

## 7 Nights / 8 Days Thimphu & Wangdiphodrang Festival

Minimum 2 pax-maximum 18 pax

**FESTIVALS: WANGDUE TSHECHU (22-24 September 2023)  
& THIMPHU TSHECHU (24-26 September 2023)**

Date	Place	Remarks
21-Sep-23	Thimphu	Paro SS and drive to Thimphu
22-Sep-23	Gangtey	By road
23-Sep-23	Thimphu/Gangtey	
24-Sep-23	Punakha/Wangdue	Morning: Wangdue Festival
25-Sep-23	Thimphu	Sightseeing
26-Sep-23	Thimphu/Paro	Morning: Thimphu Festival
27-Sep-23	Paro	Sightseeing
28-Sep-23	Departure	

**21<sup>st</sup> September 2023**

**Arrive Paro By Air & Transfer to Thimphu (65 KMS / 1 hr. 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 after sightseeing in Paro.

**Lunch will be served in Paro and after lunch 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.

**Drive to Thimphu**, the capital city of Bhutan with a stop off at Chhuzom. Thimphu is a unique city with an 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 traffic lights. On arrival in Thimphu check-into the hotel.

Take an exploratory walk around Thimphu main street and market area in the evening.

**Overnight stay in Thimphu. (Altitude 2350m)**

**22<sup>nd</sup> 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 Wangduephodang.



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 harsh winters.

Explore the Phobjikha Valley.

**Overnight stay in Gangtey. (Altitude 2800m)**



**23<sup>rd</sup> September 2023:**

**Gangtey to Wangdue/Punakha (70 Kms / 3 hrs. Drive Approx.)**

**After breakfast,** visit the Black Necked Crane Centre that provides information on the black necked cranes and the natural and cultural history of the area.



**Later 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,** drive back to Wangdue and experience a glimpse of Wangdue Tshechu in the afternoon. The annual Wangdue Tshechu was introduced by Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal in the 17th century after the completion of Wangdue Dzong. The three days of Tshechu is a very special occasion for the people of Wangdue Phodrang and across the country. The Tshechu is best known for the Raksha Mangcham or the Dance of Ox. Thousands of people gather in their best traditional outfits to witness the district's biggest cultural festival.

**Overnight stay in Gangtey.**



**24<sup>th</sup> September 2023:**

**Gangtey to Wangdue Tshechu /Punakha**



**Join the annual Wangdue Tshechu (Festival) until lunch.**



**After lunch,** proceed to 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. The Dzong is open to visitors during Punakha festival and in summer when the monk body moves to Thimphu.

**Overnight stay in Gangtey.**

**25<sup>th</sup> September 2023:**

**Wangdue/Punakha to Thimphu (70 kms / 2 hrs. 30 mins Drive Approx.)**

**After breakfast at the hotel and check out,** drive back to Thimphu over the Dochula Pass (3080m). Upon arrival, visit the Takin Reserve.



The Motithang Takin Preserve is a protected area where the national animal of Bhutan, the Takin, is preserved. A half an hour walk around the reserve would unveil many exotic birds and animals wandering freely in their natural habitat. The beauty and serenity of nature and the wildlife here is captivating and a special experience.

**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 stay in Thimphu.**



**26<sup>th</sup> September 2023:**

**Thimphu to Paro (65 kms / 1 hr. 30 mins Drive Approx.)**



**Attend the Thimphu Tsechu until lunch time.** 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 are one of the best ways to experience the ancient living culture of Bhutan. A Tsechu is a Buddhist festival in honour 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 costumes in celebration of their culture and faith.



**After Lunch,** Drive back to Paro. In the afternoon visit Sanga Choekhor Buddhist college, 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 stay in Paro. (Altitude 2300m)**

## 27th September 2023: Paro Taktsang Excursion



**After breakfast,** an excursion to Taktsang Monastery (5hrs hike Alt. 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 was 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.



**On the way back to town,** stop to have a view of Drukgyel Dzong (from the outside), a 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.

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

**Overnight stay in Paro.**



## **28<sup>th</sup> September 2023. Depart Paro**

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

### **Notes:**

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

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

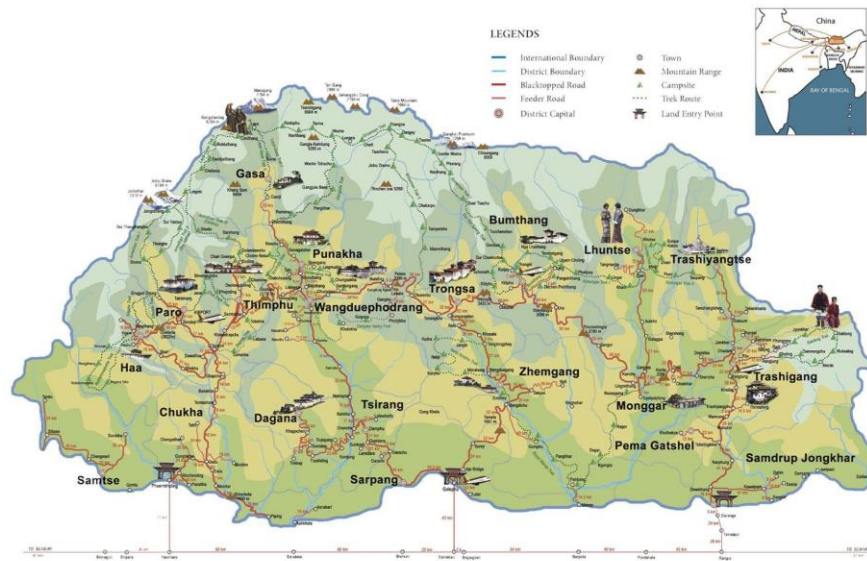
### **Cancellation:**

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 kilometers

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