

07 NIGHTS / 08 DAYS Punakha Festival

Minimum 2 pax - Maximum 18 pax

27th February 2023:

Arrive in Paro by air & transfer to Thimphu (55 kms / 1½ hrs. Drive Approx.)



You can take the flight either from Delhi or from Kathmandu.

The flight to Paro is one of the most spectacular in the entire Himalayas. Whether flying along the Himalayan range from Kathmandu or over the foothills from Kolkata, the journey offers fascinating views and an exciting descent into the Kingdom. Bhutan's first gift to you as you disembark from the aircraft will be the cool, clean, fresh mountain air.

After immigration formalities and baggage collection, you will be met by our representative. Then drive to Thimphu, the capital city of Bhutan with a stop-off at Chuzom, the confluence of Thimphu and Paro rivers. Shortly before reaching Chuzom, you will visit the TachogLhakhang, "the temple of the excellent horse". It is a private temple, built in the 15th century, as a result of the visitation from Balaha, the excellent horse, a manifestation of Chenrezig, the compassionate Buddha.

On arrival in Thimphu, check-into the hotel. Thimphu is also the center of government, religion and commerce. It is a unique city with an unusual mix of modern and ancient traditions and culture. Thimphu is still a metropolitan and lively place. Home to civil servants, expatriates and the monk body, Thimphu maintains a strong national character in its architectural style.



In the evening, take an exploratory walk around Thimphu's Main Street and market area. Also visit the Local Crafts Bazaar and browse through some of Bhutan's fine traditional arts. Here you can buy

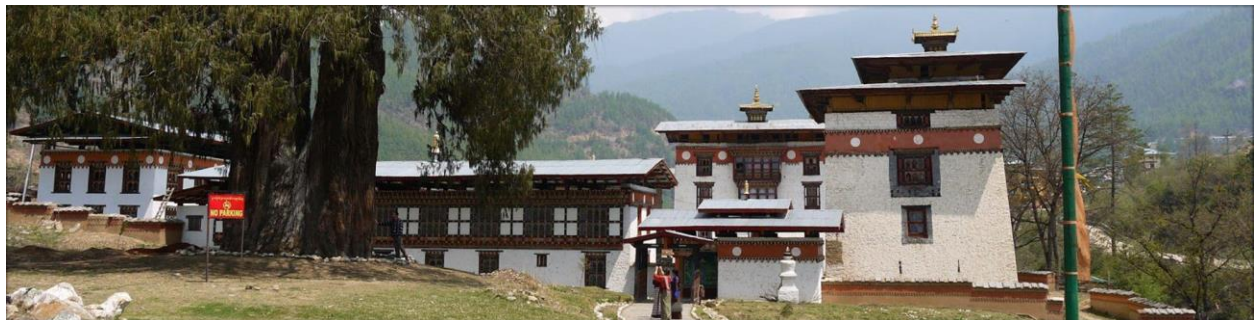
hand-woven textiles, Thangkha paintings, masks, ceramics, slate and wood carvings, jewelry and many interesting items made from local materials.

Overnight in Thimphu. (Altitude 2400m)

28th February 2023: Thimphu



After breakfast, sightseeing in the Thimphu valley including a visit to the following: The National Library, housing an extensive collection of priceless Buddhist manuscripts; 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. Later, visit the Textile Museum, which provides an insight into one of the most distinct art forms in Bhutan.



After lunch, take a short drive (15 km) to PangriZampa, built in the 16th century and one of the oldest monasteries in Bhutan located just north of Thimphu. Here is a monastic school where Buddhist monks learn Lamaism and astrology based on Buddhist philosophy.



Afterwards, visit the Buddha Point (KuenselPhodrang). Located a short drive away from Thimphu city center, visitors can get a panoramic view of the Thimphu valley from here. You can pay your obeisance and offer prayers to the Buddha, the largest in the country. A walk in and around the premises taking in the scenic beauty of the surroundings is a popular activity even among the locals.

Later, visit the Trashichhoedzong, one of the most important dzongs in the country. This impressive fortress/monastery houses the Throne Room of His Majesty, the King and various government offices. It is also the summer residence of the Je Khenpo, the Chief Abbot and the central monk body.

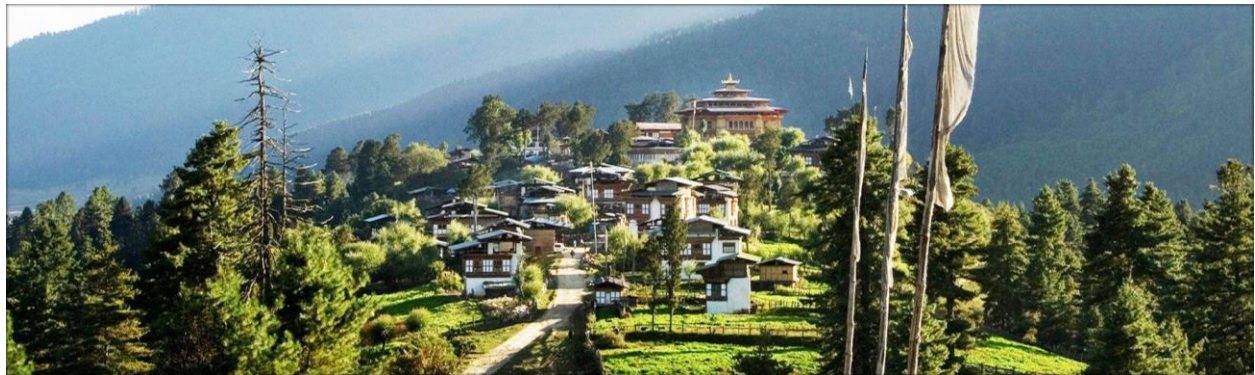
Overnight in Thimphu.

01st March 2023:

Thimphu to Gangtey (150 kms / 5 hrs. Drive Approx.)



After breakfast at the hotel and check out, drive to Punakha across the beautiful Dochula pass (3080m). In Bhutan, the passes are marked by a large Bhutanese Chorten (stupa) and prayer flags. Dochula pass offers the most spectacular view of the towering peaks of the eastern Himalayas on a clear day. The Druk Wangyel Stupas (hundred stupas) are a sight to behold against this backdrop.



In the evening, take a stroll around the Gangtey Village.

Overnight stay in Gangtey. (Altitude 2800m)

02nd March 2023: Gangtey



After breakfast, proceed to visit Gangtey Goempa, perched on a small hill that rises from the valley floor. The Gangtey Monastery has a large collection of Buddhist arts and artifacts.

Later, explore the wide Phobjikha valley. A few kilometers beyond the Gangtey Monastery, on the valley floor lies the valley of Phobjikha. This quiet, remote valley is the winter home of the black necked cranes, which migrate from the arid plains of Tibet in the north, to pass the winter months in a milder climate.



Also visit the Black Necked Crane Visitor Centre that provides information on the black necked cranes and also on natural and cultural history of the area.

Overnight at Gangtey.

03rd March 2023:

Gangtey to Punakha (70 kms / 3 hrs. Drive Approx.)

After early breakfast, check-out from the hotel and drive to Punakha, the old capital of Bhutan.



On arrival in Punakha visit Punakha Dzong, a fortress, built at the junction of two rivers popularly known as male and female rivers.

It was the capital of Bhutan until 1955, and still serves as the winter residence of the monk body.

Witness the Punakha festival of mask and folk dance in Punakha Dzong.

Overnight in Punakha. (Altitude 1400m)

04th March 2023:

Punakha to Paro (120 kms / 4½ hrs. Drive Approx.)



After breakfast, drive to the parking for Khamsum Yuelley Namgyel Chorten, starts hike up through fields of chilies, cabbages to Khamsum Yuelley Namgyel Chorten, which was built to remove negative forces and promote peace, stability and harmony in the changing world. The Chorten dominates the upper Punakha Valley with commanding views across the Mo Chhu and up towards the mountainous peaks of Gasa and beyond. A stunning monument recently built by the Queens and consecrated in 1999.

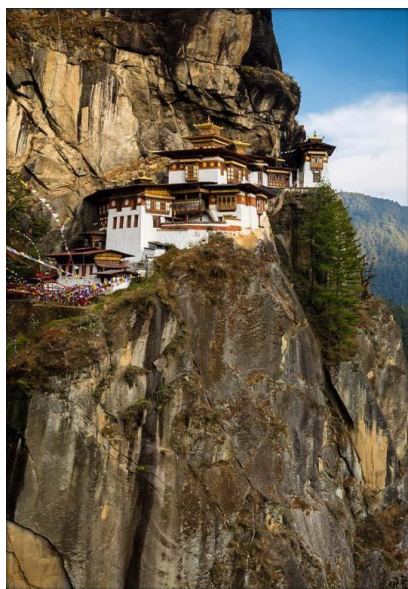
Depart from Punakha to Paro and have lunch enroute at Dochula pass.



Upon arrival in Paro, visit Ta Dzong, originally built as a Watchtower, which now houses the National Museum. The extensive collection includes antique Thangka paintings, textiles, weapons & armor, household objects and a rich assortment of natural and historic artifacts. Bhutan's exquisite stamps exhibited here offer another interesting collection

Overnight stay in Paro. (Altitude 2300m).

05th March 2023: Paro



After breakfast, hike to Taksang Monastery (approx. 5hrs walk): It is one of the most famous monasteries, perched on the side of a cliff 900m above the Paro valley floor. It is said that Guru Rinpoche arrived on the back of a tigress and meditated here and hence it is called 'Tiger's Nest'. This site is recognized as one of the most sacred places in Bhutan. It was also visited by ZhabdrungNgawang Namgyal in 1646 and is now visited by all Bhutanese at least once in their lifetime. On 19 April, 1998, a fire severely damaged the main structure of the building. However, this iconic monastery has been restored to its original splendor.

Afternoon, stroll through the main town of Paro. The town has many souvenir and coffee shops for you to relax and do some souvenir shopping.

Overnight in Paro.

06th March 2023: Depart Paro

After an early breakfast at the hotel, drive to the airport for flight to your onward destination. Our representative will help you with exit formalities and then bid you farewell.

Notes:

Upgrades to higher category hotels can be arranged on request with surcharge.

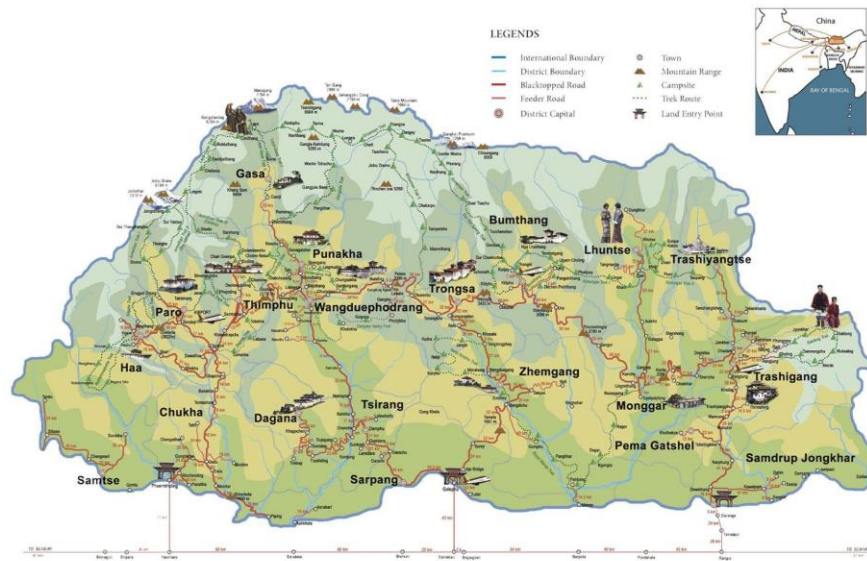
Pre and post excursions in Delhi or Kathmandu can be arranged on request.

Cancellation:

One month prior to arrival date: **100% refund**

15 days prior to arrival date: **50%**

1-15 days prior to arrival date: **0%**



Bhutan, often referred to as the "Land of the Thunder Dragon" or 'Druk Yul', is regarded as one of the last "Shangri-Las" in the Himalayan region given its remoteness, its spectacular mountain terrain, varied flora and fauna, its unique ancient Buddhist monasteries and the peaceful and serene environment.

This country of rolling hills and towering crags certainly exudes a charm of its own. The people are delightful, the mountains are magnificent, the forests are dense, the air is pure, the architecture inspiring, the religion profound and the art superb. Like timeless images from the past, the traveler encounters the full glory of this ancient land through its strategic fortresses known as Dzongs, numerous ancient temples, monasteries and stupas which dot the countryside, prayer flags which flutter along the high ridges, wild animals which abound in dense forests, foamy white waterfalls like ethereal showers and the warm smiles of its friendly people.

The tiny kingdom of Bhutan shares with Nepal the world's greatest belt of mountains and the living heritage of Buddhism. The flight to Paro can truly be described as a flight into fantasy. During the flight, a first-hand close-up view of Mt. Everest, Mt. Kanchenjunga and other famous peaks of the Himalayan range became a reality.

With its beautiful and largely unspoiled Himalayan setting, its rich flora and fauna and its vibrant Buddhist culture, Bhutan has become an increasingly popular destination for international tourists. In addition to generating hard-currency revenue, tourism is also providing the impetus for the development of the service sector and economic development across the region.

In an effort to safeguard its rich natural and cultural environment, the country has consciously adopted a tourism policy that promotes a sustainable path to development.



Facts and Figures:

Land area: 38,394 square kilo meters

Forest area: 72.5 %

Altitude: between 240metres and 7541
meters above sea level

Inhabitants: 700,000

Language: Dzongkha, English widely spoken

Religion: Vajrayana stream of Mahayana
Buddhism (Also known as Tantric Buddhism)

Currency: Ngultrum (equal to Indian Rupee)

Capital: Thimphu

National Tree: Cypress

National Bird: Raven

National Flower: Blue Poppy

National Sport: Archery

National Animal: Takin

Local time: Six hours ahead of GMT and half
an hour ahead of Indian Standard Time