



Bhutan Checklist and General Information including Tips for Guide and Driver

Clothing and Items

Year round, other than winter months, the weather tends to vary, so be prepared for occasional rain, as well as sunny weather. The average temperature during these months still remains very pleasant around 55-65 F degrees during the day. Summer it can rise up to the mid 80's F.

Your clothing should be lightweight, breathable, hand-washable, and quick-drying. Altitudinal differences account for a wide range of temperatures from day to night the year round. It is, therefore, suggested that clothing be layered so that you can adapt to the changing conditions.

- Sweater, fleece jacket and or/ wind and rain jacket is essential especially for higher altitudes.
- Long pants (zip-off pants are very useful)
- Shorts for summer months, ankle length pants
- For Temples, Dzong (Fortress) and Monasteries, you should wear long pants or long skirts. If you are wearing a t-shirt, it will have to be long sleeve, and for short sleeve shirts, a collar is required.
- Sun hat
- Sunglasses
- Umbrella/Rain Jacket
- A well equipped pack of travel medicines
- Sunscreen
- Earplugs for unwanted noises in the room, barking dogs etc.
- Insect repellent
- Walking sticks for the Tiger's Nest hike, you can find these on the path to rent, and is highly recommended especially for the hike down.
- Travel packs of detergent, your favorite kind. You can also get this locally in Thimphu and Paro.

Foot Wear

- Bring comfortable sports shoes/New Tennis shoes with good soles for the Tiger's Nest hike because it can be slippery if it rains. Please try not to bring your old favorite tennis shoes, the older soles might not grip on the loose rocky trails.
- Light-medium sandals such as Tevas, Merrill, Chacos are good for daily touring, but flip flops are not recommended. Flip flops are convenient for hotel use only.
- When entering temples shoes must be removed so it is, therefore, suggested that you bring 1 slip-on shoe and that you carry an extra pair of socks to wear inside religious buildings/temple socks.

Medication to bring:

- Motion Sickness. Bhutan's roads are famously windy with switchbacks, and motion sickness medication is recommended as a precaution. In our experience most people who believe they have altitude sickness actually suffer from motion sickness. A small dose 1/2 hour before we leave for the ride makes a huge difference for some.
- An anti-diarrhea medicine (an oral rehydration solution is also very helpful in case of diarrhea), aspirin or painkiller, muscle soother, antiseptic cream, antihistamine cream, anti-nausea tablets (in case of mountain sickness), bandages, sore throat lozenges, lip salve and insect repellent. All of these items can be found at the pharmacy in Bhutan as well, but good to bring your own brand etc. You can replenish these items at the drug stores, market.

Food:

Breakfast is continental with a variety of teas, coffee and juices. Lunch and dinners consist of freshly cooked vegetables, a meat dish and either Bhutanese red rice or white rice. Sometimes a meal will be influenced by the cuisine of India, Nepal and may incorporate bread, spices and traditional dishes of Bhutan. None of the main dishes are very spicy. Ema Datshi is the national dish made of Chili and Cheese; it's served as a side dish.

Local SIM cards:

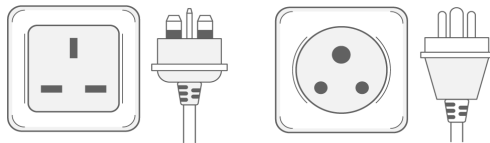
SIM cards are now available from a SIM counter located at the Paro Airport. Here you can purchase and gain assistance for activating local SIM cards in your devices. They will cost around \$10-15 USD for the duration of your stay depending on what plan you opt into.

WIFI: Smart phones, I pads, Notepads etc. generally work well in WIFI zones albeit slowly as signal strength is often weak. WIFI is offered for free in all the hotels that we will be staying in for the tour.

Electricity, Voltage, and Adapters:

Standard Voltage: All hotels will have standard voltage outlets (110-120) for your cell phones (I Phones and Samsung phones). You can bring your own adapter, and the hotels do have them for your cell phone as well, (and upon availability) But please don't forget to bring your own cell phone charger, these are hard to find in Bhutan.

Bhutan follows the Indian outlet plug usage, pictured below. You can also use your European plug as well (pictured below).



Type C plug

Type D plug

Type C – The standard European plug

Type D – Mostly used in India

Hair Dryers: There are hair dryers in all hotels. You do not need to bring one.

Credit Cards & ATM

- **Visa & MasterCard** is accepted, but limited in Bhutan to only a few shops, but mostly you will be using cash. For handicrafts and local shops, it's cash only.
- **Money Exchange.** On day 1 and 2 of your stay, you can bring as many new \$100 USD as you wish to convert and we will give you local currency at the current bank rate.
- **ATM:** Yes, we have ATM's In Thimphu, Paro and Punakha there are ATM machines where you can withdraw money. Please alert your bank that you will be using your ATM in Bhutan for the dates you have on your Visa. If your card is not flagged for travel, you will not be able to use them in Bhutan. Also, make sure you have a chip on your ATM and not a magnetic strip, this will not work at the ATM's.
- **Cash:** Banks in Bhutan exchange US, Canadian and Australian dollars, UK pounds, Euros, Japanese yen and some other Asian and Scandinavian currencies. Note that the exchange rate for US dollar bills of lower denominations than US\$100 is much lower than for large bills.

- **US Dollars for Money Exchange.** You must bring US Dollars that are newer than 2002. Do not bring the old US Dollars to Bhutan, as they will not be acceptable. Also, do not bring 5,10,20's, 50's, these are not used in Bhutan.

Baggage Allowance for Bhutan Airlines/Druk Air

- The baggage allowance for your Economy Flight for Bhutan airlines and Druk air is 30 kg (66 pounds) for all the sectors.
- Hand Baggage: Please ensure the carry-on bags in the cabin do not exceed the dimensions of 55cm x 40cm x 20cm and a maximum weight of 7 kg (15 pounds) for Bhutan Airlines and for Druk Air the dimensions of 45cm+35cm+20cm and a maximum weight of 5 Kg (11 pounds). You are allowed 1 carry on, 1 checked bag and 1 small purse. All combined luggage cannot exceed the total weight allowance.

Suggested Tip for Guide and Driver

These are suggested tips for your guide & driver and are at your discretion, however tipping is kindly appreciated. For a Group Tip: US \$8-10 per person per day for your guide & US \$5-7 per person per day for your driver. We will collect the tips as a group and present them to the main guide and driver on the last evening before departure at our cocktail party.

Speaking Dzongkha /English is the Second Language in Bhutan Dzongkha directly translated means “Dzong” is the district and Kha is the language. We hope you can try a few words if you are comfortable. Here are a few basic phrases to help you along the way. English is the second language in Bhutan, so most people can speak if they are 40-50 years and younger. All subjects in Bhutan are taught in English except for Dzongkha, a script form of the language derived from Tibet originally.

Kuzu-zangpo- La – Hello, Respected Greetings

Tashi Delek – May all good things come to you. (Use this as a farewell, and a greeting)

Kadrin-che-La – Thank you.

Goempa/Lhaxhang – Meditation Centre.

Lhaxhang – Temple

Chapsa – Toilet.

Chuu – Water

Good Morning- Dobro delek

What is your name? chö meng gaci mo

Where are you from? chö gâti lä mo,

I'm from-nga lä ing

I don't understand- may shey

