

7 Nights / 8 Days Thimphu/Gangtey Festivals

Minimum 2 pax-maximum 18 pax

**FESTIVALS: THIMPHU TSHECHU (24-26 September 2023)
and GANGTEY TSHECHU (27-29 September 2023)**

Date	Place	Remarks
25-Sep-23	Thimphu	Thimphu Festival
26-Sep-23	Thimphu	Thimphu Festival
27-Sep-23	Gangtey	Gangtey Festival
28-Sep-23	Gangtey	Gangtey Festival
29-Sep-23	Punakha/Wangdue	
30-Sep-23	Paro	
1-Oct-23	Paro	
2-Oct-23	Departure	

25th September 2023:

Arrive Paro By Air & Transfer to Thimphu (65 Kms / 1hr 30 mins Drive Approx.)



You can take the flight either from Delhi or Kathmandu.

The flight to Paro is one of the most spectacular in the entire Himalayas. Flying along the Himalayan range from Kathmandu, 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 cool, clean fresh mountain air. After immigration formalities and baggage collection, you will be met by our representative. Drive to Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan.

On Arrival in Thimphu, Check into the hotel.

Thimphu is also the Centre of government, religion and commerce. It is a unique city with an unusual mix of modern and ancient tradition and culture. 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. Visit the Craft Bazaar and browse through some of Bhutan's fine traditional arts. Here you can buy hand-woven textiles, Thankha paintings, Masks, ceramic, slate and wood carvings, jewelry and many interesting items made from local materials.

Overnight in Thimphu. (Altitude 2300m)

26th September 2023: Thimphu

After breakfast, enjoy the last day of Thimphu Tshechu. It is one of the grandest of Bhutan's festivals and attracts the largest audience. Featuring dances performed by trained monks and laymen in amazing masks and costumes, Tsechus (festivals) are one of the best ways to experience the ancient living culture of Bhutan.



A Tsechu is a Buddhist festival in honor of Guru Rimpoche, the saint who brought Buddhism to Bhutan. The Thimphu Tsechu was established by the 4th Temporal Ruler, Tenzing Rabgye (1638-1696) in 1670. This festival also provides a great opportunity to witness locals gathered in their finest Gho's and Kira's in a celebration of their culture and faith.



After Lunch, visit the Kuensel Phodrang or Buddha point as it is popularly known, located a short drive away from the city center. You can get a panoramic view of Thimphu valley from here and 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.

Next, visit the Textile Museum to get to know about the living National art of weaving. Exhibitions introduce the major weaving techniques, styles of local dress and textiles made by women and men.

Later, 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.

27th September 2023:

Thimphu to Gangtey (150 KMS / 5 Hrs. Drive Approx.)



After breakfast at the hotel, drive to Gangtey across the Do Chula pass (3080m). In Bhutan, the passes are marked by a large Bhutanese Chorten and prayer flags. Here you will see the beauty of 108 chortens against the backdrop of the most spectacular view of the high peaks of the eastern Himalayas on a clear day. Descent from Dochula pass to the valley of Punakha and Wangduephordang.

Wangdue is also known for its bamboo handicrafts, slate carving, and stone carving. The road to Gangtey/Phobjikha Valley passes through an oak and rhododendron woodland.



Phobjikha is one of Bhutan's few glacial valleys and the preferred home of black-necked cranes migrating from the Central Asian Plateau to avoid the hard winters.

Explore the Phobjikha Valley.

Overnight in Gangtey. (Altitude 2800m)

28th September 2023: Gangtey.

After breakfast, witness Gangtey Festival, a three-day religious event, celebrated in the large courtyard of the famous Gangtey Goenpa (monastery) to commemorate Guru Rinpoche's birth. It presents various sacred mask dances based on the Peling tradition.



A few of the dances are unique to Gangtey. In between mask dances, there are also folk songs & traditional performances. The celebration concludes with *Nguedup Langwa*, a spiritual blessing for wisdom and power.



In the afternoon, take the beautiful Gangtey Nature trail. The hike is a beautiful Nature walk along the Black Necked crane roosting area with the view of the lower Phobjikha valley. It is the most beautiful and shortest of the existing nature trails in Bhutan. The trail hike starts from the Mani Stone wall stupa to the north of Gangtey Gompa and ends in Khewa Lhakhang (a temple). The hike takes around 45 minutes to an hour through the pine forest and small bamboo shrubs. You may spot a few of the early arrivals in their roosting areas on this hike. (1hr 30 mins.)

- Distance: 1 hr 30 mins
- Altitude: 2700 M
- Elevation gain: 200m
- Difficulty: Easy

Overnight in Gangtey. (Altitude 2800m)

29th September 2023:

Gangtey to Wangdue/Punakha (70 km/ 3 Hrs. Drive Approx.)

Early morning, enjoy the last day of the Gangtey festival with the display of the Thongdrol, a giant thangka or thongdrol (applique silk work with Buddhist images) of Pema Lingpa which is displayed every year on the last day of the festival. The Thongdrol is preceded by prayer ceremonies called the Moelam Chenmo which is performed by the monks of Gangtey Sherda.



Later, drive back towards Wangdue and Visit Wangdue Dzong before lunch.



After lunch, visit Punakha Dzong, built strategically at the junction of Pho Chhu and Mo Chhu rivers in 1637, by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal to serve as the religious and administrative center of the region. Punakha Dzong has played an important role in Bhutan's history. Damaged by four catastrophic fires and an earthquake, the Dzong has been fully restored by the Kings.

Overnight in Punakha. (Altitude 1400m)

30th September 2023:

Wangdue/Punakha to Paro (150 KMS / 5 Hrs. Drive Approx.)

After breakfast, drive back to Paro descending down from Dochu La and following 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.



After lunch, visit Ta Dzong, originally built as a Watchtower, which now houses the National Museum. The extensive collection includes antique thangkha paintings, textiles, weapons & armor, household objects and a rich assortment of natural and historic artifacts.

Later, visit Sangchen Choekor Shedra, home to about 150 monks, studying for six years before they move on to Tango Monastery upon graduation. It's worth a visit mainly for the scenic views from the hilltop and the serene ambience of this lovely traditional monastery.

Overnight in Paro. (Altitude 2300m)

31st September 2023: Paro

After breakfast, hike to the Taktsang Monastery (5hrs hike / 3150 Meters): It is 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 Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal in 1646 and now visited by all Bhutanese at least once in their lifetime.



On 19 April 1998, a fire severely damaged the main structure but now this Bhutanese jewel has been restored to its original splendor.

Overnight in Paro.

01st November 2023: Departure.

After breakfast at the hotel, drive to the airport. Our representative will help you with exit formalities until you leave the country with beautiful memories.

Notes:

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

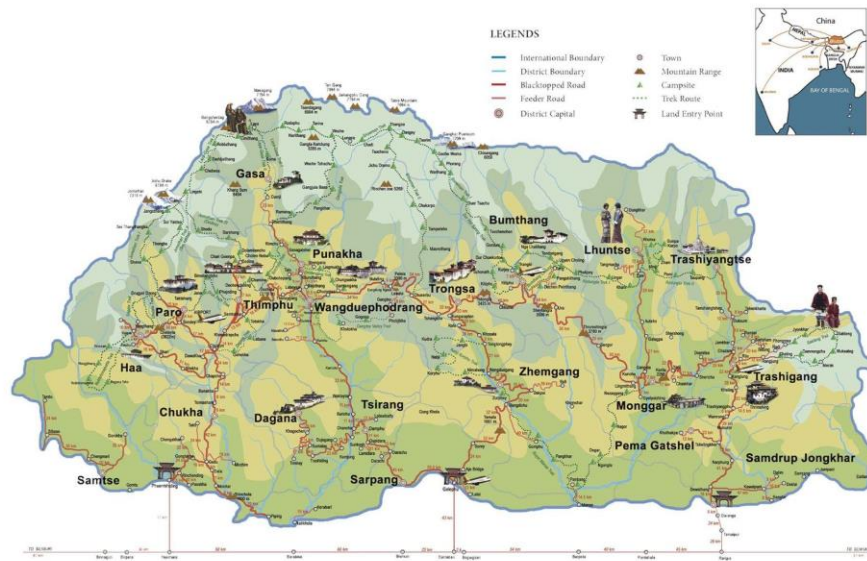
Pre and post excursions in Delhi or Kathmandu can be arranged on request.

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

