, a map with an elevation profile, and links to that day in both of my films
- Getting home from Hushe, other ways to do it, food and camp life, what I paid and gear for this route
- Weather and safety, one page of things to check before you go (including current security advice), and a printable trip sheet

How to use it offline

Save this PDF to your phone's Files or Books app before you leave home. Load the GPX files and download offline maps while you still have Wi-Fi: after Askole I don't count on a connection. Each day starts on a new page. The film links need a connection; everything else works in airplane mode.

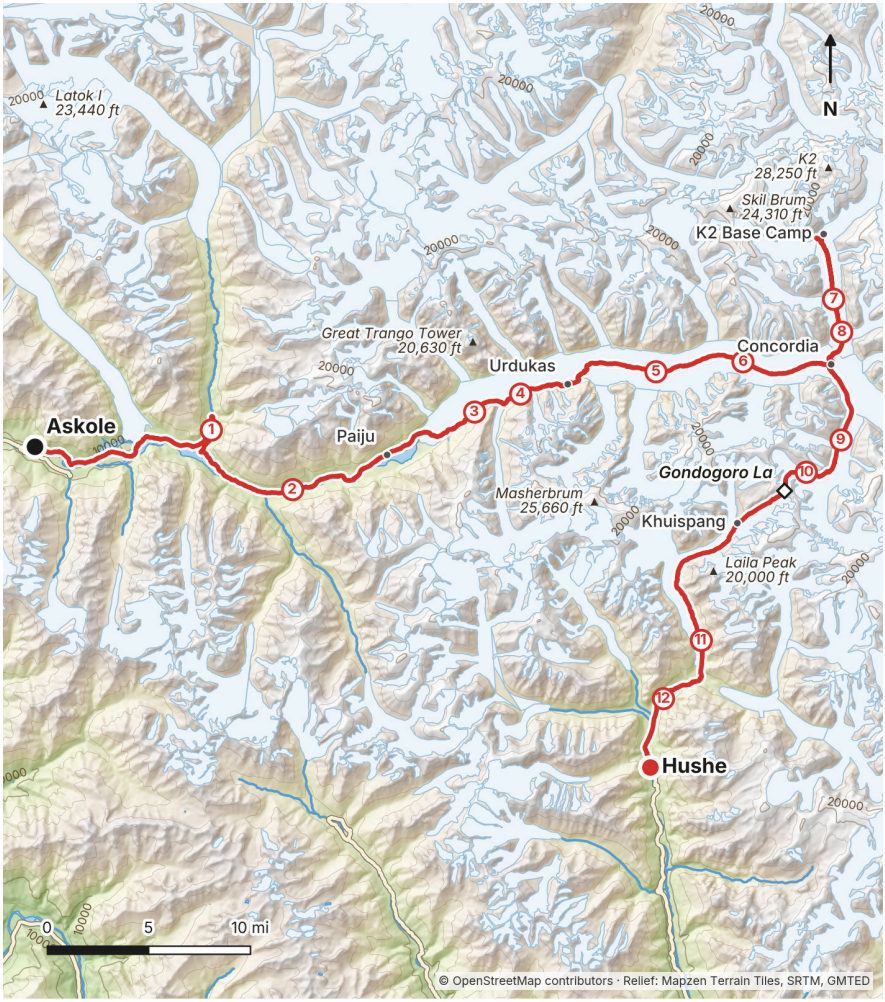
When I say "I," it's my own trip. Rules, fees and advice change, so they're dated, and the checks are collected on one page: Before you go, check these.

At a glance

QUICK FACTS	
Distance	99.9 miles (160.8 km) over 12 walking days
Climbing	about 11,150 ft (3,400 m) up and 10,860 ft (3,310 m) down
Start	Askole, where I started. Some operators now drive on to Jhola when the road is open
Finish	Hushe, at the end of the jeep road on the other side
High point	The Gondogoro La: 17,936 ft (5,467 m) on my GPS; usually published as 18,323 ft (5,585 m)
Highest camp	Ali Camp, 16,237 ft (4,949 m) on my GPS
Nights	11 in tents on the trek
How	With a licensed operator, guides, porters, cooks and pack animals. A permit is required
When	Summer. I walked August 18 to 29, 2025
Difficulty	One of the hardest things I've ever done. Short days, but high, cold, remote, and a pass with ropes
Airports	Islamabad, then a domestic flight to Skardu (or two days by road)
Trip	A group trip I hosted, organized by a licensed Pakistani operator

DAY	ROUTE	MILES (KM)	UP / DOWN (FT)	CAMP (FT)
1	Askole to Jhola	14.6 (23.5)	879 / 691	10,160
2	Jhola to Paiju	11.7 (18.9)	1,318 / 352	11,120
3	Paiju to Khoburtse	8.3 (13.4)	1,740 / 314	12,550
4	Khoburtse to Urdukas	3.8 (6.2)	645 / 83	13,170
5	Urdukas to Goro II	7.5 (12.0)	1,011 / 229	13,920
6	Goro II to Concordia	8.4 (13.6)	1,124 / 23	15,010
7	Concordia to K2 Base Camp, Broad Peak camp	12.1 (19.5)	1,380 / 891	15,500
8	Broad Peak camp to Concordia	3.5 (5.6)	14 / 502	15,010
9	Concordia to Ali Camp	6.5 (10.4)	1,275 / 84	16,240
10	Ali Camp over the Gondogoro La to Khuispang	6.3 (10.2)	1,707 / 2,628	15,320
11	Khuispang to Saicho	10.7 (17.3)	36 / 4,192	11,150
12	Saicho to Hushe	6.4 (10.2)	20 / 866	Hushe, 10,260

The numbers come from my own GPS recordings, smoothed the same way for every day. Apps count climbing differently: Strava shows 99.99 miles and about 14,300 ft for the trip. My GPS heights read a little low near the top; see Altitude.





My twelve days, from Askole up the Baltoro Glacier to K2 Base Camp and out over the Gondogoro La to Hushe. The numbers are the days. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.

Straight answers

Can I do this trek on my own? No. The route from Askole up the Baltoro to Concordia and out over the Gondogoro La to Hushe is on the Pakistani government's list of restricted-zone treks. You need a trekking permit, your trekking visa needs a sponsor letter from a tour operator licensed by the Department of Tourist Services, and a licensed guide and porters are mandatory (all checked September 2026). See How this trek works.

How many days do I need? I walked 12 days from Askole to Hushe, with no full rest day. Add a day in Islamabad, the flight to Skardu, a jeep day each way and spare days for flights and weather. My card records put me in Pakistan for about 19 days. The Gilgit-Baltistan tourism department gives 14 to 20 days for the trek, depending on the route.

How hard is it? It was one of the hardest things I've ever done, a double diamond compared to anything I'd done before. The daily distances are short, 3.5 to 14.6 miles, and the team carries the camp. What makes it hard is the altitude (seven nights above 13,000 ft), walking on loose rock over glacier ice, cold nights and hot days, being far from home for a long time, and a pass climbed at night on fixed ropes.

Do I need climbing experience for the Gondogoro La? I didn't have any. I had never done anything like it. We wore alpine boots, crampons, helmets and harnesses, climbed a steep snow slope clipped from rope to rope, and rappelled on the way down. A team from Hushe fixes and looks after the ropes each season. Ask your operator what gear they provide, and practice walking in crampons and clipping in before you go.

Is it safe? There are two separate questions. Altitude is the big physical risk: read Altitude. Security advice changes. In September 2026 the US rated Pakistan Level 3 (reconsider travel) and said not to travel to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan or near the Line of Control; Gilgit-Baltistan, where this trek is, isn't named. The UK doesn't list Gilgit-Baltistan in its warnings, but advises against all travel on the Karakoram Highway between Mansehra and Chilas. Details and links: Before you go, check these.

When should I go? I went in August. The season is June to September, and the Gondogoro La is normally crossed from late June to about the end of August. See When to go.

What does it cost? My own trek price isn't in my records: I hosted the group and the operator arranged everything. Your budget is mostly the operator's package, plus international flights, a visa, insurance, a helicopter rescue deposit or guarantee, tips and spare nights. See What I paid.

What's a day like? Warm water to wash with, breakfast, then 2.5 to 9.5 hours of walking at the group's pace, with a lunch stop. At camp the tents are up and your bag is waiting. Tea, dinner in the dining tent, and an early night.

Where do you sleep? In tents the team puts up. I had my own tent, and two pads under me, which kept me warm.

Can I charge my phone and camera? On my trip the team ran a generator for a couple of hours each evening for cameras, phones and drone batteries. Bring a power bank for the rest of the day.

Are there showers? No. The lack of showers was one of the challenges for me. There was warm water for washing your face and hands each morning and before each meal.

What was your most useful gear? The reflective umbrella. It was the MVP of this trip, for the sun on the glacier and for the rain.

How this trek works

What my operator did

My trip was organized by Spantik Expeditions (spantikexpeditions.com), a licensed company in Skardu led by Aziz and his son Abdul. A year earlier, Abdul messaged me on Instagram inviting me to come hike in Pakistan. That message eventually brought me here, with a small group of subscribers.

The company took care of everything: the logistics, the permits and the food. Then they took care of us through the whole trek, helping with crampons and food, giving advice, making sure the tents were good, translating for us and dealing with currencies. Aziz and Abdul, a father and son, were the two guides you see throughout my films. Behind them were porters, cooks and a caravan of pack animals, and a goat and a few chickens.

On the road in, when a bridge was missing, the team unloaded the jeeps, carried the supplies across by hand and loaded everything again on the other side, several times. The dedication was obvious from the start.

Life in camp

The food. The cooks fed us three meals a day. Breakfast was bread, eggs, porridge, fruit, coffee and tea. On Day 1, lunch was fresh fruit, mangoes and melon cut that morning. Each afternoon the cooks rolled fresh chapati by hand. Dinner was Chinese food on the first night, and noodles, chicken and fried potatoes at Urdukas. At Goro II, popcorn really hit the spot, and that night we had our goat for dinner. At lunch my appetite was endless: seconds, then thirds.

The extras. The team carried so much Coca-Cola for us that it became a running joke; we celebrated at K2 Base Camp with Coke and boiled potatoes. I ate a lot of Snickers on this trek and drank a lot of tea.

Camp. The team put up the tents, a big dining tent and a kitchen, and our bags were waiting when we arrived. There were warm water stations every morning and before each meal. A generator ran for a couple of hours each evening for charging. My operator's 2026 package lists member, dining, kitchen and toilet tents. Camp shoes were essential.

Water. The river was brown and violent from flooding on the way in. My records don't show how our drinking water was treated. Ask your operator, and carry a filter or tablets as a backup.



Our camp at Khoburtse on Day 3.

The pace. I wanted to move faster, but it wasn't just about my pace. The porters, cooks and animals all had difficult jobs that longer days would have made even harder. Traveling with a group was part of the challenge for me, and there were a lot of moments that didn't make the video: the long conversations, the meals, the jokes and the struggles.

What I paid

I hosted this trip, so my records don't have a normal trek price in them. This is what my card and bank records show, and it isn't the full picture.

ITEM	WHAT I PAID
Etihad ticket, the only one on my card that year (I flew into Islamabad through Abu Dhabi)	$778.65, bought in May 2025
The trek itself: operator, permit, park fee, food, staff	Not in my records
Islamabad to Skardu and back	Not in my records
Meals and coffee in Islamabad after the trek	$3.69 to $12.69 each
Cash from an Islamabad ATM	PKR 10,000, $39.07 plus $6.17 in fees
Flight home through Istanbul	Not in my records

For your budget (2026)

- **The operator's package.** This is most of the cost. My operator's page shows no price. For scale, another licensed operator published US$1,990 for a 21-day K2 and Gondogoro La trek for 2026 and 2027. Ask exactly what's included.
- **Government fees,** usually inside the package: trekking fee US$150 per person (April to September) and the national park fee, US$190 per person.
- **The Gondogoro La rope fee,** paid to the Hushe team; my operator includes it.
- **Helicopter rescue deposit or guarantee:** my operator lists US$15,000, refundable minus US$500 if unused, not included in the price.
- **Visa:** check the fee for your passport on the visa site.
- **Insurance** covering trekking to about 5,600 m and helicopter evacuation.
- **International flights,** spare nights in Islamabad and Skardu, a sleeping bag if it isn't included, and **tips** for the staff and porters, which usually aren't in the price.

What you need to arrange

The rules below were checked on official Pakistani government pages on September 26, 2026. They change, so confirm them with your operator.

1. **A licensed tour operator.** The trekking visa needs a sponsor letter or agreement with an operator authorised by the Department of Tourist Services (DTS). The operator files your permit. The government's list of licensed operators is on the visa site, visa.nadra.gov.pk.
2. **A trekking permit.** The Gilgit-Baltistan Tourism Department issues it. The 2025 fee schedule, still posted in September 2026, charges foreigners a trekking fee of US$150 per person from April to September (US$75 from October to March), paid in Pakistan after the visa is granted. There is also a Central Karakoram National Park waste management fee, US$190 per person for restricted-zone trekkers (one line of the same schedule says US$200), paid in advance into the park's account. The same rules cap a group at 20, require a briefing and debriefing at a tourism office in Gilgit-Baltistan, and assign a liaison officer to each restricted-zone group.
3. **A trekking visa.** Apply online at visa.nadra.gov.pk under "Mountaineering & Trekking". It's a single-entry visa for up to 3 months, and processing normally takes 4 weeks. Pakistan's tourism corporation advises applying at least 45 days ahead, and the UK says the permission process can take up to 2 months. Don't book flights until you have the visa grant notice.
4. **A licensed guide and porters.** Both are mandatory in restricted areas. Porters must be insured (up to PKR 3 million each under the 2025 rules), and their wages are set by the regional government. My operator's 2026 package lists 25 kg of luggage per trekker carried each way. Tips for the staff and porters are usually not in the price.
5. **A way to Skardu.** A domestic flight from Islamabad, or two long days by road. See Getting there.
6. **Insurance and rescue.** Helicopter rescue in the Karakoram is run by Askari Aviation with army helicopters. It is not guaranteed, it flies only in daylight, and you have to be registered before the trek with a cash deposit, a bank guarantee from your operator or a guarantee from your embassy. My operator's 2026 page lists a US$15,000 deposit, refundable minus US$500 if unused. The US advises insurance that covers medical

evacuation, and the UK warns that your insurance may not be valid without the correct permits.

7. **Spare days.** For flights to Skardu, roads, weather and the pass.
8. **Cash in rupees.** The Gilgit-Baltistan tourism department says cards aren't widely accepted in the region. I exchanged money in Islamabad with the group.

Questions to ask an operator

- Are the trekking fee, the park fee and the Gondogoro La rope fee in the price?
- Who arranges the helicopter rescue deposit or guarantee, and what does it cost?
- What do you provide for the pass: crampons, harness, helmet, boots? What do I bring?
- Are tents, pads and a sleeping bag included? (Sleeping bags often aren't.)
- How many rest and acclimatization days are in the plan?
- What happens if the Gondogoro La is closed or the weather is wrong on the day?
- How are the porters insured and paid, and how much do they carry?
- How big is the group, and who is the guide?

When to go

The season. The Gilgit-Baltistan tourism department gives June to September as the time to go. The Gondogoro La is normally crossed from late June to about the end of August, while the Hushe team keeps ropes on it; there's no official season notice, so ask your operator for your year's dates. I crossed on August 27, 2025.

What I got. The first day was long and hot, and rain came in the afternoon. The sun on the glacier was strong. From Day 5 the nights got colder, and on Day 6 water bottles left outside froze solid. We had clear skies at Concordia, then rain, cloud and fresh snow on the day to K2 Base Camp, frost the next morning, snow and hard glare on the way to Ali Camp, and a freezing night on the pass. It was very cold at times and very hot at times.

Floods and roads. Monsoon rain, floods and landslides are a risk from late June to early October (UK advice, 2026). In 2025 floods and landslides had taken out whole sections of the road to Askole, and the team carried our supplies across missing bridges by hand. In 2026 the floods came again. On June 30 the Hushe River cut the road to Hushe, where this trek ends (news reports in late July still had the Hushe Valley road closed for repairs), and in July floods closed the Jaglot to Skardu road until a temporary bridge went in on July 27. Ask your operator whether the jeep roads to Askole and from Hushe are open for your dates.

Go soon. This trek still feels wild. You feel like you're getting away with something, because there's hardly anyone else doing it. It will become popular as infrastructure and money pour in. I said it at the time: do it as soon as you can.

Altitude

This is the part of the trek to take most seriously. You sleep seven nights above 13,000 ft, the highest at 16,240 ft, and cross a pass of about 18,300 ft in the middle of the night.

My camp heights

NIGHT	CAMP	SLEEPING HEIGHT, MY GPS	CHANGE
Before Day 1	Askole	9,980 ft (3,042 m)	
1	Jhola	10,160 ft (3,098 m)	+56 m
2	Paiju	11,120 ft (3,389 m)	+291 m
3	Khoburtse	12,550 ft (3,824 m)	+435 m
4	Urdukas	13,170 ft (4,015 m)	+191 m
5	Goro II	13,920 ft (4,244 m)	+229 m
6	Concordia	15,010 ft (4,575 m)	+331 m
7	Broad Peak camp	15,500 ft (4,725 m)	+150 m
8	Concordia	15,010 ft (4,575 m)	-150 m
9	Ali Camp	16,240 ft (4,949 m)	+374 m
10	Khuispang	15,320 ft (4,669 m)	-280 m
11	Saicho	11,150 ft (3,400 m)	-1,269 m

Highest points on foot: 16,317 ft (4,973 m) near K2 Base Camp on Day 7, and the Gondogoro La on Day 10. My GPS reads lower than most published heights up high (5,467 m at the pass, against the usual 5,585 m), and published camp heights differ from each other by up to about 300 m. Use these as a guide to the steps between camps.

The rules of thumb

From the CDC's 2026 guidance on altitude illness, based on the Wilderness Medical Society's recommendations:

- Above 3,000 m (9,850 ft), don't raise your sleeping height by more than 500 m (1,600 ft) a night, and plan an extra day for every 1,000 m (3,300 ft) you gain.
- My trip stayed under 500 m every night, but it had no full rest day, only two short days (4 and 8). By the extra-day rule, the climb from Askole to Ali Camp, about 1,900 m, calls for about two more days. My operator's current 23-day itinerary adds a rest day at Paiju and a day at Concordia.
- **Acute mountain sickness (AMS):** a headache plus at least one of loss of appetite, dizziness, tiredness or nausea, usually 2 to 12 hours after arriving higher. It improves with a descent of 300 m (1,000 ft) or more. If it gets worse at the same height, you must go down.
- **HACE (brain swelling):** confusion, poor balance and drowsiness, like being drunk. Start down immediately.
- **HAPE (fluid in the lungs):** unusual breathlessness, first when walking and then at rest, with a cough or chest congestion. It can kill faster than HACE. Going down is urgent.
- Acetazolamide (Diamox) can help prevent AMS. Talk to your doctor before the trip.

What this means on the Baltoro

Going down fast is hard here. From Concordia it's days back down the glacier on foot, the pass is only possible with the ropes in place and good weather, and helicopters fly only in daylight, when they're available. Askari Aviation's briefing gives a maximum landing height of 5,000 m and advises moving casualties on the Baltoro to Concordia. In 2025 there was a small medical dome at Concordia with a doctor on call. Tell your guide early if you feel unwell, and turn around below the pass if anyone in the group is getting worse.

On the pass, the altitude, the cold, the darkness and the lack of sleep made it one of the craziest experiences of my life. Coming down the other side, breathing felt easier.

Getting there

What I did. I flew into Islamabad through Abu Dhabi after hiking the Haute Route in the Alps. Our group met for the first time in Islamabad and spent the day exploring. We exchanged money, walked around the Shah Faisal Mosque and visited the Pakistan Monument. I did not see another tourist anywhere, and locals stopped us constantly for photos and conversation. After lunch at a tandoori restaurant we drove up to the Daman-e-Koh viewpoint and watched the sun drop and the city lights come on, with monkeys watching us.

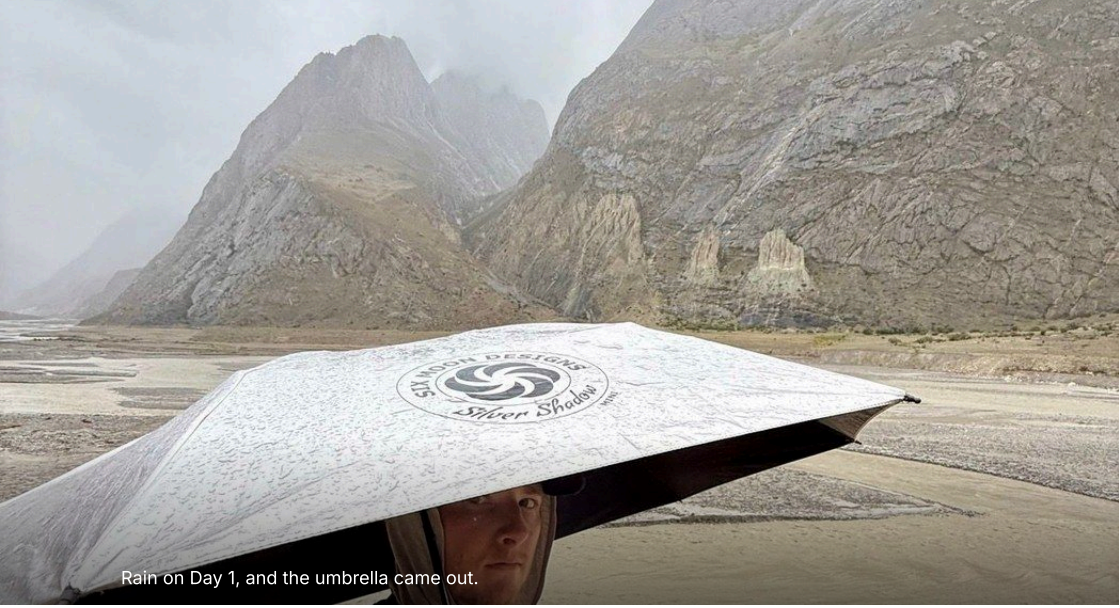
The next morning a short flight took us north to Skardu, a desert valley surrounded by sharp peaks and braided rivers. That evening, on the roof of the guesthouse, I listened to the call to prayer echo across the valley.

From Skardu we drove toward the trailhead at Askole. The road was barely a road: floods and landslides had taken out whole sections. Where a bridge was missing, the team unloaded the jeeps, carried everything across by hand and loaded it again on the other side.

Flights to Skardu. In 2026 PIA, Airblue and AirSial fly Islamabad to Skardu (AirSial since May 2026; I didn't check schedules on the airlines' own sites). Flights to the northern mountains are often delayed or cancelled by weather, so leave spare days. Operators drive when flights are cancelled: my operator's plan is Islamabad to Chilas (12 to 13 hours) and Chilas to Skardu (8 to 9 hours).

By road. Gilgit-Baltistan is reached on the Karakoram Highway or over the Babusar Pass (seasonal, and closed by floods in July 2025). The UK advises against all travel on the Karakoram Highway between Mansehra and Chilas. The Babusar road crosses Khyber Pakhtunkhwa too, so both road routes cross the province the US says not to travel to (September 2026). If your flight is cancelled, ask your operator which road they would use and check the current advice for it. Don't drive the highway at night.

Skardu to Askole. About 5 to 6 hours by jeep (operator figure, 2026), on a road that floods can break.



Rain on Day 1, and the umbrella came out.

DAY 1

Contents

Askole to Jhola

DISTANCE	CLIMBING	DESCENT	TIME I TOOK
14.6 mi (23.5 km)	**879 ft** (268 m)	**691 ft** (211 m)	**8.1 hours** (8:15 a.m. to 4:20 p.m., 5.3 hours moving)

HIGH POINT

10,352 ft (3,155 m), near the end

CAMP

Jhola, about 10,160 ft (3,100 m)

TERRAIN

A dirt path along the Braldu river, then a side valley to cross

HEAT AND SUN

Low, dry and hot. Start with full water and sun cover

My day

Askole is the last village before the wilderness: small stone homes, terraced fields and kids playing everywhere. It was the final touch of civilization before we stepped onto the trail.

The first day was long and hot. Lunch was fresh fruit, mangoes and melon cut that morning. The porters and pack animals passed us, including our goat, who the group named Messi, because Messi is the goat. Rain came in and the umbrellas came out. That umbrella ended up being one of the most useful pieces of gear I brought.

We reached camp tired but excited. Our bags were already waiting at the tents. We changed into dry clothes and settled into the rhythm of life out here: a big dining tent went up, tea boiled, chickens wandered around camp, and dinner was Chinese food.

The trail

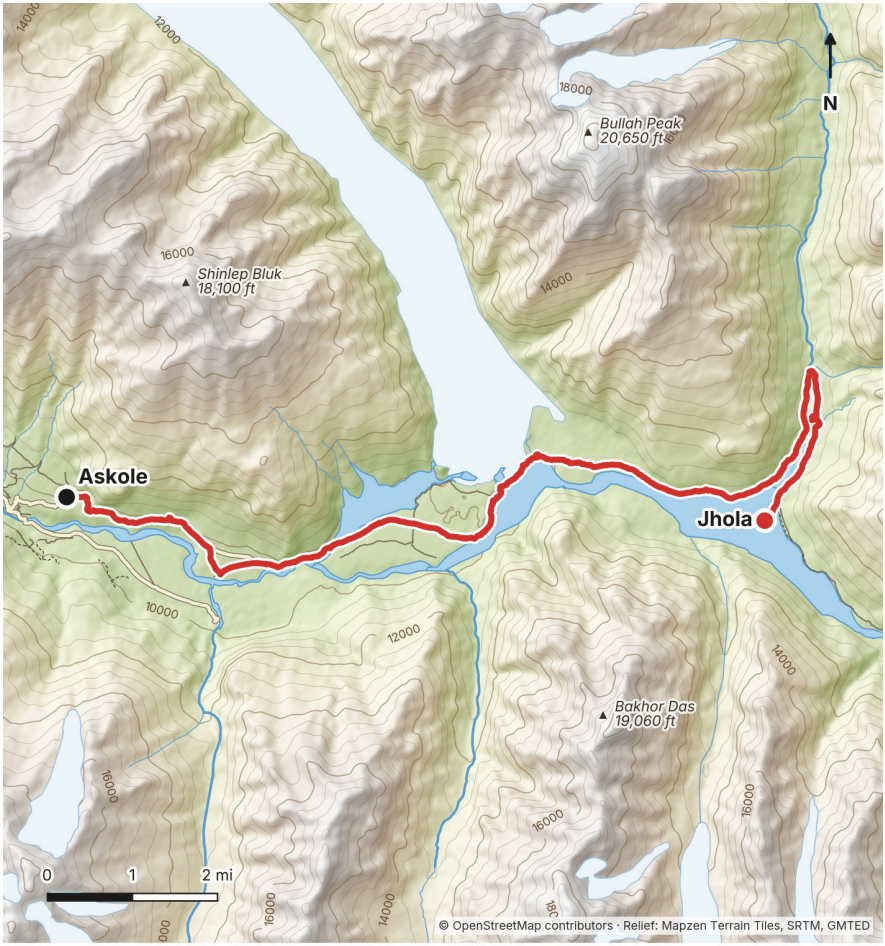
From Askole a dirt path follows the Braldu river east. It's a long day but not a steep one: my GPS stays between about 9,800 and 10,350 ft all day. About 12 miles in, the path turns north into a side valley, crosses the river and comes back down the far side to the Jhola camp. The heat and the sun are the hard part, not the climbing.

If you need to get off

Walk back down the valley to Askole, where the jeep road ends. On every day of this trek, getting off is your guide's call: see Weather and safety for rescue.

Watch this day

Narrated film, Day 1 · Ambient film, Day 1





Day 1 map and elevation profile. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.



The Braldu valley and the spires ahead on Day 2.

DAY 2

Jhola to Paiju

DISTANCE	CLIMBING	DESCENT	TIME I TOOK
11.7 mi (18.9 km)	**1,318 ft** (402 m)	**352 ft** (107 m)	**8.2 hours** (7:35 a.m. to 3:40 p.m., 4.8 hours moving)

HIGH POINT

11,135 ft (3,394 m), at Paiju

CAMP

Paiju, about 11,120 ft (3,390 m), the last green camp

TERRAIN

A path along the river, past the Bardumal camp at about 3 miles

CAMP NOTES

Camp shoes, and a generator for charging in the evening

My day

The mornings started with bread, eggs, porridge, fruit, coffee and tea. I appreciated the warm water stations set out each morning and before each meal. Being able to wash your face and hands on a trek like this is a small thing that makes a huge difference.

We followed the river, which was brown and violent from flooding. The team carried so much Coca-Cola for us it became a running joke. As the clouds cleared, huge mountains appeared on both sides of the valley, and crossing a stream gave us our first real look at the sharp peaks we'd be hiking toward.

Paiju was our last green campsite before the glacier. Camp shoes were essential. The team ran a generator for a couple of hours each evening so we could recharge cameras, phones and drone batteries.

The trail

The path keeps to the Braldu valley, passing the Bardumal camp at about 3 miles on my GPS, and climbs gently all day, from about 10,160 ft to 11,120 ft at Paiju. There are streams to cross on the way. Paiju has trees and shade, and it's the last camp with any green around it.

If you need to get off

Walk back down the valley to Askole, one or two days.



Paiju, the last green camp, on Day 2.

Watch this day

Narrated film, Day 2 · Ambient film, Day 2





Day 2 map and elevation profile. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.



The ice of the Baltoro Glacier on Day 3.

DAY 3

Contents

Paiju to Khoburtse

DISTANCE	CLIMBING	DESCENT	TIME I TOOK
8.3 mi (13.4 km)	**1,740 ft** (530 m)	**314 ft** (96 m)	**7.7 hours** (7:25 a.m. to 3:10 p.m., 4.2 hours moving)

HIGH POINT

12,678 ft (3,864 m), near the end

CAMP

Khoburtse, about 12,550 ft (3,820 m), on the glacier's edge

TERRAIN

Onto the Baltoro Glacier at about 2.3 miles: loose rock on top of ice

SIGHTS

The Trango Towers, across the glacier

My day

This was the day we stepped onto the Baltoro Glacier. Rocks shifted over the ice and water seeped through the cracks. The trail narrowed in places and demanded full focus. The sun was strong, and the umbrella saved me again. We passed the Trango Towers, some of the most famous climbing walls on Earth.

Around midday the long train of pack animals caught up to us, bells echoing across the glacier. Khoburtse was a military outpost, with old fuel drums scattered everywhere. That evening Aziz, one of our two guides, noticed holes in my trail runners and patched them up for me. That small act probably saved my shoes for the rest of the trip.

The trail

From Paiju the path follows the moraine to the snout of the Baltoro Glacier. My GPS crosses onto the mapped glacier about 2.3 miles in, and from here on most days are on the ice. The glacier here is covered in stones and gravel, so it doesn't look like ice until a stone rolls or you see a meltwater pool. The path climbs about 1,700 ft over the day, most of it gradually.

If you need to get off

Back down the glacier to Paiju, then down the valley to Askole.



The Trango Towers from the Baltoro Glacier on Day 3.

Watch this day

Narrated film, Day 3 · Ambient film, Day 3





Day 3 map and elevation profile. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.



The Baltoro Glacier and its granite towers on Day 4.

DAY 4

Khoburtse to Urdukas

DISTANCE	CLIMBING	DESCENT	TIME I TOOK
3.8 mi (6.2 km)	**645 ft** (196 m)	**83 ft** (25 m)	**3.4 hours** (8:15 to 11:40 a.m., 2.2 hours moving)

HIGH POINT

13,199 ft (4,023 m), at Urdukas

CAMP

Urdukas, about 13,170 ft (4,015 m), on a slope above the glacier

TERRAIN

Along the glacier and up to the camp: short, but all uphill

My day

The next morning we hiked to Urdukas. A shorter day, but all uphill, and we reached camp by lunchtime. I wanted to move faster through the trek, but I quickly realized it wasn't just about my pace. The porters, cooks and animals all had difficult jobs that longer days would have made even harder.

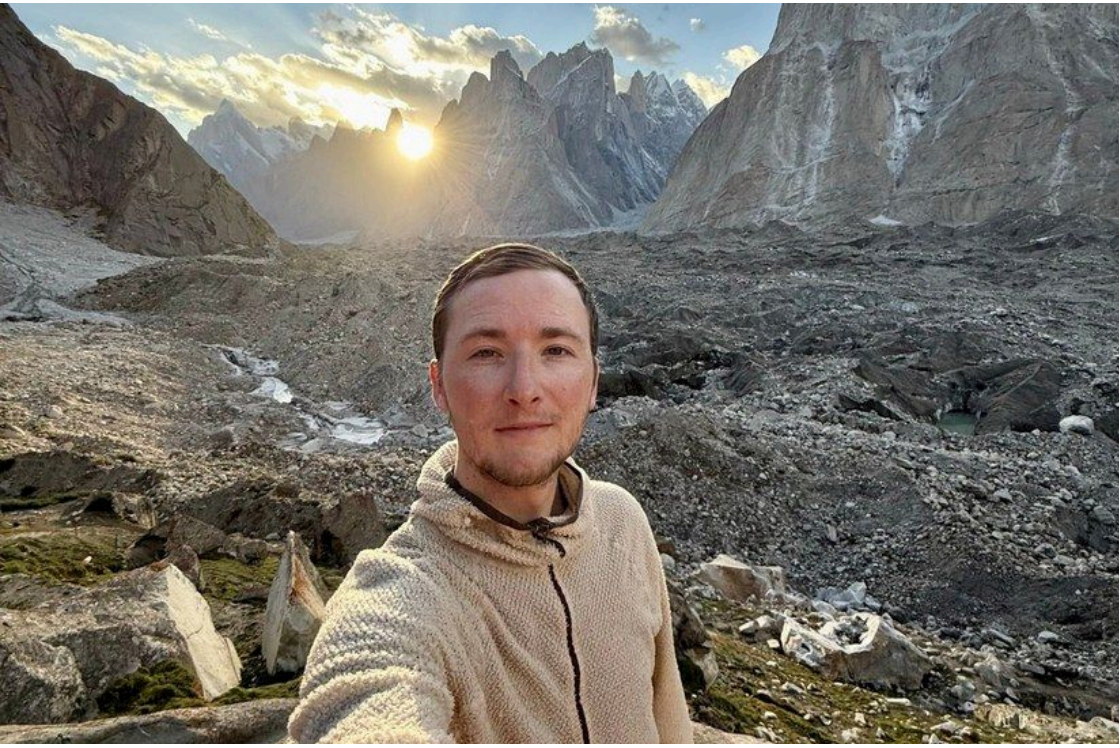
Each afternoon the cooks rolled fresh chapati by hand. Dinner was noodles, chicken and fried potatoes: simple and comforting. Urdukas sits on a cliff with unbelievable views in every direction.

The trail

The shortest day of the approach, and the first above 13,000 ft. The path works along the glacier and climbs to Urdukas, a camp of terraces on the slope above the ice. We were in camp at 11:40 a.m. A short day at this height is part of acclimatizing: see Altitude.

If you need to get off

Back down the glacier to Paiju and Askole, two or three days.

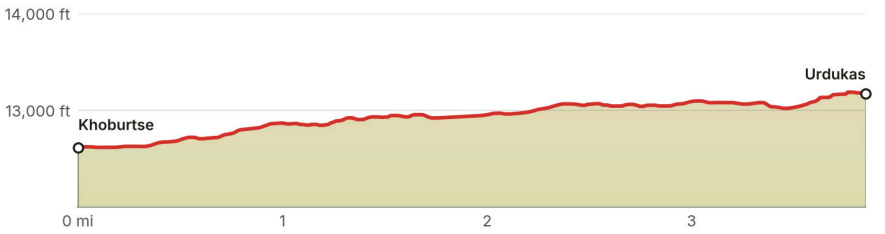


Me at Urdukas in the evening, Day 4.

Watch this day

Narrated film, Day 4 · Ambient film, Day 4





Day 4 map and elevation profile. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.



Gasherbrum IV at the head of the Baltoro Glacier on Day 5.

DAY 5

Urdukas to Goro II

DISTANCE	CLIMBING	DESCENT	TIME I TOOK
7.5 mi (12.0 km)	**1,011 ft** (308 m)	**229 ft** (70 m)	**6.6 hours** (7:20 a.m. to 1:55 p.m., 3.9 hours moving)

HIGH POINT

13,926 ft (4,244 m), at Goro II

CAMP

Goro II, about 13,920 ft (4,245 m), on the glacier itself

TERRAIN

The middle of the Baltoro Glacier: ice towers, crevasses, moraine

SIGHTS

Gasherbrum IV at the head of the glacier

My day

We walked straight up the glacier, past huge ice melt towers and deep crevasses. Gasherbrum IV glowed in the morning light. At lunch my appetite was endless. I had seconds, then thirds. I feel like I eat way more than most hikers.

At camp, popcorn really hit the spot. As the sun dropped, the glacier melted just enough to reflect the light. That night, sadly, Messi the goat's journey ended, and we had goat for dinner.

The nights were getting colder, but I felt fully prepared with warm layers and my own tent, which the team provided. This was the first time I ever had two pads underneath me while sleeping, and it kept me warm.

The trail

Almost all of today is on the glacier: 95 percent of my track is inside the mapped glacier. The path runs up the middle of the Baltoro past the Goro I camp at about 5.3 miles to Goro II, a camp on the ice. Stay on the line your guide takes: the ice towers and crevasses are right beside the path.

If you need to get off

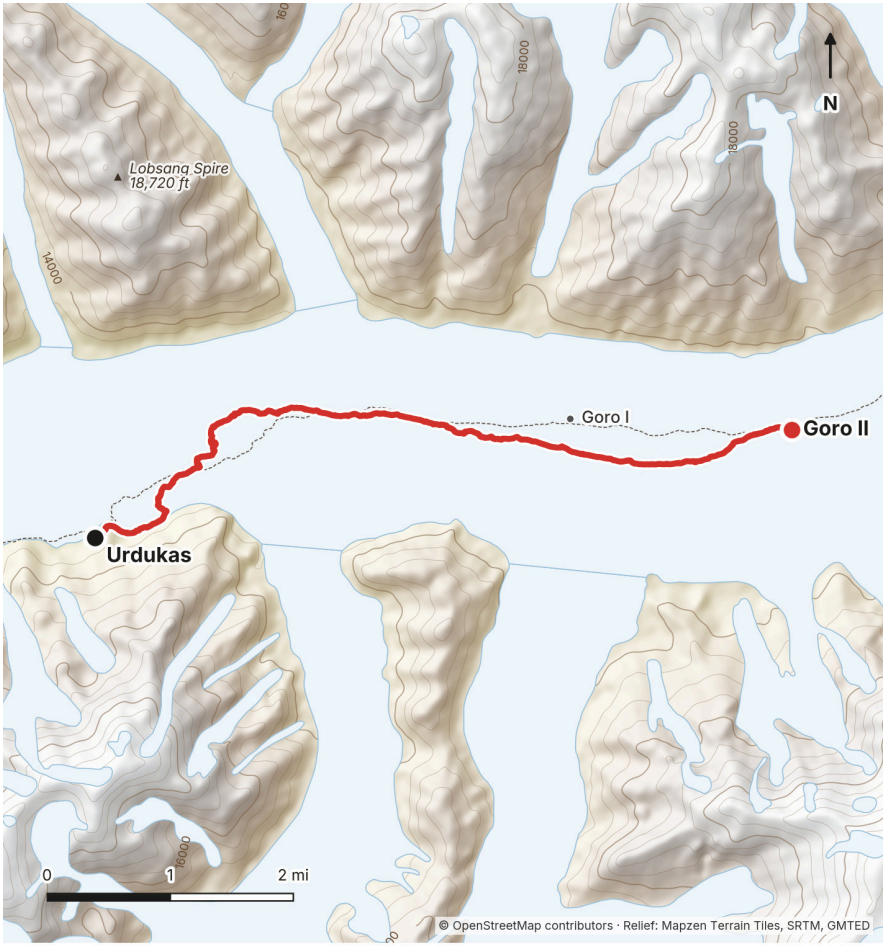
Back down the glacier the way you came, to Urdukas and Paiju.

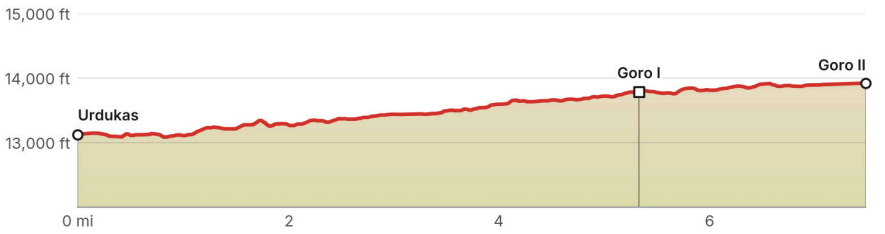


Alpenglow on Gasherbrum IV on Day 5.

Watch this day

Narrated film, Day 5 · Ambient film, Day 5





Day 5 map and elevation profile. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.



K2 from Concordia on Day 6.

DAY 6

Goro II to Concordia

DISTANCE	CLIMBING	DESCENT	TIME I TOOK
8.4 mi (13.6 km)	**1,124 ft** (343 m)	**23 ft** (7 m)	**6.7 hours** (7:45 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., 4.2 hours moving)

HIGH POINT

15,024 ft (4,579 m), at Concordia

CAMP

Concordia, about 15,010 ft (4,575 m), where the glaciers meet

TERRAIN

On the glacier all day, flattening out toward Concordia

SIGHTS

K2, for the first time

My day

The morning was the coldest yet. Water bottles left outside were frozen solid. We passed more exposed ice, but the terrain slowly flattened, and the chaotic maze of broken glacier opened up into a wide valley. Then we reached Concordia.

This was the first time I saw K2. After days of walking, it just appears and everything goes quiet. You don't talk. You just stand there trying to take it in.

K2 looks unreal. Compared to Everest, which hides behind other peaks from its base camp viewpoint, K2 stands alone, perfectly centered between the mountain ranges, with a glacier rising up to its clean triangular summit. Looking back, the way we came was just as beautiful. Concordia might be one of the most beautiful places I have ever stood. We had clear skies and perfect conditions while we were there. There was even a small medical dome with a doctor on call.

The trail

All on the glacier, gently uphill, about 1,100 ft on the day. Concordia is the junction where the Baltoro meets the Godwin-Austen Glacier, which runs north to K2. It's also where the route to the Gondogoro La turns south, so you'll be back here on Day 8.

If you need to get off

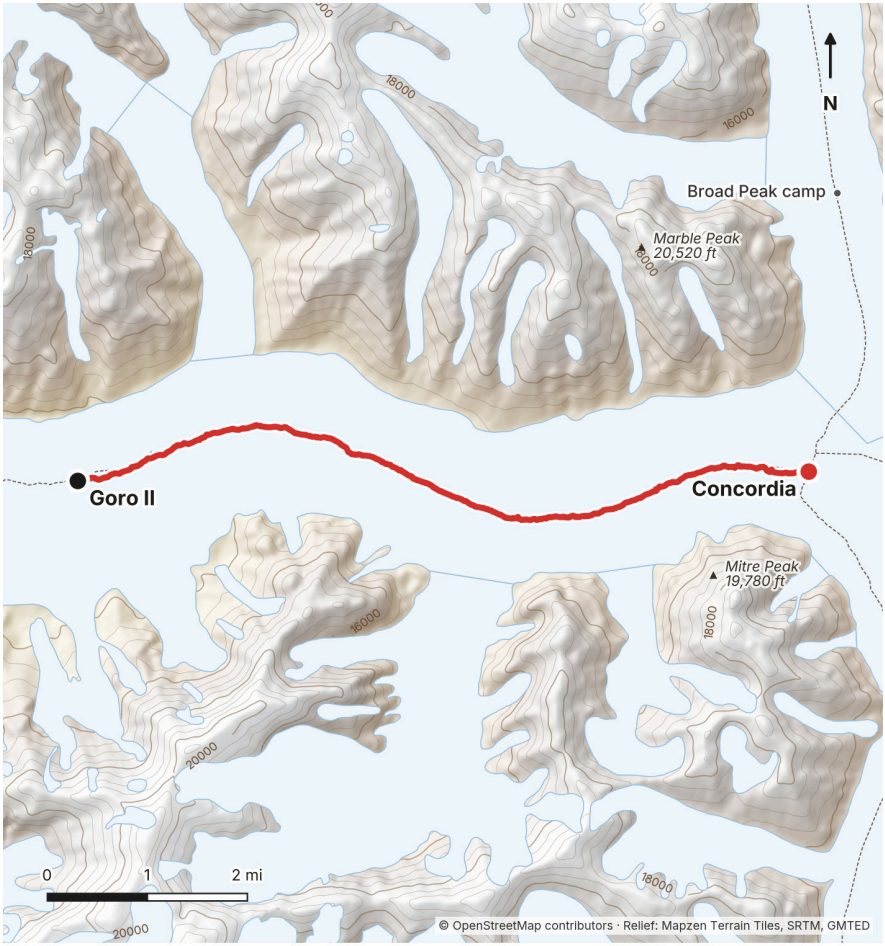
Back down the Baltoro the way you came: four days or more to Askole on foot. See Weather and safety.

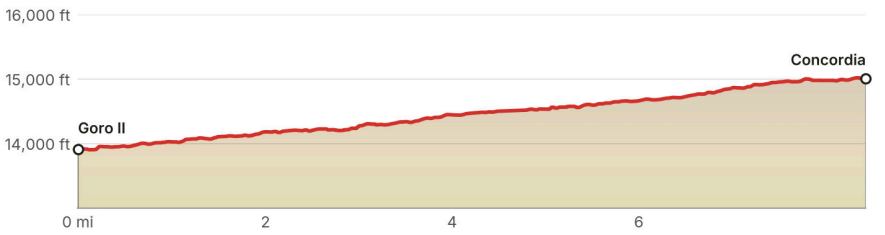


The medical dome at Concordia on Day 6.

Watch this day

Narrated film, Day 6 · Concordia views of K2 · Ambient film, Day 6





Day 6 map and elevation profile. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.



The flag at K2 Base Camp in fresh snow on Day 7.

DAY 7

Contents

Concordia to K2 Base Camp and Broad Peak Camp

DISTANCE	CLIMBING	DESCENT	TIME I TOOK
12.1 mi (19.5 km)	**1,380 ft** (421 m)	**891 ft** (272 m)	**9.5 hours** (8:10 a.m. to 5:35 p.m., 6.1 hours moving)

HIGH POINT

16,317 ft (4,973 m), just past the base camp sign

K2 BASE CAMP SIGN

7.5 miles in, 16,266 ft (4,958 m) on my GPS, at 2:35 p.m.

CAMP

Broad Peak camp, about 15,500 ft (4,725 m), on the way back

TERRAIN

North up the Godwin-Austen Glacier; fresh snow that day

My day

We woke to rain and clouds hiding K2. It was one of the tougher days, so I locked in with my umbrella and music. At lunch everyone squeezed into the dining tent, which immediately steamed up from the stove flames. Fresh snow covered the whole landscape toward K2 Base Camp.

When we reached the base camp sign, next to a Pakistani flag and a single tent, it felt surreal: a milestone after days of walking toward this one mountain. We celebrated, of course, with some Coke and boiled potatoes. Then we visited the Gilkey Memorial, a cliff covered in plaques for climbers who died attempting K2. A heavy moment, and something not many people get to see in their lifetime.

The trail

From Concordia the route goes north up the Godwin-Austen Glacier, past the camp below Broad Peak, to the K2 Base Camp sign at 7.5 miles on my GPS. My high point of the day was 16,317 ft, about 0.7 miles past the sign and an hour later. Then we walked back down the glacier to the Broad Peak camp for the night, 12.1 miles in all. This was the longest day since Day 1, at the highest heights yet, and on my trip it was in snow.

If you need to get off

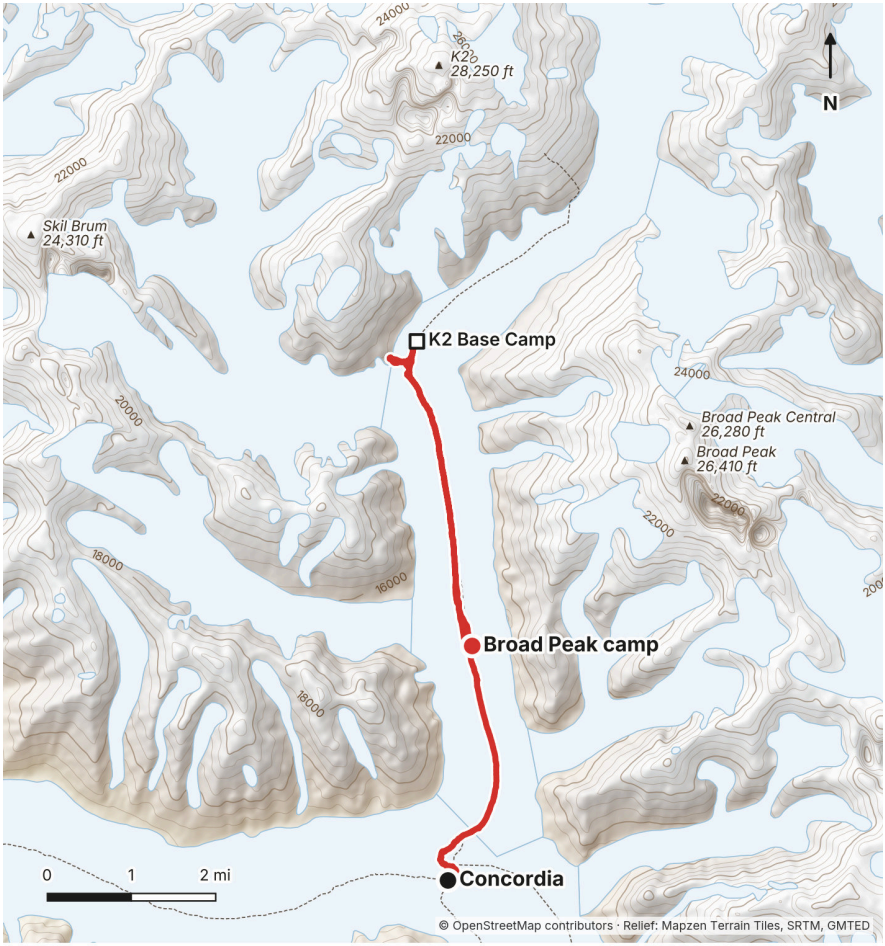
Back down the Godwin-Austen Glacier to Concordia, then down the Baltoro.

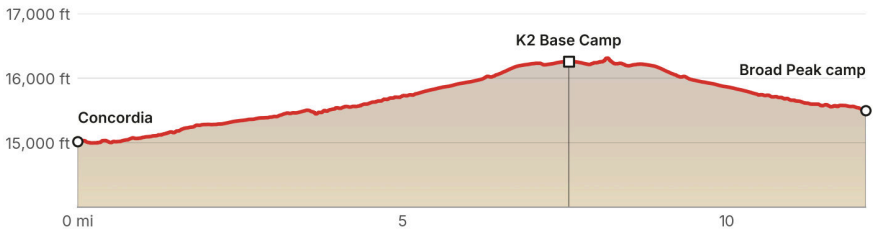


The Gilkey Memorial near K2 Base Camp on Day 7.

Watch this day

Narrated film, Day 7 · Ambient film, Day 7





Day 7 map and elevation profile. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.



On the moraine of the Godwin-Austen Glacier on Day 8.

DAY 8

Broad Peak Camp to Concordia

DISTANCE	CLIMBING	DESCENT	TIME I TOOK
3.5 mi (5.6 km)	**14 ft** (4 m)	**502 ft** (153 m)	**2.6 hours** (9:00 to 11:40 a.m., 1.9 hours moving)

HIGH POINT

15,504 ft (4,726 m), at the start

CAMP

Concordia again, about 15,010 ft (4,575 m)

TERRAIN

Down the Godwin-Austen Glacier: a short, easy half day

My day

The next morning everything was coated in frost. The sun came out and gave us our last close views of K2. My tripod fell over at this point and cracked my lens, which hurt, but the camera survived. I ate a lot of Snickers on this trek and drank a lot of tea. It was a short rest day with an incredible sunset.

The trail

A short walk back down the glacier to Concordia, mostly downhill. We were in camp before noon, which gives you an afternoon to rest before the long push toward the pass.

If you need to get off

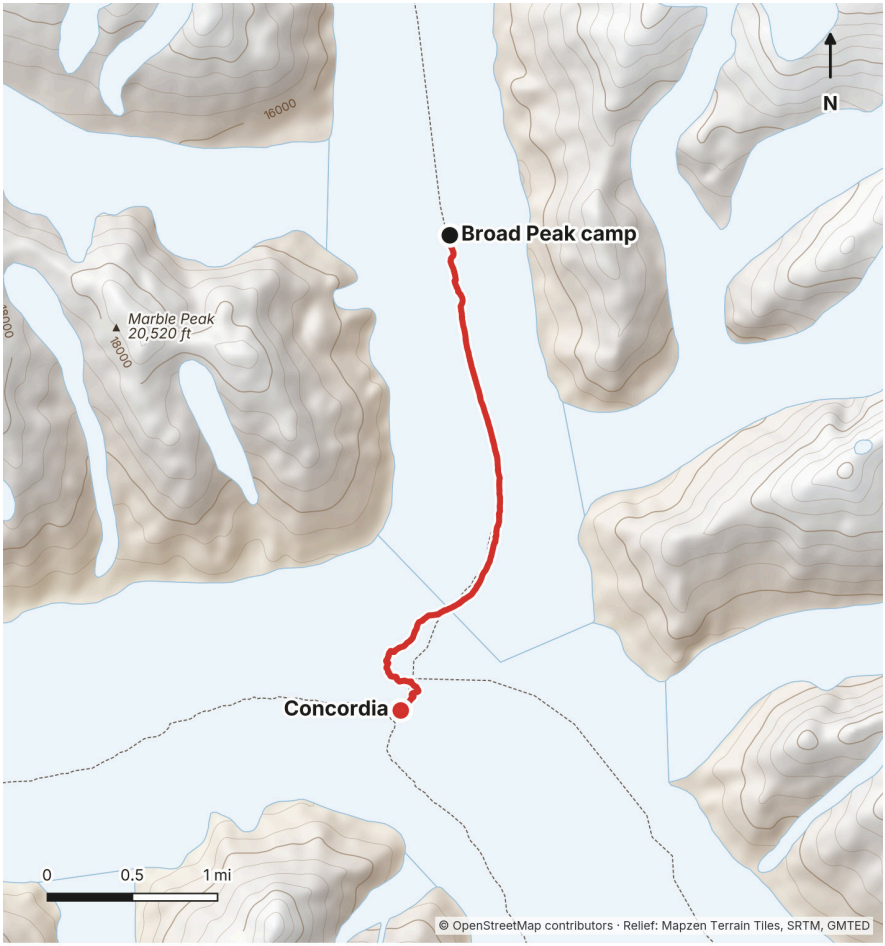
This is the last easy exit. From Concordia you either go back down the Baltoro or on over the Gondogoro La. If anyone in your group is struggling with the altitude, this is the day to say so.

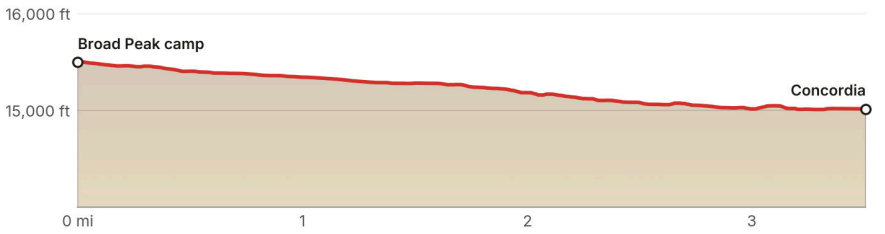


K2 over our tents on the morning of Day 8.

Watch this day

Narrated film, Day 8 · Ambient film, Day 8





Day 8 map and elevation profile. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.



Ali Camp, below the Gondogoro La, on Day 9.

DAY 9

Concordia to Ali Camp

DISTANCE	CLIMBING	DESCENT	TIME I TOOK
6.5 mi (10.4 km)	**1,275 ft** (389 m)	**84 ft** (26 m)	**4.8 hours** (8:55 a.m. to 1:45 p.m., 3.0 hours moving)

HIGH POINT

16,237 ft (4,949 m), at Ali Camp

CAMP

Ali Camp, about 16,240 ft (4,950 m), the highest camp

TERRAIN

South up the Vigne Glacier, on snow, with crevasses to cross

GEAR

Glacier glasses. The glare off the snow is intense

My day

The next day the team split. The pack animals and some of the gear went back the way we came. From here on we traveled light. The ground was covered in snow and deep ravines slowed us down.

This was the day I realized alpine glasses are essential. The reflection off the snow was intense, and I wish I'd had more protective glasses. We checked our alpine gear for the next day and went to bed early, because we'd be waking up at midnight.

The trail

From Concordia the route turns south up the Vigne Glacier to Ali Camp, the base for the Gondogoro La. It's all on the glacier: snow over ice, and crevasses that you walk around or step across. Your guide picks the line. Ali Camp was our highest camp, and the night there is short.

If you need to get off

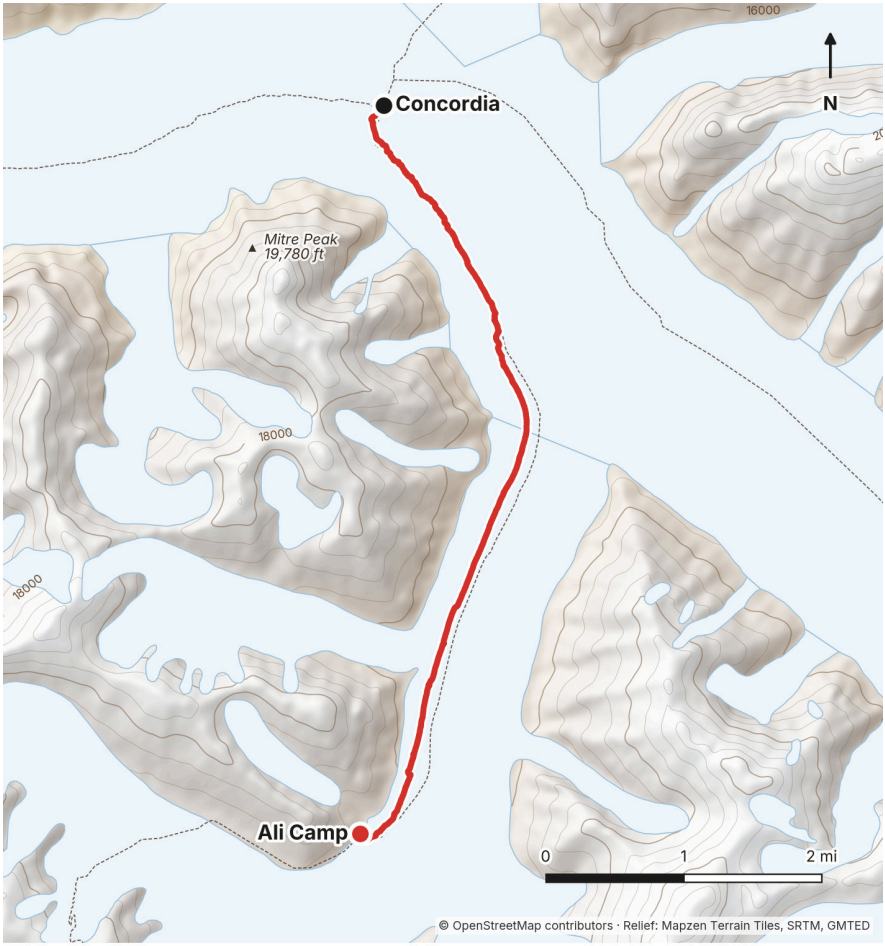
Back down the Vigne Glacier to Concordia and out down the Baltoro, the way the pack animals went. If the pass is closed or the weather is wrong, that's the way out too.

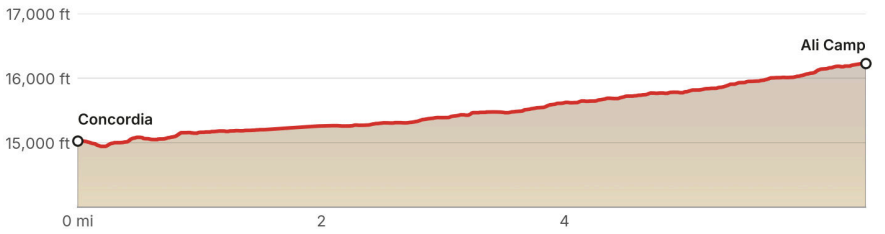


A crevasse on the way to Ali Camp on Day 9.

Watch this day

Narrated film, Day 9 · Ambient film, Day 9





Day 9 map and elevation profile. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.



Looking down the Gondogoro Glacier after the pass on Day 10.

DAY 10

Ali Camp over the Gondogoro La to Khuispang

DISTANCE	CLIMBING	DESCENT	TIME I TOOK
6.3 mi (10.2 km)	**1,707 ft** (520 m)	**2,628 ft** (801 m)	**8.2 hours** (11:30 p.m. to 7:40 a.m., 3.3 hours moving)

HIGH POINT

17,936 ft (5,467 m) on my GPS, at the pass (usually published as 5,585 m)

AT THE TOP

about 4:40 to 5:30 a.m., before sunrise

CAMP

Khuispang, about 15,320 ft (4,670 m), under Laila Peak

TERRAIN

Glacier, then a steep snow slope with fixed ropes on both sides of the pass

GEAR WORN

Alpine boots, crampons, helmet and harness, clipped to the ropes

My day

It was complete darkness when my midnight alarm went off. A quick breakfast, a coffee and a prayer for safe passage. We hiked uphill until the slope became too steep to continue without gear. It was freezing, so we wore every layer we had. Then we put on alpine boots, crampons, helmets and harnesses. I had never done anything like this. It was scary and exciting at the same time.

We climbed a steep snow staircase and clipped from rope to rope. The altitude, the cold, the darkness and the lack of sleep made this one of the craziest experiences of my life. Reaching the top was a relief. The team unrolled a banner for a photo, but it was still too dark to film the moment the way I wanted. We took off our crampons and waited for sunrise. I stayed at the top as long as I could, but eventually it was just too cold for me and the drone.

After a little bit of descent the light finally hit, and I got some of the best footage of the trip. Descending was tough, though. I couldn't really film myself while rappelling. Laila Peak, towering over Khuispang camp, is one of the coolest peaks I've ever seen. I recovered with tea and sleep. The hardest part was behind us.

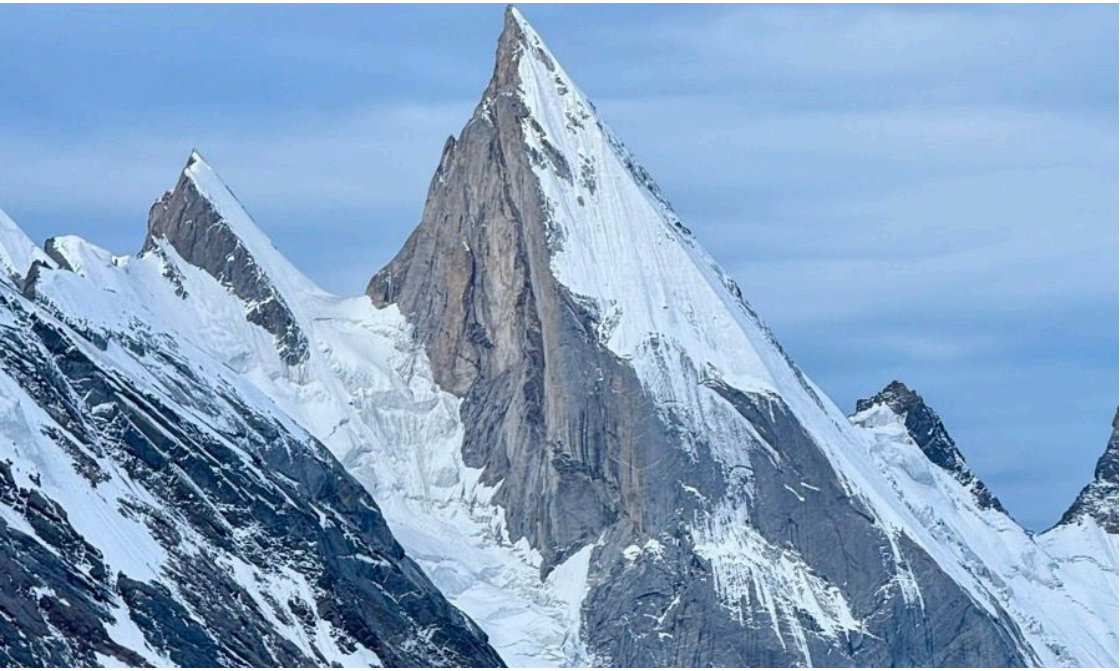
The trail

My GPS shows how the night went. We left Ali Camp at 11:30 p.m. and covered the first 2 miles on the glacier in about 1 hour 40 minutes, to about 16,820 ft. The next mile, the steep slope on the fixed ropes, took about three hours and climbed about 1,100 ft to the pass. We were at the top from about 4:40 to 5:30 a.m. The first mile down, steep and roped, took about an hour and dropped about 1,570 ft. Then the path eases off down to Khuispang, which we reached at 7:40 a.m.

My GPS reads 5,467 m at the pass. Most published sources give the Gondogoro La as 5,585 m (18,323 ft), and some give up to 5,650 m. My GPS reads low up here, so plan for the published figure.

If you need to get off

Before the pass, the only way out is back to Concordia and down the Baltoro. Once you're over, keep going down: Khuispang, Saicho and Hushe are all downhill. The pass is not something to try in bad weather or without your guide and the ropes in place.



Laila Peak above the Gondogoro valley on Day 10.

Watch this day

Narrated film, Day 10 · Ambient film, Day 10





Day 10 map and elevation profile. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.



Green again: the trail down the valley on Day 11.

DAY 11

Khuispang to Saicho

DISTANCE	CLIMBING	DESCENT	TIME I TOOK
10.7 mi (17.3 km)	**36 ft** (11 m)	**4,192 ft** (1,278 m)	**6.2 hours** (8:35 a.m. to 2:45 p.m., 3.8 hours moving)

HIGH POINT

15,318 ft (4,669 m), at the start

CAMP

Saicho, about 11,150 ft (3,400 m), with tables and chairs

TERRAIN

Down the Gondogoro Glacier and valley, past Dalsampa at about 5.8 miles; one big stream crossing

My day

We rested at Khuispang the day we came over the pass and walked on the next morning. It was warmer and all downhill. Breathing felt easier, and I even ran parts of the trail. We had one big stream crossing, and I watched the landscape slowly turn green again. The trees came back, and so did softer ground. At camp, tables and chairs were waiting.

The trail

About 4,200 ft down over 10.7 miles. The first part follows the Gondogoro Glacier: about half of my track is on the mapped ice. Below it the path runs down the valley past the Dalsampa meadows to Saicho, the first camp among trees. The big stream crossing is on this day; follow your guide and cross together.

If you need to get off

Keep going down to Saicho and Hushe, where the road starts.

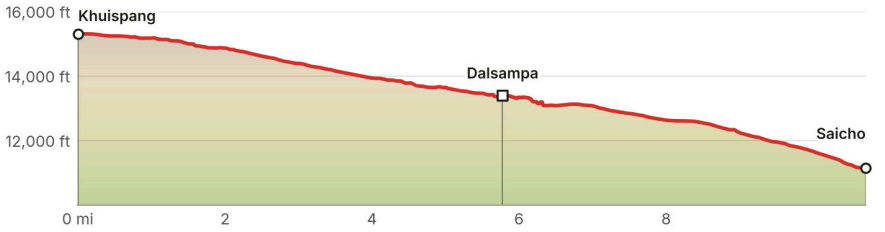


Saicho camp on Day 11.

Watch this day

Narrated film, Day 11 · Ambient film, Day 11





Day 11 map and elevation profile. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.



Hushe and its fields at the end of Day 12.

DAY 12

Saicho to Hushe

DISTANCE	CLIMBING	DESCENT	TIME I TOOK
6.4 mi (10.2 km)	**20 ft** (6 m)	**866 ft** (264 m)	**3.0 hours** (8:15 to 11:15 a.m., 1.8 hours moving)

HIGH POINT

11,135 ft (3,394 m), at the start

FINISH

Hushe village, about 10,260 ft (3,130 m); jeeps to Skardu

TERRAIN

A valley path, then a river crossing in a hanging basket

My day

On the final day we said goodbye to the old man who owned the camp. The last obstacle was a river crossing in a hanging basket surrounded by ropes. We crossed slowly, one at a time.

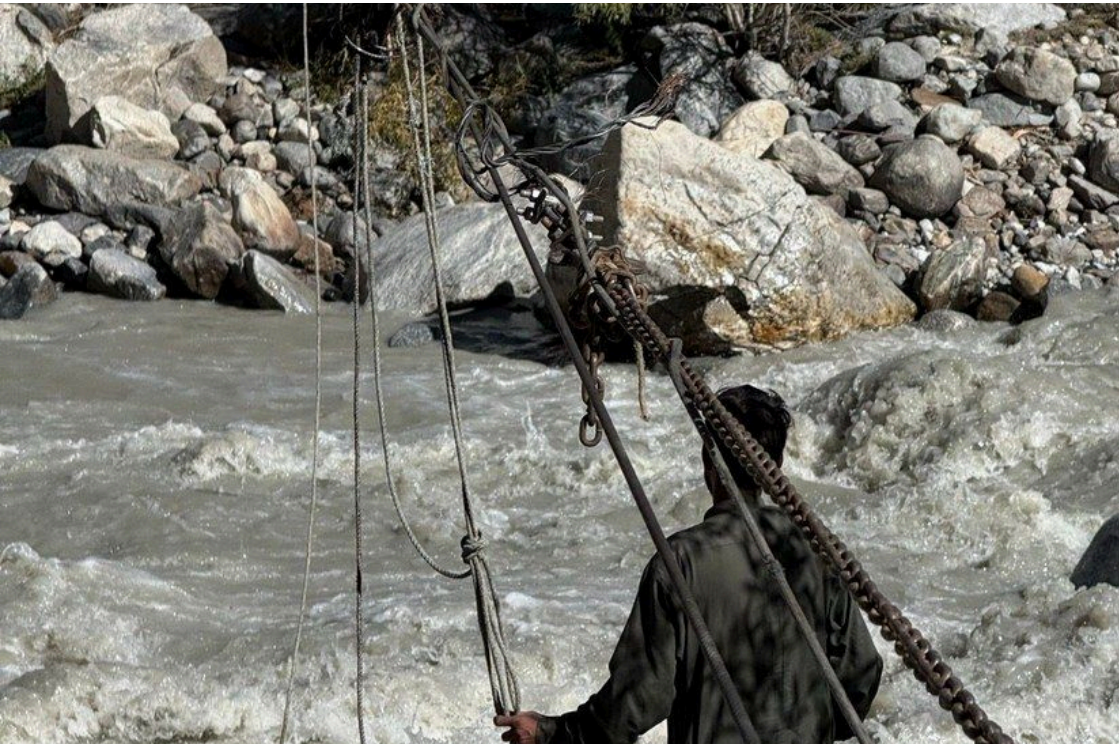
My shoes were destroyed by this point, but thanks to Aziz's patch job earlier in the trek, they survived to the very end. We reached Hushe, a small farming village, and the trek officially ended. The team got paid, the jeeps were loaded, and we began the long drive back to Skardu, over the same broken bridges we had crossed on the way in.

The trail

An easy last morning down the valley to Hushe, about 870 ft down in 6.4 miles. The one thing to take seriously is the basket crossing: one person at a time, and do what the crew tells you.

If you need to get off

You're walking out. The road starts at Hushe.



The hanging basket over the river on Day 12.

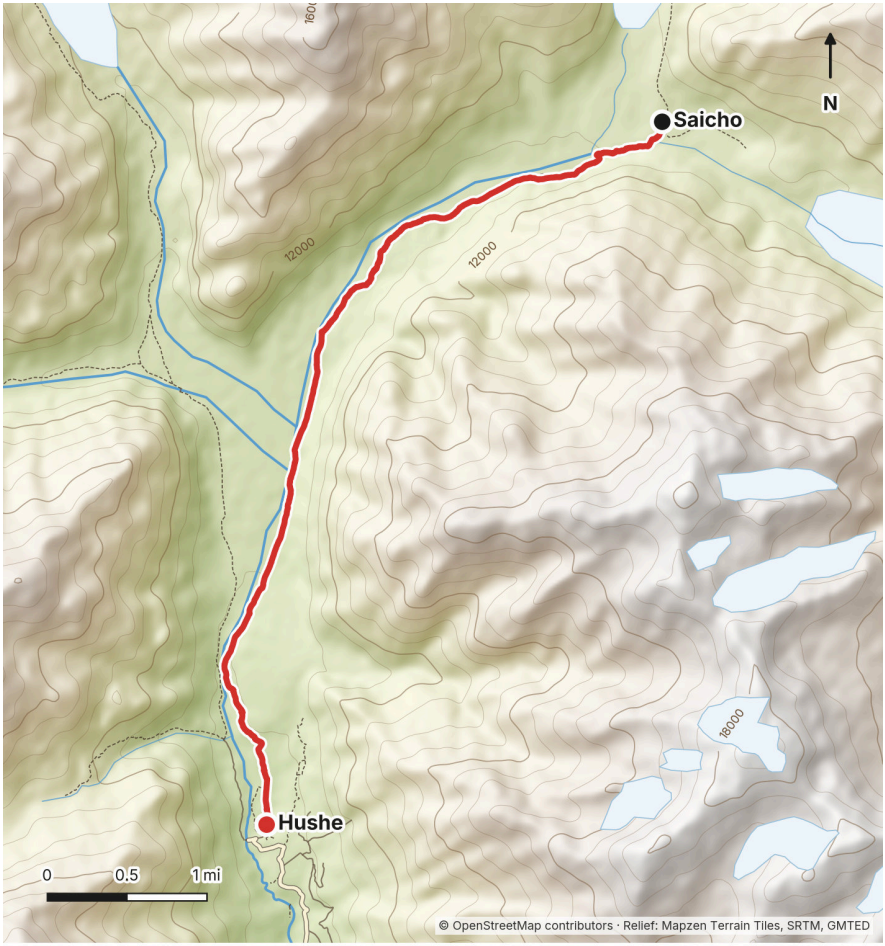
Watch this day

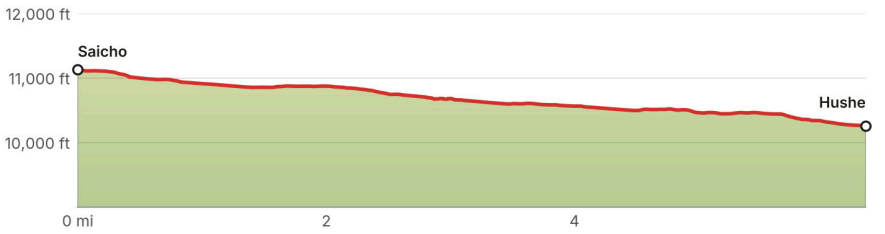
Narrated film, Day 12 · Ambient film, Day 12 · Behind the scenes

Getting home

What I did. At Hushe the team got paid, the jeeps were loaded, and we began the long drive back to Skardu, crossing the same broken bridges we had crossed on the way in. My records don't show how I got from Skardu back to Islamabad. I was in Islamabad on September 1 and 2, and flew home through Istanbul on September 3.

Hushe to Skardu. About 5 to 6 hours by jeep (operator figure, 2026). From Skardu, fly or drive back to Islamabad as in Getting there. Flights are often cancelled by weather, so don't book your flight home for the day after the trek.





Day 12 map and elevation profile. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.

Other ways to do it

I walked the twelve days in this guide. These are other ways operators run the trip, and I didn't do them.

Out and back, without the pass

From Concordia you can walk back down the Baltoro the way you came, as our pack animals did on Day 9. It skips the Gondogoro La, its night climb and its ropes, and it's the way out if the pass is closed. My operator lists a 21-day K2 Base Camp trek of this kind, with a high point of about 5,100 m (2026 page).

With rest days

My operator's current K2 and Gondogoro La itinerary runs 23 days door to door, with a rest day at Paiju and a day at Concordia for K2 Base Camp, Broad Peak and the memorial, before the pass. On my trip we had no full rest day, and we slept at the Broad Peak camp on the way back from K2 Base Camp. By the altitude rules in Altitude, the extra days are worth having.

Just the Hushe side

The Hushe valley, with Saicho and the camps below the Gondogoro La on the south side, is its own restricted-zone trek on the government list. The GPX files for Days 11 and 12 cover the lower part of it.

Gear for this route

What this trek needs

- Warm layers and a sleeping bag or quilt for nights below freezing (our bottles froze at Goro II)
- Sun protection for hot, bright days low down and on the glacier: an umbrella, a hat and glacier glasses
- A headlamp for the midnight start on the pass, and camp shoes
- Boots that take crampons, or whatever your operator provides for the pass
- A water bottle you can keep in the tent at night, and a water filter or tablets
- A power bank (the generator ran for a couple of hours a day)

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My operator's team carried the tents, the kitchen and the food. Here's the hiking gear I brought in August 2025, what I'd take now, and what I filmed with.

What I carried in 2025

The hiking gear from my film's gear list, which I used and brought on this trip.

- **Pack:** Hyperlite Mountain Gear Unbound 55 (Hyperlite)
- **Tent:** my tent. The team provided it.
- **Quilt:** Hyperlite Mountain Gear 20° Quilt (Hyperlite). Nights were below freezing: our water bottles froze at Goro II.
- **Sleeping pad:** Therm-a-Rest NeoAir XLite NXT (Amazon). I slept on two pads.
- **Pillow:** Klymit Pillow X (Amazon)
- **Pad inflator:** AlpenBlow Micro Inflator (Garage Grown Gear)

- **Sun hoodie:** PATH Projects Pyrenees T19 Hoodie (PATH Projects)
- **Fleece:** Senchi Designs A90 Half Zip Hoodie. Similar: PATH Projects Lomond Hoodie (PATH Projects).
- **Puffy:** Arc'teryx Cerium Hoody (Arc'teryx)
- **Rain shell:** Arc'teryx Beta AR Jacket (Arc'teryx)
- **Pants:** PATH Projects Killam PX Pant (PATH Projects)
- **Shorts:** Territory Run Co. Long Haul Short. Similar: PATH Projects Sykes PX Short (PATH Projects).
- **Socks:** PATH Projects Joyner Crew Sock (PATH Projects)
- **Shoes:** trail runners. They got holes on the glacier and made it to the end thanks to Aziz's patch.
- **Umbrella:** Six Moon Designs Silver Shadow Carbon (Amazon). The reflective umbrella, the MVP of the trip, for the sun on the glacier and for the rain.
- **Headlamp:** Nitecore NU20 Classic (Amazon). For the midnight start on the pass.
- **Power bank:** Nitecore NB20000 (Amazon). The team ran a generator for a couple of hours each evening. Bring a power bank for the rest of the day.
- **Water bottle:** Katadyn BeFree AC · 1L (Amazon)
- **Camp shoes:** a pair of camp shoes. They were essential.
- **On the pass:** alpine boots, crampons, a helmet and a harness, plus every warm layer I had

What I'd take now

What I'd add for this trek, from my current kit.

- **Glacier glasses:** more protective glacier glasses. The glare off the snow on Day 9 was intense. I wish I'd had them.
- **Camp shoes:** Crocs Classic Clog (Amazon)
- **Shoes:** Oboz Katabatic LT Low GTX (Amazon). I wore them on Alta Via 1: lightweight and stable, and no blisters.
- **Poles:** Black Diamond Alpine Carbon Z Poles (Amazon). For the rocks and ice of the Baltoro Glacier.

- **Cap:** PATH Projects Muir Cap 2.0 (PATH Projects). The days are hot and bright low down and on the glacier.
- **Gloves:** Unigear Touchscreen Liner Gloves (Amazon)
- **Navigation:** AllTrails+ (AllTrails, 30% off). Import my GPX files and download them offline while you still have Wi-Fi. Offline maps need the paid plan.
- **Phone data:** Airalo eSIM (Airalo, $3 off). Data in Islamabad and Skardu. After Askole I don't count on a connection.

Filming kit

What I filmed this trip with in 2025. My setup is smaller now (below). Read the drone note in Weather and safety before you bring one.

- **Camera:** Sony ZV-E1 (Amazon). I shot this entire trip on it.
- **Lens:** Sony FE PZ 16-35mm f/4 G (Amazon). My tripod fell over on Day 8 and cracked the lens, but the camera survived.
- **Drone:** DJI Air 3 (Amazon), now the Air 3S
- **Tripod:** SmallRig Carbon Fiber Tripod (Amazon)
- **Tripod head:** Joby BallHead 3K (now the 3K PRO) (Amazon)
- **Wrist strap:** Peak Design Cuff Wrist Strap (Amazon)

What I film with now

Since September 2026 I film with a smaller setup: the Pocket 4 and the Mic 3 on the trail, and the Mini 5 Pro in the air.

- **Camera:** DJI Osmo Pocket 4 (Amazon)
- **Mic:** DJI Mic 3 · 1 TX + 1 RX (Amazon). It pairs with the Pocket 4.
- **Drone:** DJI Mini 5 Pro (Amazon)

Weather and safety

Emergency numbers (September 2026). 1122 for ambulance and fire, 15 for police. Gilgit-Baltistan Tourist Police: 1422 inside the region, 05811-930055 from elsewhere in Pakistan. Rescue 1122 Skardu: 05815-1122.

Helicopter rescue. Askari Aviation flies rescue with army helicopters: not guaranteed, daylight only, and only if you're registered before the trek (see What you need to arrange). Its briefing gives a maximum landing height of 5,000 m and advises moving casualties on the Baltoro to Concordia.

Where to be careful:

- River and stream crossings: the brown, flooded river on Day 2, the big stream crossing on Day 11 and the hanging basket on Day 12
- The glacier: loose rock over ice from Day 3, ice towers and crevasses beside the path on Day 5, crevasses under snow on Day 9
- Heat and sun low down; cold nights and snow glare high up
- The Gondogoro La: a night climb on a steep snow slope with fixed ropes, and a roped descent. Cross only with your guide, the ropes in place and the weather right
- Altitude, every day above Urdukas: read Altitude

Go with the group. The UK's advice for Gilgit-Baltistan is to use a reputable trekking agency, stay on established routes, walk in groups and never trek alone, and to register with the local authorities (ask your operator how).

Photos. Don't photograph military sites, airports, bridges or dams (UK advice), and photography is banned near military installations in Gilgit-Baltistan. Khoburtse, where we camped on Day 3, was a military outpost. Ask your guide before you point a camera.

Drones. I flew a drone on this trip. Reports from 2024 and 2025 conflict on whether Pakistan's civil drone rules are in force, and I found no official page for visitors in September 2026. Ask your operator and the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority before you bring one.

Using the GPX files

My own GPS recordings from August 2025, with all timestamps removed.

FILE	WHAT IT IS
k2-day-01.gpx to k2-day-12.gpx	One file per day, Day 1 (Askole to Jhola) to Day 12 (Saicho to Hushe)
k2-full-route.gpx	All twelve days, with waypoints for Askole, every camp, K2 Base Camp, the Gondogoro La and Hushe

The files show the way I walked in 2025. On a glacier the line moves from year to year, and your guide chooses it on the day. Use the files to see where you are and how far it is to camp, not to navigate alone.

AllTrails. On a computer, sign in at alltrails.com, create a new map and use Import. It then shows up in the app on your phone. Offline maps need a paid plan.

Gaia GPS. Open the file from Files, email or AirDrop and choose Gaia GPS, or use Import on gaiagps.com. Download the map area offline.

Garmin. In Garmin Connect on the web, go to Training, Courses, Import. Save it as a course and send it to your watch.

Organic Maps (free). Download the offline map that covers Gilgit-Baltistan, then open the GPX file and choose Organic Maps. It works fully offline.

Before you leave, download offline maps for the whole route, turn on airplane mode, and check that each day and your location show up.

Before you go, check these

These change every year; everything else in this guide stays the same. Checked September 26, 2026. Check them again, with your own government's advice, when you book and the week you fly.

Security

- US State Department (June 6, 2026): Pakistan Level 3, reconsider travel; do not travel to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan or near the Line of Control. Gilgit-Baltistan isn't named. travel.state.gov
- UK FCDO (September 22, 2026): no warning for Gilgit-Baltistan, but against all travel on the Karakoram Highway between Mansehra and Chilas; register locally, don't trek alone. gov.uk

Permits and paperwork

- Your operator is on the licensed list, and what the price includes
- The trekking visa: visa.nadra.gov.pk
- The fees (2025 schedule, per person in summer): US$150 trekking fee, US$190 park fee
- Rescue registration, and insurance for this altitude and evacuation, valid with your permits

The pass and the travel

- Whether the Gondogoro La is open and roped for your dates, and the plan if it isn't
- Skardu flights, spare days at both ends, and the roads: Jaglot to Skardu, the Babusar Pass, the Karakoram Highway advice
- Flood and glacial lake warnings: visitgilgitbaltistan.gov.pk

Money, health and gear

- Rupees and tip money before Skardu; a doctor's visit about altitude and acetazolamide
- Drone rules if you bring one; offline maps and GPX files on your phone

One-page trip sheet

DAY	DATE 2025	FROM, TO	MI (KM)	CAMP, FT (M)
	Before Aug 18	Islamabad, flight to Skardu, jeep to Askole		Askole, 9,980 (3,042)
1	Aug 18	Askole to Jhola	14.6 (23.5)	10,160 (3,098)
2	Aug 19	Jhola to Paiju	11.7 (18.9)	11,120 (3,389)
3	Aug 20	Paiju to Khoburtse	8.3 (13.4)	12,550 (3,824)
4	Aug 21	Khoburtse to Urdukas	3.8 (6.2)	13,170 (4,015)
5	Aug 22	Urdukas to Goro II	7.5 (12.0)	13,920 (4,244)
6	Aug 23	Goro II to Concordia	8.4 (13.6)	15,010 (4,575)
7	Aug 24	Concordia, K2 Base Camp, Broad Peak camp	12.1 (19.5)	15,500 (4,725)
8	Aug 25	Broad Peak camp to Concordia	3.5 (5.6)	15,010 (4,575)
9	Aug 26	Concordia to Ali Camp	6.5 (10.4)	16,240 (4,949)
10	Aug 26 to 27	Ali Camp, Gondogoro La, Khuispang	6.3 (10.2)	15,320 (4,669)
11	Aug 28	Khuispang to Saicho	10.7 (17.3)	11,150 (3,400)
12	Aug 29	Saicho to Hushe, jeep to Skardu	6.4 (10.2)	
Total			**99.9 (160.8)**	**About 11,150 ft up**

Heights (published): K2 8,611 m (28,251 ft). Gondogoro La usually 5,585 m (18,323 ft); my GPS 5,467 m.

Paperwork: trekking visa (visa.nadra.gov.pk), permit through a licensed operator, licensed guide and porters, helicopter rescue registration.

Altitude: no more than 500 m more sleeping height a night above 3,000 m; go down for worsening AMS, and at once for HACE or HAPE.

Emergency: 1122 ambulance and fire, 15 police, 1422 Gilgit-Baltistan Tourist Police, 05815-1122 Rescue 1122 Skardu.

About this guide

K2 Base Camp Hiking Guide: 12 days up the Baltoro Glacier and out over the Gondogoro La, by Kraig Adams. 2027 season edition, updated September 2026.

I walked from Askole to K2 Base Camp and out over the Gondogoro La to Hushe from August 18 to 29, 2025, on a group trip I hosted with a small group of subscribers, organized by a licensed Pakistani operator. I made two films of it: 12 Days Hiking 100 Miles to K2 Base Camp in Pakistan and the ambient version. Everything in first person comes from that trip, my films, my GPS recordings and my records. Permits, fees, travel advice and safety facts were checked on official sources in September 2026, and anything that changes is dated.

Updates and contact. If something has changed, or you spot a mistake, email me at kraig@kraigadams.com.

Paid links, no sponsors. The gear links in this guide are paid links: I earn a commission if you buy through them, at no extra cost to you. Nobody paid for a mention in this guide, and it isn't sponsored.

Safety. This is a high-altitude trek in a remote part of Pakistan, with glacier travel, river crossings, a roped pass and changing security conditions. This guide describes my trip and what I found, not current conditions. Rules, fees, roads and advice change. Go with a licensed operator and guide, follow their decisions and local rules, check your government's travel advice, and turn back when conditions aren't right. You're responsible for your own safety.

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