

Trail Notes: Tbilisi National Park, Zedazeni Monastery to Mamkoda Village

IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER

The TCTA strives to provide accurate, current information as to trail conditions and trail routes. However, actual trail conditions may be different, and such information may not be accurate or complete. Trail users are urged to consider all the information available from other sources and to heed local advice when available. Trail users are ultimately responsible for all decisions as to the trail routes, trail conditions, weather, and safety.

QUICK FACTS:

- **Total Distance:** 15km
- **Suggested Duration:** 1 day
- **Elevation Gain/Loss:** 580m /820m
- **Marking Type:** Red & white painted blazes
- **Difficulty Level:** Medium
- **Max / Min Altitude:** 1,430 m / 600 m
- **Recommended Season:** March-Nov
- **Emergency Services:** 112



Note: The route is described from west to east, but can be hiked in either direction.

ZEDAZENI MONASTERY TO MAMKODA VILLAGE VIA TBILISI NATIONAL PARK

Tbilisi National Park sits just 20 kilometers north of the city center and offers a dramatically different forest landscape than the hills around the main city. The thick deciduous forest provides pleasant shade in the summer and will be lovely in the autumn.

This hike follows a ridge in the western half of the park. It is mostly well-marked with white-red-white blazes, but there is often no trail. Wear good waterproof shoes and be prepared to move through thick sections of grass and bushes. Long pants will help with the many patches of stinging nettle. The route is not particularly challenging, but it is mostly off-trail and has many tripping hazards. On the plus side, it is a gorgeous forest walk with very few visitors, and you will be rewarded with occasional spectacular views over all of Tbilisi and the surrounding hills.

HOW TO GET TO THE ZEDAZENI MONASTERY TRAILHEAD

From Saguramo, take the Saguramo-Zedazeni Monastery road, which will wind approximately 6 km up to Zedazeni monastery. This road is stone and easily drivable. So alternatively, you can easily skip this section and the 620m of elevation gain with a car or taxi. If you're coming from Tbilisi, you can order a Bolt taxi directly to the monastery. From Zedazeni monastery, take a few minutes to say hi to the monks and dogs and to admire the massive metal cross hung with icons. (On a clear day, this cross is visible on the ridge from Tbilisi center.)

ZEDAZENI MONASTERY TO MAMKODA VILLAGE VIA TBILISI NATIONAL PARK

At the Tbilisi National Park sign on the road just below the monastery, turn left (E). Look for the small blazes to the left along the fence by the satellite tower. You'll follow a small, overgrown track that runs alongside the outside of the fence. After this overgrown section, you'll turn onto an easy jeep track. But you won't be on it for long. Keep an eye out for a blaze high on your right. You'll turn off the jeep track and start climbing up (SE) into the forest.

When you reach the top of the small hill, turn right again. Look for the red and white blazes. The path is very overgrown, but the blazes were quite fresh in summer 2020 and should be easy to follow. You'll soon pass a picnic area with a lovely shelter. After this, there will be blazes all along the ridge. Follow and enjoy the occasional views of Tbilisi, but do keep an eye out for logs hidden in the grass and patches of stinging nettle. After approximately 5 kilometers, the trail will split-- you'll see a confusing section with several different blazes going in different directions. For this hike, you'll want to go right (S). (Eventually, the longer TCT will turn left.) Continue to hug the hillside and keep left until you see blazes along the main ridge again. Then you'll head steeply downhill.

The trail will shortly open up to rejoin a wide path. Here you'll find a picnic area and spring. After following the wide forest path for a bit, you'll come to an intersection. Turn right (S) down the hill towards the picnic table. At the next intersection, go downhill to the left. Soon you'll come out onto a small, grassy village road. Follow this to the right. As you walk out along the road, you'll enjoy sweeping views over Tbilisi.

You can arrange a taxi from Mamkoda village or walk a few kilometers extra down to the Tbilisi Tianeti Highway. From here, it's easy to call a taxi. You can also walk further to Gldani, where you can access public buses.



This guide was updated in August 2020. For the latest version go to www.transcaucasiantrail.org

For suggestions or feedback contact: info@transcaucasiantrail.org

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