



10 Day Detailed Itinerary, Departs on Day 11

Day 1 Arrive Kathmandu to Paro - Drive to Thimphu (55km/34 miles approx) Overnight Thimphu (7,576 ft elevation)

During the flight into Bhutan, you will experience breathtaking views of Mount Everest, Kanchenjunga and other famous Himalayan peaks, including the sacred Mount Jhomolhari and Jitchu Drake in Bhutan. On arrival at Paro International Airport, you will be met by your Cypress Himalaya Tour guides, and after the formalities, including the processing of your Visa (please bring your copy) we will drive to Thimphu. After lunch, explore Thimphu city.

Day 2 Thimphu (7576 ft) Overnight Thimphu

A packed first full day ahead. First, we have an open ceremony and Lhasang with Bhutanese Lamas who will bless our journey with some mantras and we'll enjoy the sounds of Bhutan with the long horns. After breakfast at 7am-8am, we will drive to Kuensel Phodrang and circumambulate the iconic second-largest seated Buddha; locals call it "Buddha Point". In the afternoon, we will visit the Memorial Chorten, built in 1974 in the memory of our third king, a multi-storied stupa that will introduce you to the vitality of Tantric Buddhism. At the temple, there will be opportunities to make offerings of butter lamps, and time to meditate in the temple. After lunch we'll visit Pangri Zampa, the Monastic Astrology College where the monks can do your astrology chart. Evening, we will have leisure time in the city.

Day 3 Thimphu to Punakha (Drive time 3 hrs/4,075ft elevation) Overnight Punakha

After breakfast, we will drive to Punakha valley. On the way to Punakha is the Dochula pass (10,04ft) which has a beautiful panoramic view of the Himalayan mountain ranges. The serenity of this place will capture your heart by the sight of The Druk Wangyel Chorten, 108 stupas built for all sentient beings by the eldest queen mother Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck. Punakha has a more subtropical climate and its rich fertile valley is fed by the Phochu (Male River) and Mochu (Female River) rivers. We'll visit the Punakha Dzong built by Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel (the unifier of Bhutan) in 1637.

Day 4 Punakha

Today we will hike to Chimi Lhakhang, most popularly known as the temple of fertility. The temple was built in the 15th century as a dedication to Lama Drukpa Kuenley, known as the divine madman and considered one of Bhutan's favorite saints. The hike to this temple will take us through a village surrounded by beautiful rice fields. Meditate in the main temple under the future Buddha Maitreya. Overnight Punakha.

Day 5 Drive from Punakha to Bumthang (Drive time 6 hrs/7,218ft) Stop in Trongsa.

We start early for the fabulous drive to the central valleys of Bhutan through the breathtaking

landscape of Bhutan's rich flora and fauna. We'll reach a mountain pass at Pelela (3,300 m/10,989ft.) and if there's clear weather we can view the high snow capped peaks of Mt. Jhomolhari (7,314m/24,355ft.). From here we will descend for 2 hours to Trongsa valley. We'll spend the afternoon at Trongsa Dzong, built in 1647; this Dzong was the source of many important historical events in the making of modern Bhutan. Today, before driving towards Bumthang we will visit the Trongsa Tower Museum, built as a watch tower at the Dzong. We'll then resume our drive to Bumthang crossing the Yotongla Pass (3,424m/11,234ft.) and into the first four valley of Bumthang known as Chumey where we will make a stop to observe the weavers weaving the famous Bumthang fabric known as Yathra. From the Chhume valley it will take 40 minutes to drive to Chhoekor valley, our last stop of the day. Overnight Bumthang (8,528ft) Overnight Bumthang (7,218ft)

Day 6 : Bumthang Bhutan dating back to the 7th century. We'll visit Kurjey Lhakhang (the body imprint temple). It is believed that the body imprint was left on the rock where the Guru Rinpoche (precious master) had meditated. We will hike (approx 30 min) to Tamshing Lhakhang, the temple that was built by the treasure discoverer in the 16th century. We will visit Lhodrak Kharchu, a Nyingma Monastery, founded in the 1970s by H.H Namkhai Nyingpo Rinpoche, with about 400 monks currently in residence.

Day 7 Bumthang Visit to Mebar Tsho "Burning Lake".

In the afternoon we will visit Mebartsho, "Burning Lake" where Terton Pemalingpa 1450-1521) a treasure revealer is believed to have taken out a hidden treasure from the lake. These treasures were hidden by Guru Rinpoche in the 8th century to be revealed at a future auspicious time from a person with special qualities of seeing and knowing, (terton). Overnight- Bumthang (8528ft)

Day 8 Drive from Bumthang to Paro.

Today we'll drive 7 hours from Bumthang to Paro. We'll leave early in the morning and take our time winding our way back to Paro. We will stop for nature hike and lunch midway through the trip, In the afternoon if there's time we'll visit one temple, Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche's Memorial House, the beloved Rinpoche who was also the primary master and teacher of the 4th King of Bhutan, Jigme Singye Wangchuk.

Day 9 Visit to Paro Nye (Secret holy place) and short hike to **Dzongdraka Goemba**, we will be in the presence of the past Buddha's relics and make offerings at the temple. This is an off the beaten track holy temple where we will meditate and listen to some teachings from the temple lama. We will spend the afternoon in Paro town for some shopping then rest up for our early morning hike to Tiger's Nest.

Day 10 Tiger's Nest Paro Taktsang

After an early breakfast, we will hike to Tiger's Nest Monastery (Taktshang Goemba). The trip is an uphill walk of about 3.5 hours total. The legend of Taktshang (Tiger's Nest/Lair) evolves from Tantric mythology when, in 747 AD, Guru Rimpoche (PadmaSambhava) chose a cave on this sheer rock face to meditate and, assuming his wrathful form, Guru Dorji Drolo, he subdued the local deity, and manifested into the spiritual protector of Taktshang. His companion and consort, Yeshe Tshogyal transformed herself into a Tigress to assist him on his travels, then changed back into a female human companion and achieved the status of a female Buddha in her lifetime. In the afternoon/sunset we'll enjoy the picturesque farmhouse in the rice fields of Paro and take a well deserved herbal bath known as 'Hot stone bath'. We'll have a wonderful Bhutanese dinner and taste of the local ara "rice wine"

