

7 Nights 8 Days Bhutan Package valid for Indian Nationals for May 2017

Day 01: Arrival in Phuentsholing

On arrival in Phuentsholing, met by our representative and after clearing immigration formalities, check in at the Hotel.

Later in the day if time permits visit **ZangthoPelri**: Situated in city centre, this small temple represents the heaven of Guru Rinpoche.

Dinner and Overnight at the hotel in Phuentsholing. (Altitude 300m)

Day 02: Phuentsholing – Thimphu (180 km, approx 6 hours drive)

After breakfast drive to Thimphu.

En route stop at **Kharbandi Gompa**, the beautiful monastery situated in garden of tropical plants and flowers. The monastery contains paintings depicting scenes from the life of Buddha and statues of Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal and Guru Rinpoche. From the monastery garden there is a splendid view of Phuentsholing and plains of West Bengal and their tea gardens beyond. Proceed further to Thimphu. This entire drive is very pleasant with numerous scenic spots en route.

Stop a few miles before Thimphu to visit **Simtokha Dzong**, the place of profound tantric teaching, this dzong now houses a school for the study of the Dzongkha language.



On arrival, in Thimphu check-into the hotel. The capital town of Bhutan and the centre of government, religion and commerce, Thimphu is a unique city with unusual mixture of modern development alongside ancient traditions. With the population of about 90,000 it is perhaps still the world's only capital city without a traffic light. Evening an exploratory walk around Thimphu main street and market area.

Dinner and Overnight at the hotel in Thimphu. (Altitude 2,320m)

Day 03: Thimphu

After breakfast, drive to **Buddha Point (Kuensel Phodrang)**. Located at a short drive from Thimphu city centre, visitors can get a good overview of the Thimphu valley from the Buddha point (Kuensel Phodrang). You can pay your obeisance and offer prayers to the Buddha, the largest statue in the country and then walk around and take a glimpse of the valley.

Then, visit **King's Memorial Chorten** continuously circumambulated by people, murmuring mantras and spinning their prayer wheels. Construction of this landmark was the idea of Bhutan's third king, His Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuk ("the father of modern Bhutan") who has wished to erect monument to world peace and prosperity. Completed in 1974 after his untimely death, it serves both as a memorial to the Late King and as a monument to peace.

Afterwards visit to **Textile and Folk Heritage Museums**, a fascinating testimony of the Bhutanese living traditions.

Post lunch, visit the **National Library**, housing an extensive collection of priceless Buddhist manuscripts and the **Institute for ZorigChusum** (commonly known as the Painting School) where students undergo a 6-year training course in Bhutan's 13 traditional arts and crafts.

Then, drive to **Takin Preserve**. The Takin is national animal of Bhutan, and looks like a cross between a cow and goat.

Later in the afternoon visit **Trashichoedzong**, "fortress of the glorious religion". This is the center of government and religion, site of monarch's throne room and seat of JeKhenpo or Chief Abbot. Built in 1641 by the political and religious unifier of Bhutan, ShabdrungNgawangNamgyal, it was reconstructed in 1960s in traditional Bhutanese manner, without nails or architectural plans.

Evening time can be spent strolling through the government-run **Handicrafts Emporium and local crafts bazaar**, to browse through example of Bhutan's fine traditional arts. Here you can buy hand-woven textiles, thangkha paintings, masks, ceramics, slate and wood carvings, jewelry, interesting items made from local materials.

Dinner and Overnight at the hotel in Thimphu. (Alt 2,320m)

Day 04: Thimphu – Punakha&Wangduephodrang (75 km, approx. 3 hours drive)

After breakfast, drive to Punakha & Wangduephodrang across **Dochu La**. Located at a height of 3,088m/ 10,130 ft, Dochula is a scenic location with chorten, mani wall, and prayer flags which decorate this highest point on the road. If skies are clear, it may be possible to see the following peaks from this pass in the order left to right: Masagang (7,158m), Tsendagang (6,960m), Terigang (7,060m), Jejegangphugang (7,158 m), Kangphugang (7,170 m), Zongphugang (7,060 m), a table mountain that dominates the isolated region of Lunana - finally Gangkarpuensum, the highest peak in Bhutan at 7,497m.

Afternoon visit **Punakha Dzong** or (Palace of Great Happiness), built in 1637 by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal, at the junction of the Phochu and Mochu rivers. This majestic dzong served as both the religious and the administrative center of Bhutan in the past. It measures some 600 by 240 feet and has a six-story, gold-domed tower. Inside are courtyards and religious statuary that hint at the depth of history and spiritual tradition embodied here. Your guide will illuminate your understanding of this intricate culture that is exotic to us, though long established here.



Later in the day excursion to **Chimi Lhakhang**.

The Chimi Lhakhang, situated on a hillock in the centre of the valley, is also known as the temple of fertility. It is widely believed that couples who do not have children and wanting one, if they pray at this temple, they are usually blessed with a child very soon. A walk through the village near the temple will give you rare glimpses into the daily life and lifestyle of the villagers.

Dinner and Overnight at the hotel in Punakha / Wangduephodrang. (Altitude 1,300m)

Day 05: Punakha & Wangduephodrang– Paro (125 kms, approx. 4hours drive)

After breakfast drive back to Paro descending back down from Dochu La, follow the way back up the dramatic Wang Chhu and Paro Chhu river valleys, before crossing through Paro Town towards the north end of the valley.

Later in the day after checking into hotel, proceed to visit **Ta Dzong**, originally built as Watchtower, which now houses National Museum. The extensive collection includes antique thangka paintings, textiles, weapons & armour, household objects and a rich assortment of natural and historic artifacts.

Then walk down the trail to visit **Rinpung Dzong**, meaning (“fortress of the heap of jewels”), which has a long and fascinating history. Along the wooden galleries lining the inner courtyard are fine wall paintings illustrating Buddhist lore such as four friends, the old man of long life, the wheel of life, scenes from the life of Milarepa, Mount. Sumeru and other cosmic Mandala.



Dinner and Overnight at the hotel in Paro. (Altitude 2,280m)

Day 06: Paro

After breakfast excursion to **Taktshang Monastery** (approx 5 hours round trip walk). It is one of the most famous of Bhutan's monasteries, perched on the side of a cliff 900m above the Paro valley floor. It is said that Guru Rinpoche arrived here on the back of a tigress and meditated at this monastery and hence it is called 'Tiger's Nest'. This site has been recognized as a most sacred place and visited by ShabdrungNgawangNamgyal in 1646 and now visited by all Bhutanese at least once in their lifetime.

OR

After breakfast, driving excursion to **Chelela pass**.

Chele la (pass), at an elevation 3,988 meters is considered to be one of the highest motorable passes in Bhutan. About an hour's drive along a thickly-forested road, is this Pass-a botanical paradise. The pass provides stunning views of the sacred mountain Jomolhari and Jichu Drake. It is also marked by hundreds of prayer flags fluttering in the wind. Here, visitors can see cascades of wild roses, purple and yellow primulas, and swathes of deep blue iris covering the forest floor. The top of the pass bloom with rhododendrons in a variety of colours-pale pink, deep pink, burnt orange, mauve, white and scarlet.

Later en route excursion to **Dzongdrakha Goempa**. Often called as mini Takstang, Dzongdrakha is a cliff-side temple complex on the western side of the Paro Valley. Four shrines make up the complex, dedicated to Drolma (Tara), Tsheringma (Goddess of Longevity), Guru Rinpoche and the Buddha of the Future, Maitreya. Local oral tradition states that when Guru Rinpoche first came to Bhutan, he came from Nepal, first landing at Drakarpo, and then Dzongdrakha before arriving at Taktshang(Tiger's Nest) farther north up the valley. Located approx 20 minute drive from Paro, these temples are built on a cliff above Bondey village but the walk is not as strenuous as Taktshang. From the road, it take only about 30 minutes walk to reach here, through forests of rhododendron and oak trees with white monkeys on it. Dzongdrakha also hosts an annual Tshechu (festival) that takes place the day before and the day after the larger Paro Tshechu held at Rinpung Dzong near the main town. During the festival at Dzongdrakha, one of the main blessings takes place when the chorten (stupa) of the past Buddha is opened so that attendees are blessed by the relic held within. The Dzongdrakha village has numerous temples and is known for most of their men being either fully ordained monks or gomchens (lay monks who don't take vows of celibacy). Ironically it is the women who work in the fields and are the bread earners unlike in any other part of the country.

Afternoon drive to **Drukgyel Dzong**, a ruined fortress where Bhutanese warriors fought Tibetan invaders centuries ago. The snowy dome of sacred Chomolhari, "mountain of goddess" can be seen in all her glory from the approach road to the Dzong.

Along the way, visit the 7th century **Kyichu Lhakhang**, one of the 108 temples built in the Himalayas by Tibetan King, SongtsenGampo. The building of this temple marks the introduction of Buddhism in Bhutan.

Evening an exploratory walk around main street and market area..

Dinner and Overnight at the hotel in Paro. (Altitude 2,280m)

Day 07: Paro – Phuentsholing (175 km, approx 6 hours drive)

After leisurely breakfast drive back to Phuentsholing.

Evening explore Phunetsholing market and city centre.

Dinner and Overnight at the hotel in Phuentsholing. (Altitude 300m)

Day 08: Exit to India

After breakfast, depart Phuentsholing for onward journey.

“Tour End”

Itinerary is subject to change.

Based on the above itinerary, our cost will be as follows:

Basis – Hotel Thimpu Tower/ Kisa or similar / Thimpu + Dragon Nest/ Drubchu or similar / Punakha + Hotel Tashi Phuntshok/ Tiger Nest or similar / Paro + Hotel Lakhi or similar / Phuentsholing

02 pax: **INR 46,000.00 nett per person in double or sharing twin**

The above costs will include the following services:-

- Airport Transfers with Bhutan
- Accommodation on Twin / double sharing basis
- Meals (Breakfast & Dinner only)
- Sight-seeing as per the itinerary
- Accompanying Guide.

Extra Cost:

1. **One way transfer from Bagdogra to Phuentsholing: INR 7,000.00 nett per car per way**

The above costs do not include the followings and same will be extras:-

- Entrance Fees to monuments (lists of monuments with entrance fees mentioned below and clients can pay directly to respective monuments)
- Lunch/evening tea/snacks
- Any insurance for clients
- Any extra cost incurred in unforeseen events or not specified in above mentioned inclusions

Type of vehicle used for tourists in Bhutan

Hyundai Tucson / Santa Fe; 1-2 guests

REMARKS

- Costs are valid for Indian nationals possessing valid Indian passport or voter's ID. Original Indian birth certificate issued by Indian Government Authority required for Minors.
- Indian tourists traveling via Non-Indian sectors (Kathmandu /Bangkok/ Singapore/ Dhaka etc) need valid passport while from India, they can travel either with Valid passport or Voter's ID card.
- For NRIs, OCI or PIO card holders, different tariff & policy applies in accordance with norms of Tourism Council of Bhutan. Please check with us separately on this.

Above mentioned entrance fees in INR applicable to Indian passport/ Voter ID holders

1. Ta Dzong – Paro – Rs. 25 Per Person
2. Trashichhoe Dozng - Thimphu – Rs. 300 per person
3. Simply Bhutan – Thimphu- Rs. 200 per Person
4. Folk Heritage Museum – Thimphu – Rs. 30 Per Person
5. Takin Preserve/Zoo – Thimphu- Rs. 100 Per Person
6. Arts & Crafts School (Zorig Chusum) – Thimphu – Rs. 100 per Person.

7. *Textile Museum – Thimphu – Rs. 50 per Person*
8. *Taktsang Monastery - Rs 500 Per person adult; Student Rs 250 Per child*

CLOSING DAYS OF SOME OF MONUMENTS MENTIONED IN ITINERARY:

- *Ta Dzong – Paro (national museum) : closed on Government Holidays*
- *National Library – Thimphu : closed on Sat, Sun & on Government Holidays*
- *Textile Musuem – Thimphu : Closed on Government Holidays & on Sun. On Sat open from 9.00 a.m to 4 p.m*
- *Institute of ZorigChusum (Arts & Crafts School) - Thimphu : Closed on Sun & Government Holidays. On Sat open from 10 a.m to 12 o'clock. Also closed in winter/summer (Dec-early March, June-Aug – closing date available only a few weeks before).*
- *Simply Bhutan – Thimphu : Closed on Sun & on Government Holidays*
- *Ta Dzong – Trongsa : closed on Weekend and on Government Holidays*
- *Taktsang Monastery (Tiger’s Nest) – Paro : Closed on Tue*

(This current available update on the closing/opening information is subject to change as per the Govt. policy)

While entry into Bhutan by land please note the Immigration Office at Phuentsholing remain closed on Saturday and Sunday hence permits can be obtained only during office hours from Monday to Friday.