

Bhutan 13 Night 14 Day Tour

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Duration: 14 days

Price: \$2786

Rating: 3 Star

Group Size: Minimum Pax - 2

Grade: Strenuous

Destination: Bhutan

Activity: Fly In Drive Out

Itinerary:

Day 1: Arrive at Paro International Airport by Druk Air.

The wide valley of Paro is historically important and is still a living cultural center. In spring, hundreds of families gather here to witness the Paro Tshechu, a four day religious festival of mask dances and folk entertainment. The town of Paro lies in the center of the rich, fertile Paro valley, with beautiful landscapes, scenic villages and historic buildings all within a few kilometers. Because of its proximity to the airport, there are hotels and tourist facilities close to the airstrip. The valley of Paro contains a wealth of attractions and requires a few days to be properly explored. On arrival at Paro International Airport, your tour representatives will receive you. Check in hotel/lunch. Start the day by visiting the National Museum (Ta- Dzong). Once the watchtower for Rinpung Dzong (Fortress) built in 1646 AD is the seat of the district administration as well as the home for the monastic school. The central tower (Utse) of the Dzong, with its superb woodwork, is one of the most beautiful in Bhutan, it was converted into the national Museum in 1968. The museum stands on a promontory overlooking the Paro valley in all its glory. Drive to Drukgyel Dzong 18km from the hotel followed by a short walk to Paro Dzong (Rinpung Dzong), Nyamai Zam, Ugyen Pelri Palace, Chhoeten Lhakhang, Druk Choeding and Dumtse Lhakhang. To visit all above points depend on arrival time in Paro. If arrival is late then rest of the points will be arranging to visit for next day. [Tourist standard regular hotel accommodation in Paro with B, L & D]

Day 2: Paro Thimpu (65 km. 2 hours. 2350 m)

Thimphu is the capital city of Bhutan since 1955 and lies at an altitude of 2,350 meters at the Thimphu Bridge (Lungtenzampa Bridge) and 2,450 meters at Motithang. Once a small rural settlement, it is today a bustling town on the banks of the Thimphu Chhu, set gloriously on the gentle slopes of the Thimphu valley, and is home to over 90,000 people. Thimphu is the home to the Bhutanese Royal Family, the Royal Government and to several foreign missions and development projects. Visiting one of the oldest monasteries in Bhutan, The first King of Tibet; Songtsen Gampo built Kichu Lhakhang in the 7th century to introduce Buddhism to our country, when our country was still influenced by the Bon beliefs. Kyichu Lhakhang, Satsam Chorten and Drongja Goemba en-route to Taktshang Goemba. After lunch visit Drukgyel Dzong (a ruined fortress 16 kms away from Paro Town). The Dzong, although in ruins today, holds historical significance. It was from this fortress that the Bhutanese repelled many Tibetan invasions. The name means The victorious Bhutanese. This spot also offers a magnificent vista of Mount Jomolhari, Abode of the Goddess Jumo (7315m) and in the late afternoon two hours drive will take you to Thimphu (7,700 feet), the only Capital City in the

world without traffic lights and visit the weekend market in the evening if your travelling on Friday or Saturday or Sunday. drive from Paro to Thimphu is spectacularly scenic. Especially in April (spring season in Bhutan), as you will find nature in its festive mood with rushing turquoise rivers which can be heard from miles away and mountains transformed into a Master artists palette- brilliant vermilion, yellows, purples, pink, oranges and reds to dazzle your senses.

Wild cherry, mountain ((s) without s) plums, cotton silk and forests of rhododendron trees bloom with astonishing beauty and abundance. Magnificent monasteries, stupas in the valleys and mountains tops. Experience the Last Buddhist Himalayan Kingdom on earth. [Tourist standard regular hotel accommodation in Thimphu with B, L & D]

Day 3: Thimphu - Punakha (77 km. 3 hours. 1350 m)

Punakha was the capital of Bhutan until the early 1950s and is one of the most fertile valleys in Bhutan, abundant with crops and vast terraces of rice fields.

Early rise and drive to the Dochula (3150m pass) for breakfast. If the weather is clear, the Dochu- la pass offers the most spectacular views of the eastern Himalayas mountain ranges. Then we drive to Punakha for lunch at hotel. After lunch we visit Punakha Dzong, the most beautiful in Bhutan. It was built in 1637 by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyel. The Dzong is located at the convergence of two rivers, the Pho-chu & Mo-chu. After Dzong we drive further to take a small hike to Nyzergang to visit the Khamsum Yuelly Namgyal Temple. [Tourist standard regular hotel accommodation in Punakha with B, L & D]

Day 4: Punakha Trongsa (128 km. 5 hours. 2200 m)

Trongsa, meaning the new village, is 135 kms from Wangdue. It is the Dzongkhag or district headquarters. The landscape around Trongsa is spectacular, and for miles on end the Dzong can be seen and one wonders whether one will ever reaches it. Trongsa used to be the civil administrative headquarters for the Eastern Bhutan (Pelela Pass onwards was considered Eastern Bhutan) till the crowning of the first King in 1907. Drive to Trongsa with a stop at Chendebji Chorten. Trongsa is 128 kilometers and 5 hours drive from Punakha. Wangdue is another District and is only a half hours drive from Punakha. In 1638 Wangdue Dzong was built by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal one year after the Punakha Dzong.

The road will climb all the way to Pele-la pass at 3300m. It is main landmark between east & west and from here we will drive all the way down to Trongsa. On the way we will come across Yak herders camps and encounter Yaks especially during the winter, we will also see high Himalayan villages like Rukubji and Chendebji. All the houses cluster together separate from the fields. If time permit late afternoon, make an excursion to Kuenga Rabten, an ancestral home of the Royal Family. [Tourist standard regular hotel accommodation in Trongsa with B, L & D]

Day 5: Trongsa - Bumthang (68 km. 2 hours. 2600-+m)

Trongsa is the ancestral home of Bhutans Royal Family. Both the First and Second King ruled the Kingdom from this ancient seat. All the Kings of Bhutan have to become Trongsas Penlop (Honorary post of Governor) prior to being crowned as the Druk Gyalpo (King of Bhutan). Trongsa Dzong (Fort), is one of the largest & most impressive in the country. It was first built in 1648 and later enlarged many times. Because of being situated on a high commanding position on the only connecting route between the eastern and western sectors (where the trail actually runs through the Dzong), the Trongsa Penlop was able to control the whole of the eastern region very effectively for many centuries. Visit the ancient watchtower (Ta- Dzong), which is situated above the town.

About three hours drive from Trongsa; we will reach to the famous valley of Bumthang. Bumthang is made up of four main valleys, Chummey, Tang, Ura and Choskhor (Jakar). A few miles after crossing Yotong La Pass (3400m), you will encounter buckwheat

fields and the only straight road in the country entering the first valley of Bumthang, Chummey. The main development center of the province is situated in Choskhor commonly known as the Jakar valley where you can see a little bit of the modern touch with Swiss influence. On the way one can see girls weaving Yathra the traditional woolen materials used for different purposes on a traditional hand loom. The finished products are all displayed in a shop outside in the open & on sale. [Tourist standard regular hotel accommodation in Bumthang with B, L & D]

Day 6 & 7: Bumthang - Bumthang

Bumthang is different from all the other valleys in Bhutan. It is very spacious and open ranging in altitudes from 2600m to 4000m. Bumthang is a heaven for hikers and Trekkers, not to mention the numerous beautiful and important Buddhist monasteries and pilgrimage sites, making it the Cultural and Historic heartland in Bhutan.

One could spend months exploring this fascinating valley. Almost every little valley or hill has a background of interesting myths and legends about Kings, Buddhist masters and Serpents. Bumthang is especially dominated by the religious influence of Padmasambhava (believed to be the second Buddha 7th 8th A.D) and his reincarnation the Treasure revealer. Terton Pemalingpa 1450-1521, who is known to have discovered many sacred Buddhist texts hidden by Padmasambhava (Guru Rimpoche) in various places.

Take a walk up to Tamshing monastery (Lhakhang) founded by Terton Pemalingpa, where about 200 monks reside. Visit the historical temple & Swiss Farm (tour), Ugyen Choling, visit the Wangduechholing Palace, Jambay Lhakhang, Kurjee Lhakhang, and the oldest monastery in the Kingdom. All the Kings of Bhutan are taken for their cremation rites to Kurjee Monastery. Visit some more temples.

Drive to the sacred Mebartsho (meaning burning lake). The importance of this site is indicated by the extensive array of prayer flags and is considered as one of the most holy places for Buddhist pilgrimage. After this visit drive back to Chamkhar and stroll in town. [Tourist standard regular hotel accommodation in Bumthang with B, L & D]

Day 8: Bumthang - Gangtey (Phobjikha) 188 km / 05 - 06 hours drive

Gangtey Gumpa was built on a small hillock surrounded by blue pine trees. A descendant of Pema Lingpa (the great Bhutanese saint of Bumthang) built the Gonpa in the 16th century and it is a Nyingmapa monastery. At the end of the 17th century it was enlarged once and at present it is headed by the 9th reincarnation called Gangtey Trulku. It is under renovation at present. It is run by the family houses of Gomchens (layman), who worship and work at the monastery.

Further down you will reach the Phobjikha valley. This place is reserved for the migration of the black neck crane. The people out here have become friendly with the endangered species and every consecutive year starting from the 2nd week of November to the 1st week of April the fields and marshes of this undisturbed valley offer a truly magnificent sight as you watch the cranes.

Drive to Phobjikha valley, which is one of the most beautiful in the country. Lunch box will be served at Chendebji Chorten. Evening explore the valley on your own.

[Tourist standard regular hotel accommodation in Gangtey Gumpa with B, L & D]

Day 9: Visit Phobjikha Valley

Gangtey Gumpa walk; Crane Center; optional hiking through villages, forest, and farmland.

Day 10: Leisurely morning in Phobjikha Valley & drive to Wangdiphodrang (65 kms / 2.5 - 03 hours)

[Tourist standard regular hotel accommodation in Gangtey Gumpa with B, L & D]

Day 11: Drive to Thimpu, with stop at Chimi Lhakhang Thimphu

Drive to Thimpu, with stop at Chimi Lhakhang Thimphu afternoon to explore on your own.

[Tourist standard regular hotel accommodation in Thimpu with B, L & D]

Day 12: Thimphu: Tashichho Dzong

Thimphu: Tashichho Dzong, handicraft shops, National Textile Museum, Drubthob Gumpa nunnery, etc. Late-afternoon drive to Paro.[Tourist standard regular hotel accommodation in Paro with B, L & D]

Day 13: Hike to T Lhakhang, the Tigers aktsangNest

[Tourist standard regular hotel accommodation in Paro with B, L & D]

Day 14: Depart from Bhutan

Depart from Hotel and transfer to the Paro Airport for your return flight.