



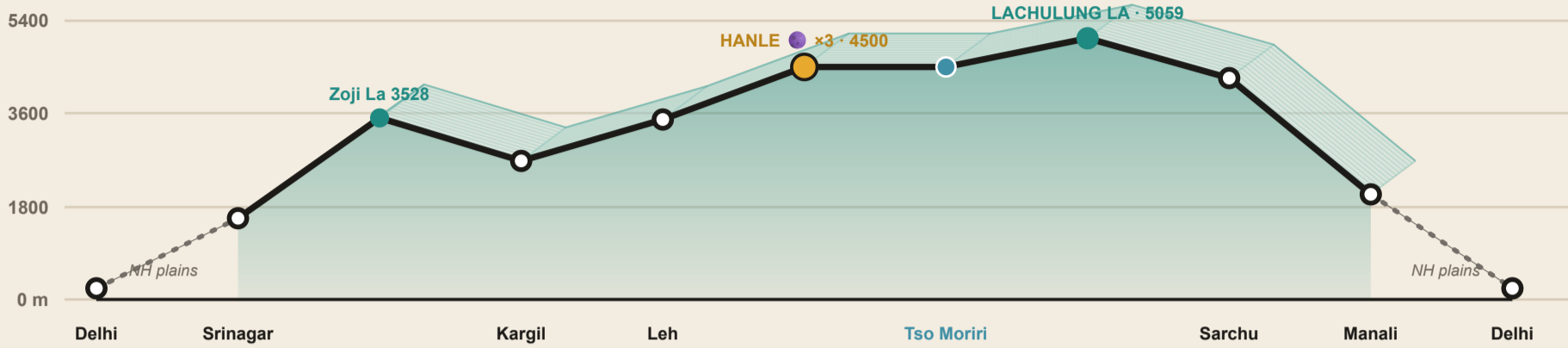
DELHI → HANLE → TSO MORIRI

Grand Vitara (FWD) · 2 Travellers · 12 Days · 4–15 Sept 2026 · all-tarmac route · ~3,000 km

NEW MOON · 11 SEP · 0% GLOW

ALTITUDE & ROUTE · 3D TERRAIN

altitude to scale · waypoints by sequence · Srinagar up, Manali down



THE LOOP · ROUTE MAP

cropped to NW India · schematic, not to scale



THE ICONIC LOOP

A self-driven Trans-Himalayan circuit built around one goal — India's darkest sky. The ascent is deliberate: up the Kashmir valley and over **Zoji La**, letting the body adjust before Ladakh's thin 3,500 m air. From Leh the road bends into the Changthang for **three moonless nights at Hanle (4,500 m)**, timed to the 11 Sept new moon when the post-monsoon atmosphere runs clearest. **Tso Moriri** adds a high-lake camp on the way out, and the return drops down the legendary Manali highway — **Lachulung La, the More Plains, Baralacha La** — shedding nearly 5 km of altitude in two days.

~3,000 km · 12 days · 9 driving days · one clean loop

● Dark-sky stay x3 ● Lake ▲ Pass ● Drive stop

DAY BY DAY

Temps · Sept climatology (Leh ~19°/8°, Hanle/Tso Moriri ~14°/2°) · September = clearest skies of the year

04 FRI	Delhi → Jammu	Highway start. NH44 across the Punjab plains.	☁️ 34° / 26° Monsoon	~11h DRIVE	300m ~590 km
05 SAT	Jammu → Srinagar	Climb to the Kashmir valley via Ramban–Banihal & the Jawahar Tunnel.	☀️ 28° / 14° Pleasant	~7h DRIVE	1,585m ~270 km
06 SUN	Srinagar → Kargil	Zoji La (3,528m) & Drass — 2nd-coldest inhabited place on Earth.	☀️ 22° / 8° Clear	~6h DRIVE	2,676m ~200 km
07 MON	Kargil → Leh	Namika La, Fotu La, Lamayuru moonland, Magnetic Hill, Sangam.	☀️ 19° / 8° Clear	~6h DRIVE	3,500m ~215 km
08 TUE	Leh — Acclimatize & Prep REST	Mandatory rest. Shanti Stupa, EDF permit, full tank + 15 L reserve, vehicle check.	☀️ 19° / 8° Sunny	— REST	3,500m rest day
09 WED	Leh → Hanle DARK SKY	Smooth tarmac via Upshi–Chumathang–Nyoma–Loma (FWD-friendly). Astro 1.	☀️ 15° / 2° Clear	~7h DRIVE	4,500m ~250 km
10 THU	Hanle Observatory	Rest, observatory visit, deep-sky imaging. Astro night 2.	🌟 15° / 2° Pristine	— LOCAL	4,500m Hanle stay
11 FRI	Hanle NEW MOON	Darkest skies of the year — Milky Way arch horizon to horizon. Astro 3.	🌑 15° / 1° Pristine dark	— STAY	4,500m Hanle stay
12 SAT	Hanle → Tso Moriri LAKE	Loma–Nyoma–Mahe–Sumdo–Korzok (fuel at Nyoma). Lakeside night.	☀️ 14° / 2° Clear	~5h DRIVE	4,520m ~180 km
13 SUN	Tso Moriri → Jispa LACHULUNG LA 5,059M	Tso Kar, More Plains, Pang, Sarchu. Cross nalas early — carry fuel.	☀️ 16° / 3° Windy passes	~9h DRIVE	3,200m ~280 km
14 MON	Jispa → Manali	Atal Tunnel into Manali — back to green, trees & thick oxygen.	☀️ 24° / 12° Mild	~4h DRIVE	2,050m ~120 km
15 TUE	Manali → Delhi	Final highway push home with a full memory card.	☁️ 33° / 25° Monsoon	~12h DRIVE	~216m ~530 km

≈ ₹45,000 / person

All-in, 2 sharing (~₹91k total) · fuel ₹20k + stays + food + EDF + ₹12k buffer

Own white-plate car only (rented self-drives barred from Ladakh sightseeing). All-tarmac, FWD-friendly route. Tso Moriri→Manali has a long fuel gap + nalas — carry 15 L reserve, cross water early AM. EDF permit online · 1 acclimatization day in Leh (2 nights) · -2°C nights · tight schedule, no spare day.