

Dragon Kingdom

Bhutan Dragon Kingdom Tour is popularly known as the last Shangri La is a must visit for all the nature admirers and adventure seekers. As the name suggest, this is short trip for all those visitors who have time limitation but still want to explore this exotic kingdom. Largely isolated from the outside world for centuries, closed off to visitors until three decades ago, Bhutan is one of the world's most captivating destinations. On this definitive Bhutan tour, explore its main fortresses, make the pilgrimage to iconic Taktshang Monastery, walk through remote villages and delve into the philosophical underpinnings of Mahayana Buddhism.

Duration: 10 days

Price: \$1990

Rating: 3 Star

Group Size: Minimum Pax - 2

Grade: Strenuous

Destination: Bhutan

Activity: Tour in Nepal

Quick Facts

Tour Duration: 10

Fly out: Paro

Fly in: Paro

Itinerary:

Day 1: Paro -Thimphu

A spectacular descent through mountainous valleys brings you into the Kingdom of Bhutan. The beautiful airport is your first glimpse of what's ahead. After clearing customs and visa control you are met by your driver and guide. A short drive along the valley brings you to Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan. This very picturesque drive past rural homes, hillside monasteries, and Chhortens only take 1.5 hours. Settle into your hotel and after lunch at a local restaurant start your sightseeing, visiting the Textile Museum, a traditional paper making factory, and the Post office to see Bhutan's beautiful stamps which also depicts about our country's myths, traditions etc. Alternatively, you can do less formal sightseeing and walk around the town with your guide. In the evening dinner at a local Bhutanese restaurant and stay overnight at Hotel.

Day 2: Thimphu valley sightseeing and hike to Tango Monastery

After breakfast drive at Sangaygang, a field of Bhutanese prayer flags perched high above the city. Colored flags send prayers to the heavens and white flags honor the dead. Visit the Motithang Mini Zoo where you can see the National animal Takin research center where these odd animals graze peacefully in a small protected park. Walk to the Zilukha Nunnery and then drive to the Tango Monastery for a picnic lunch. The hike to the monastery takes about 45 minutes. It is a 13th Century structure and today is home to about 150 monks studying Buddhist Philosophy and meditation. Thimphu sightseeing continues with the Folk Heritage

Museum (a beautifully restored Bhutanese farmhouse from the last century) and the National Painting School. In the evening visit the National Memorial Chorten built in honor of our 3rd king Jigme Dorji Wangchuck (a wonderful opportunity to mix with the local population). All the buildings in Bhutan conform to national building principals and are beautifully carved and decorated. In the evening dinner at the restaurant and stay overnight at hotel.

Day 3: Thimphu -Punakha

Depart Thimphu and drive over the Docchu-La pass to Punakha. The teahouse at the pass offers beautiful views of the Himalayan range in the distance. This is a 3-hour drive with stops en route. Overnight at hotel Zangto-Pelri. Afternoon visits the magnificent Dzong spanning the MoChu and Po Chu rivers. This is the winter residence of the monastic body and the Je Khenpo (chief Abbott). Dinner and overnight at hotel.

Day 4: Punakha - Gangtey

This morning we travel to the Probjika Valley stopping at Wangdue en route, a typical rural town, where locals buy and sell all manner of produce! We turn off the main road for the Probhika Valley, arguably the most beautiful in Bhutan. The scenery changes dramatically and you will see dwarf bamboo and possibly grazing yaks. Continue to the bottom of the valley and see the Black Crane Institute and Research Centre. The migratory crane arrives in the valley in late October each year. Dinner and overnight at hotel.

Day 5: Gangtey - Trongsa - Bumthang

Today our drive is spectacular and passes over many valleys. We stop at the Chendibji Chorten at the top of the highest pass of the Black mountains and then continue into Central Bhutan. The golden-roofed Trongsa Dzong spans the valley that divides east and west Bhutan and is another architectural feat, which can be seen for 20 tantalizing and winding miles before it is finally reached. Afternoon visits the impressive Trongsa Dzong and then drive to Bumthang via Yotongla pass (3,400 meters). Enroute visit the joint Australian/Bhutanese wool project at Chumey valley. Watch the single loom weaving process and buy yak wool rugs or scarves if you wish. There is also a wonderful selection of textiles from all over Bhutan on display and for sale at this roadside stop. You will probably see Yaks on the high passes on the way to Bumthang. Eventually, the road winds down into the beautiful Bumthang valley, the cultural heart of Bhutan. Rice paddies give way to fields of barley and potatoes as the climate is too cold for rice. Dinner and overnight at Rinchenling Lodge.

Day 6: Bumthang

Bumthang is said to be one of the most spectacular valleys in Bhutan and also the heartland of Buddhism. Here many great teachers meditated and left in their wake many sacred grounds. The Guru and his lineage of Tertons (treasure finders) have led to the sprouting of many temples in the valley. In the morning we hike to visit Tamshing Monastery (one of the oldest monastic schools built by Terton Pema Lingpa) and Kurjey Lhakhang (where the Guru Rinpoche subdued a local demon and left his body imprint on a rock). We also visit Jambay Lhakhang (one of the oldest temple in Bhutan built in the 7th century) and Jakar Dzong (seat of the district administration). In the afternoon hike to Thangbi valley across the suspension bridge and visit the Thangbi Lhakhang built in the 14th century. Dinner and overnight at hotel Rinchenling lodge.

Day 7: Bumthang - Ura - Bumthang

After breakfast, we drive to Ura valley. At a distance of 42 kilometers from Bumthang, the road reaches the Ura Shelthangla, where there is a magnificent view in clear view of Bhutan's highest peak, Gangkar Puensum (7,500 m). The road then descends into Ura

valley by long loops across fields and pastures. Ura's main occupation is raising sheep, yaks and the introduction of potato farming has brought a certain degree of prosperity of people. We visit Ura Lhakhang and then drive back Bumthang. Afternoon visit Tamshing Monastery (one of the oldest monastic schools built by Terton Pema Lingpa) and Kurjey Lhakhang (where the Guru Rinpoche subdued a local demon and left his body imprint on a rock). We also visit Jambay Lhakhang (one of the oldest temple in Bhutan built in the 7th century) and Jakar Dzong (seat of the district administration). Overnight at Rinchenling lodge.

Day 8: Bumthang - Wangdue - Punakha

Depart the Bumthang valley and retrace our route back out of the valley and back to Wangdue. This is a long day's drive - a necessary evil in order to see the Festival. Dinner and overnight at hotel.

Day 9: Punakha - Thimphu - Paro

An early departure from Wangdue to Paro via Thimphu for a break and a chance to buy any textiles or artifacts that you may not have picked up elsewhere on your travels. Afternoon drive or hike if time allows to Takstang (Tiger's Nest) Monastery, the most photographed in Bhutan. The monastery has been rebuilt after a disastrous fire destroyed it some years ago. The monastery can only be viewed from afar as it is not open to the public. The view is, however, worth the steep 1-hour walk up a wide mountain path. Wildflowers will still be in bloom. Later, visit Ta Dzong (an ancient watchtower) which now houses the National Museum. This dzong was converted into the National Museum in 1968. The museum boasts antique thangka, textiles, weapons and armor, household objects and a rich assortment of natural and historic artifacts. We also visit the Rinpung Dzong, built in the 17th century to defend the valley against Tibetan invaders. The dzong is now used as an administration center and school for monks. Later evening take a walk around the main street of Paro's main shopping district. Dinner and overnight at hotel.

Day 10: Paro - Departure (by Druk Air)

In the morning our agent escort will bid you farewell at Paro airport. Good-bye and happy journey back home.

Other Features:

- Tour Duration: 10
- Fly out: Paro
- Fly in: Paro