



## Around Bhutan Tours and Trek

<b>Trip code</b>	
<b>Package name</b>	Around Bhutan Tours and Trek
<b>Duration</b>	7
<b>Max. elevation</b>	3000 m
<b>Level</b>	MODERATE
<b>Transportation</b>	Private vehicals for all round trip
<b>Accomodation</b>	3***hotel twin sharing bed basis during the tour
<b>Starts at</b>	Paro
<b>Ends at</b>	Paro
<b>Trip route</b>	Paro - Thimphu - Dapshung pang - Chorten Ningpo - Punakha - Thimphu - Paro
<b>Cost</b>	USD 1,850 per person

## Highlights

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## Overview

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**Bhutan Tour and trek is the combined package where one could get chance to trek over 3400 meter along with the sightseeing tour of the most prominent places of Bhutan.**

Bhutan is a culturally rich country that has been the home to many scholars, artists and noted craftsmen. Residing in the lap of the Eastern Himalayan range, Bhutan is a small country with Himalayan Mountains in the north and Himalayan foothills in the south. The country is world famous for its breathtaking views of the gigantic peaks of Mt. Jitchu Drake and Chomolhari range. Being called the Dragon Kingdom, Bhutan is a peaceful and picturesque territory vying to be explored by

the tourists. With its picturesque and untouched natural beauty, Himalayan terrain, rich flora and fauna and vivacious Buddhist culture, Bhutan is increasingly emerging as a tourist destination, especially for people who prefer to spend their holidays in the lap of pure natural settings.

This tour program is a distinct attraction for travelers. This tour comprises the highlights of Bhutan. The altitude of the trail covers almost a thousand meters in range but the slopes are mostly gradual and should not present hikers with much difficulty.

## **Trip Itinerary**

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### **Day 1 : Full Day Paro sightseeing tour**

Start your Bhutan's tour with a sightseeing tour from Paro, a beautiful valley and home to many of Bhutan's oldest monasteries and temples, and the country's only international airport. Visit Ta Dzong, the name Ta Dzong translates to 'watch tower' and it served the function of watch tower for the Paro Rinpung Dzong. Visit Rinpung Dzong, meaning 'fortress of the heap of jewels' to see the painting of the great saint Milarepa, considered as the master of meditation by the Bhutanese and believed to have attained enlightenment in a lifetime. The Dzong is now used as an administration center and school for monks. Rinpung dzong like all other dzongs in Bhutan is adorned with wall murals that symbolize the lives of the Bodhisattvas and other prominent saints, drawings from Buddhist parables within which the country's culture and traditional life is intricately represented and holy symbols that signify their own individual religious meanings. Next, we visit Kichu Lhakhang, the oldest temple in the country. From here we will be taken to the Drugyal Dzong(Bhutan Victory Fort), which was built in 1646 to commemorate Bhutan's victory over Tibetan invaders during the 1600s. The fort was gutted by a fire disaster in the 1950s but has been left in the form of historical ruins to this day to pay homage to what it stands for.

### **Day 2 : Drive Paro to Thimphu (2,320m/7,424ft) – 2 hrs. drive. Upon arrival, sightseeing tour of Thimphu**

A drive along the winding road by the Paro Chu (Chu means water or river) downstream to the confluence with the Wang Chu, then turn upstream and travel along the Wang Chu to Thimphu, Bhutan's scenically located capital city. We start our sightseeing tour with a visit to National Memorial Chorten called Gongzo Chorten or Gyaldren Chorten. This temple was first initiated by the Third Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck as a protection from the negative elements of modernization, and as a monument to world peace. The Royal Queen Mother completed it as a memorial Stupa for the Third King who passed away in 1972. Then we will continue our visit to 12th century Changangkha Temple and Drubthob monastery housing the Zilukha Nunnery. Afterwards visit National Library, the priceless collection of Buddhist manuscripts and few English version books; Folk and Heritage Museum, which displays day to day livelihood of typical Bhutanese farmers in medieval period and their accessories; Late King's Memorial Stupa, built for the world peace and Traditional Handmade Paper Factory; Painting School, which preserves our traditional paintings, sculpturing and wood curving and National Handicraft Emporium, the best place to look for souvenir from Bhutan. You can also visit the Rinpung Dzong, meaning

'fortress of the heap of jewels' to see the painting of the great saint Milarepa, considered as the master of meditation by the Bhutanese and believed to have attained enlightenment in a lifetime. The Dzong is now used as an administration center and school for monks. Dzong's are large monasteries and district administrative centers, which were once strategic forts. Some of the landmarks are closed on the weekend (Saturdays and Sundays). Therefore, if your visit to Thimphu coincides with the weekend, you can walk through the Thimphu Market to see the variety of food of Bhutan, including basket upon basket of fiery chillies, cheese and a variety of greens. (This market is open only from Friday-Sunday). Most of these places to be visited have 'no photography' rules and it have to be respected as it falls in line with the country's cultural preservation rules. You can enquire with your guide about these rules as and when you visit places, as photography is not entirely prohibited unless for strictly specified areas, as mentioned above.

### **Day 3 : Drive from Thimphu to Chamina and trek to Dopshing Pang (3400 m, 10 km) – approx. 7/8 hrs. walk**

On the third day of Bhutan trip, trek begins with a scenic drive starting from Thimphu, the capital city of Bhutan. Crossing the Thimphu Chu, our drive heads up the valley passing through the Dzong. Your drive passes the Dechenchholing Palace which serves the residence of the royal grandmother and then Pangri Zampa Lhakhang (temple) which serve as a residence of Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel when he first visited Bhutan in 1616. From here, the drive takes you uphill through rough and unsealed road and finally arrives to the starting point of your trek.

Upon arrival at Chamina village, you will commence trek to Dopshipang. As you begin your adventurous day walk, you can see Phajoding Gompa atop the hill which serves as one of the beautiful campsite. The trek trail ascends gradually until you reach the pass called Sinchula (3,400m). From this point, if the weather is clear, one can see Phajoding monastery just above Thimphu city. After crossing Sinchu La Pass, the trail takes you downhill through lush forest with beautiful landscape with a view of Thinley Gang Village, Talo Gompa and the motor high way between Thimphu and Dochu La (the pass between Thimphu and Punakha). Continuing further through narrow valley and muddy path finally reach your campsite in a wide meadow. The trek from the pass is more or less downhill until you reach the campsite at Dopshing Pang.

### **Day 4 : Trek Dopshing Pang to Chorten Ningpo (2700 m) – approx. 8 hrs. walk**

On the second day of our trek, we will walk downhill through thick and mixed forest. The walk is gradual and will take you through villages and rice fields. After arriving at the valley you will pass through terrace of rice field with villages scattered throughout the valley. Ascending a short uphill from the traditional Bhutanese farmhouse you will then traverse through tree line with valley view downhill and finally arrive at Chorten Ningpo. Chorten Ningpo is linked to Drukpa Kuenley, better known as the "divine madman" and your guide will tell you of many colorful legends connected to this man.

Your campsite is located in the centre of the village next to the historical Chorten Ningpo Sherdag. If you reached early make a visit to the Shedrag, which is worth visiting and has its connection dated back to the fifteenth century. The Shedra now house the Buddhist institute of religious studies housing around 50 – 60 monks. Inside the main shrine the key figure god is Jampa “Buddha of the Future” stretching from ground floor to the first floor. The spot offers an impressive view of the valley below. The campsite is right in front of the temple at an altitude of 2300m.

### **Day 5 : Drive Chorten Ningpo to Punakha (1,250m/4,100 ft.)**

After breakfast drive to Punakha. Visit Punakha Dzong. The impressive Punakha Dzong lies between two great rivers. The names of the rivers are Pho Chu (Male River) and Mo Chu (Female River). This Dzong serves as the winter residence for the Je Khenpo, Chief Abbot of the Central Monastic Body and also the office of the district Administration.

After lunch drive about 7km from Punakha town and after crossing the suspension bridge over the Mochu River, it takes approximately 30-45 minutes to walk to the Khamsum Yuelley Namgyel Chorten (Stupa) which is perched on a strategic ridge overlooking the nearby villages under Kabisa geog. It was built under the sponsorship of Her Majesty the Queen Mother Ashi Tshering Yangden Wangchuck to remove evil forces and promote peace, stability and harmony throughout the world. As the first of its kind in the world to have been constructed the details and the architectural designs were drawn from scriptures as visualized by Dudjom Lingpa.

### **Day 6 : Drive Punakha to Wangdue Phodrang and after sightseeing further drive to Thimphu – approx. 3 hrs. drive**

Today, we drive for about half an hour in order to reach Wangdue. Wangdue Phodrang Dzong is perched on a spur at the confluence of two rivers. Wangdue Phodrang represents an important gateway to Eastern Bhutan. High on a promontory overlooking the river, this Dzong, founded in 1639, controlled the routes to Trongsa, Punakha, Dagana, and Thimphu. The position of the Dzong is remarkable as it completely covers the spur and commands an impressive view over both the north-south and east-west roads. Punakha and Wangdue Phodrang are administrative centers of their respective Dzong khang or districts. Compared to Thimphu or Paro, the valley is at much lower elevation at about 1250 meter above sea level. Therefore it enjoys subtropical climate with warm summers and pleasant winters. The valley boasts at least two crops a year and subtropical plants like Cactuses, Mandarin, and Bananas grow here. The town of Punakha was relocated recently to Khuruthang from its location near Punakha Dzong. Punakha was former winter capital of Bhutan, the tradition that is still kept by the monastic body, who moves their capital to Thimphu in the summer and return to Punakha Dzong in the winter. It is around half hour drive between Punakha and Wangdue Phodrang. The small township of Wangdue with clusters of small shops tightly packed together, surrounding a truck stop is quite interesting to visit. Across the river, on the opposite ridge is the village of Richen gang, known for cluster of

houses connected to one another. After sightseeing tour, we drive to Thimphu for our overnight stay.

## **Day 7 : Sightseeing tour of Thimphu and in evening drive towards Paro – 2hrs. drive**

After breakfast, we will drive to Dodeyna to climb through a beautiful forest track to the Tango Monastery which overlooks a forested valley and other Buddhist retreats high in the mountains. Then we will visit the mini zoo at Motithang to see the Takin, Bhutan's national animal. The Takin (a goat-antelope) was declared the national animal of Bhutan because it is strongly associated with the country's religious history and mythology. If you wish we can then visit the Handicrafts Emporium followed by shopping for souvenirs and other items in the shops of Thimphu. In the evening, we will drive through to Paro.

## **Inclusions**

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### **What is included?**

Airport pick up & drop by private vehicle as your require.

Private vehicals for round trip.

Standard accommodation twin sharing bed basis for the duration of tour.

All meals fixed breakfast, lunch & dinner with Tea and Coffee for whole duration of your stay in Bhutan.

Mineral water supply for the trip.

Local licensed English speaking Bhutan Tour Guides.

All sightseeing tours, Monument /Museum entrance Fees as per itinerary.

Country Presentation & Tour Briefing on arrival evening.

Bhutan Visa Fees and Visa Processing assistance.

The required number of trekking & touring staff.

All trekking access, route permits logistics & fees.

Luggage will be hauled by horses, mules or yaks at higher elevations.

Government tax which goes to the country's health & education projects.

### **What isn't included?**

Your travel insurance.

Bottled/alcoholic/cold drinks room service.

International airfares and airport departure tax.

Personal Equipment.

Tips to staffs-Tipping is expected.

Any others expenses which are not mentioned on Price Includes section.

## **Complimentary**