

▣ Maja e Dritës/Papingut – the summit of Nëmërçka

Trail distance: 4, 9 kilometers (one way)

Elevation min: 1061 meters, max: 2485 meters

Cumulative height uphill: 1, 424 meters, downhill: 1, 424 meters

Difficulty level: Moderate

Time: 8 hours (return trip)

Markings: white/red/white ?

Nemerçka, the second highest mountain in the southern Albania (2485m) after Gramozit, has a very dramatic east face which drops into Vjosa valley. It looks quite opposite from the Zagoria valley (west side). The path ascends gently up to the shepherds' huts and after that one has just to follow the direction of the summit which is visible. Zagoria in itself is tremendously beautiful, and a climb of Nemerçka offers all the views. It is still a long hike (about 5 hours up, and half the time down), with 1400 meter of elevation gain.

Getting to the trailhead: turn left at the junction (UTM 34 T 448539 4439642) approx. 3 kilometers before reaching Sopik when driving the main way that connects the village of Skore with Sopik. Follow this road for approx. 1.2 kilometers and stop at the bottom of a large field of talus (WP 1). Make sure you find the trailhead as the trail will avoid much of the talus.

From the trail head (WP 1) the path accents north east in big zigzags and reaches a steep gravelly trail (WP 2) after approx. 1 kilometer. After walking onto the gravel path for few minutes follow the zigzag steep path northeast that leads to a nice meadow with shepherds' huts (WP 3). Follow this trail (northeast) and take left at the junction after few minutes (WP 4). From the junction follow the visible trail (northeast) on steep grassy trail and keep the ascending on the same ridge for approaching the summit.

The trail becomes invisible at about 2000 m of altitude but the orientation to the summit of Maja e Dritës/Papingut (WP 5) is easy.

UTM Waypoints

1. 34 T 448595 4440171, trailhead, 1061 m
2. 34 T 449173 4440188, gravelly trail, 1208 m
3. 34 T 449757 4440541, shepherds' huts, 1602 m
4. 34 T 449923 4440545, junction, 1659 m
5. 34 T 451643 4441680, Maja e Drites, 2485 m