



## Nepal Bhutan and India Tour

<b>Trip code</b>	
<b>Package name</b>	Nepal Bhutan and India Tour
<b>Duration</b>	19
<b>Max. elevation</b>	3180 m
<b>Level</b>	MODERATE
<b>Transportation</b>	All grounded vehicals depending on group size.
<b>Accomodation</b>	3***hotel twin sharing bed basis during the Tour in Nepal , India and Bhutan.
<b>Starts at</b>	kathmandu
<b>Ends at</b>	Thimphu
<b>Trip route</b>	Kathmandu - Kolkatta - Darjeeling - Silguru - Phuntsholing - Thimphu - Paro - Panukha - Bumthang - Gangtey - Thimphu
<b>Cost</b>	USD 3,450 per person

## Highlights

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Visit UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Kathmandu Nepal.

A scenic mountain flight towards the Paro airport

Reach Kunselcholing ViewPoint with a large statue of Buddha to get amazing views of Thimphu valley

Visit Tashichho Dzong, and Memorial Chorten built in the memory of King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck

Reach Dochula pass at 3,080 meters and enjoy the majestic views mountains like Masagang, Tsendagang, Gangkar plenum (the highest peak in Bhutan), etc.

Visit Punakha Dzong and explore the beauty of Khamsum Yuley Temple

See Paro Dzong, the government center of Paro, and explore Ta Dzong, a watchtower serving as a National Museum of Bhutan holding several artifacts and art pieces

Hike up to Taktshang Monastery also known as Tiger's Nest

Get to Kyichu Lhakhang Temple, the oldest temple in Bhutan

Enjoy amazing natural beauty and picturesque landscapes throughout the tour

## Overview

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**Nepal, Bhutan and India tour is a combination package where you will get an opportunity to tour around three different South-Asian countries which are famous for their natural beauties, cultural heritage sites and diversity of people among the same country. Nepal is famous for its World's highest peak; Mount Everest (8848 m) and known as the birth place of Buddha. Bhutan is known as the dragon kingdom and is famous for the preserved Bhutanese culture and lifestyle which is untouched by the modernization. India is known as the fastest developing countries which is famous for the Taj Mahal which is listed under seventh Wonder of the World.**

With a fascinating history and impressive architecture, stunning views of the Himalaya and exciting drive, this adventure tour to the famous landmarks of Nepal, Bhutan and India will be an outstanding experience for you. These high land settled in the Himalayas are some of the most adventurous destinations in the world. Nepal is a mix of culture and nature, Bhutan is the Last Shangri-La and India is the land of sages and a mix of different cultures. The multi country tours of Nature Trail Travels & Tours, Trekking & Expedition are designed to cater the need of overseas travelers who want to travel to multiple countries of South Asia in a single journey. Multi country or cross country tours include destinations of Nepal, Bhutan and India. These three countries in Asia are very different from each other. Nepal is a unique mix of different cultures and geographical features. Bhutan, the Last Shangri-La has a collection of best preserved natural and cultural heritage and it is the only Mahayana Buddhist country in the world. India is a huge country and the biggest in South Asia. It is a melting pot of all cultures and traditions of the Indian sub-continent. Travelling to these countries provides you the opportunity to explore the varied landscape and geographical regions along with the diverse culture and traditions of the area. This journey will take you to the mountainous landscape of Nepal to the plains of India and the last Shangri-La on earth – Bhutan, where you will experience great contrasts along the way. This amazing journey of a life time will give you an incredible life changing experience. An enlightening exploration of wonderful cultures and nature is something you will cherish forever.

## Trip Itinerary

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### **Day 1 : Arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport. Upon arrival, meet and transfer to hotel**

Embarking our tour, fly in Kathmandu and arrive at Tribhuvan International Airport, Kathmandu. After the clearance of customs and luggage's, exist from the Airport Departure lounge and as soon as you exist you can see number of peoples outside holding a placard. Among them one of the representative of Nature Trail Travels & Tours, Trekking & Expedition will be holding a placard with your name in it. So, closely look at them. He will then transfer you to your respective hotels. Or else, you can visit our office and after full description about your trip, you will be driven to your hotel. Overnight at hotel.

### **Day 2 : Early morning transfer to airport for Mount Everest Flight. After an hour flight, proceed for half day sightseeing tour including: Swayambhunath (Monkey Temple) and Kathmandu Durbar Square**

Today, you will be transferred to airport for the scenic Mount Everest flight. For those who are restricted by time from going trekking can get panoramic view of the Himalayas in just an hour. You can have the world's highest mountain view i.e. Mount Everest (8848 m) along with other mountains. After an hour of Mountain flight, transfer to hotel have your breakfast and then proceed for the half day sightseeing tour of the two Heritage Sites among which one is recognized by the UNESCO i.e. Kathmandu Durbar Square and Swayambhunath. You will explore the ancient and medieval Hindu Temples, Buddhist Stupas and monasteries, palaces, monuments and shrines. Kathmandu Durbar Square is located in front of the old royal palace of the former Kathmandu Kingdom and is one of three Durbar (royal palace) Squares in the Kathmandu Valley in Nepal. Durbar square is surrounded with spectacular architecture and vividly showcases the skills of the Newar artists and craftsmen over several centuries. The Royal Palace was originally at Dattatraya square and was later moved to the Durbar square. The Kathmandu Durbar Square held the palaces of the Malla and Shah Kings who ruled over the city. Along with these palaces, the square surrounds quadrangles, revealing courtyards and temples. It is known as Hanuman Dhoka Durbar Square, a name derived from a statue of Hanuman, the monkey devotee of Lord Ram, at the entrance of the palace. The labyrinth of backstreets and alleys leading from one bazaar ("chowk") to another are a true highlight of the city's character.

Swayambhunath is an ancient religious architecture atop a hill in the Kathmandu Valley, west of Kathmandu city. This Stupa is laden with 13 gold plated spires symbolizing 13 stages to salvation in Buddhism. Different sorts of Buddha has added to the attraction of the Stupa. It occupies a central position and is probably the most sacred among Buddhist pilgrimage sites. For Tibetans and followers of Tibetan Buddhism, it is second only to Boudhanath. The Swayambhunath complex consists of a stupa, a variety of shrines and temples, some dating back to the Licchavi period. A Tibetan monastery, museum and library are more recent additions. The stupa has Buddha's eyes and eyebrows painted on. Between them, the number one (in Devanagari script) is painted in the fashion of a nose. Children will enjoy here seeing the monkeys jump from here to there. Be careful with your personal belongings as the monkeys here are clever enough to snatch the good from your hands. After sightseeing, you will be driven back to your respective hotels.

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### **Day 3 : Full Day sightseeing tour in Kathmandu which includes: Pashupatinath, Boudhanath and Bhaktapur. In evening drive to Nagarkot for overnight stay.**

After breakfast, proceed for the full day sightseeing tour of the three World Heritage Sites recognized by the UNESCO i.e. Pashupatinath Temple, Boudhanath Stupa and Bhaktapur Durbar Square. Explore the ancient and medieval Hindu Temples, Buddhist Stupas and monasteries, palaces, monuments and shrines. Pashupatinath Temple is the holiest Hindu Temple of Nepal, situated on the bank of Sacred Bagmati River-one of the tributaries of the Ganges, the Boudhanath Stupa – the largest of this type and a must visit place in a life time for the Buddhists. Bhaktapur is an ancient Newari city located in the east corner of Kathmandu. This city is rich in culture, temples, and wood, metal and stone artworks. While visiting this place, you can also taste the "Ju Ju Dhau" which means "Kings Curd" which is one of the famous curd in entire country. It is experienced by the curd makers that the taste of curd prepared in this location cannot be found elsewhere all over Nepal. You will explore Nyatapola Temple, Bhairav Nath Temple, Dattatraya Temple and Layaku (Durbar Square) during your sightseeing in Bhaktapur. After Bhaktapur sightseeing, you will be driven to Nagarkot for your overnight stay.

### **Day 4 : Early morning, sunrise view and transfer to airport for flight to Kolkata.**

Wake up early today if you want to see the sunrise view from the hill top of Nagarkot. The sunrise shining slowly from the peak of Mountains is worth watching. After sunrise view, have your breakfast at hotel and drive to airport to catch up a flight to Kolkata. After baggage and custom clearance, you will be transferred to your respective hotel by one of the representative of Nature Trail Travel & Tours, Trekking & Expeditions. At evening, you can take a pleasant walk around Kolkata town. Kolkata is the capital of West Bengal and the second largest city in India (after Mumbai). Kolkata is the main business, commercial and financial hub of eastern India. Kolkata witnessed an economic decline from the late sixties till the late nineties. Kolkata is a multicultural, cosmopolitan city. Apart from the diversity of India, the cultures represented are that of the Europeans (Including Germans, Armenians, and others), and other Asians (Including Chinese, Sinhalese, and Tibetans). Kolkata is reasonably safe, and in general the people are more friendly and helpful than in many of India's other large cities.

### **Day 5 : Kolkata Sightseeing. At evening, ride train to Siliguri**

The day is free to explore Kolkata, before taking an overnight sleeper train from Kolkata to Siliguri. During your free time, you can perhaps discover the world's largest tree (The Great Banyan Tree) at the A. J. C. Bose Botanic Gardens, the place where tea was first cultivated in India. Explore the streets of the BBD Bagh, the heart of Kolkata and one of the best areas of British colonial architecture in the world. Possibly visit and support the Usthi Foundation's school and farm for impoverished children in Kolkata, and see the amazing work they do (if available). Visit the Eden Garden, the most famous and iconic cricket stadium in India. See the famous Howrah Bridge over the Hooghly River, thought to be the busiest bridge in the world with 150,000 pedestrians and 100,000 vehicles crossing every day. Discover the incredible array of art and historical artefacts on display at the Indian Museum in Kolkata, the largest and oldest museum in India. Explore the vast fields and parks of the Maidan (the 'lungs of Kolkata') and observe daily life away from the chaos of the city. See the huge white marble Victoria Memorial, built in the early 20th century by the British Viceroy of India and a grandiose reminder of Kolkata's colonial past. Visit the Mother Teresa of Calcutta Centre, a museum illustrating the life and work of the famous and controversial missionary. You can also visit the museum which is the largest and oldest museum of India and is located near Esplanade. If time permits, visit the largest temple of Kolkata which is It's located on Ashutosh Chowdhury Avenue (Old Ballygunge Road) in Ballygunge. There are plenty of things to see and do. Thus, you can contact Nature Trails Travel & Tours, Trekking & Expedition's if you would like help in booking pre-tour accommodation in Kolkata.

### **Day 6 : Arrival at Siliguri and drive to Darjeeling – 2 hrs. drive**

Early morning, our train stops at the Siliguri Station. From here, we take a four wheel drive along the narrow but steep path to reach Darjeeling. We pass through the winding roads and drive for about two hours in order to reach Darjeeling. Darjeeling is situated on a high ridge, linked by a series of steps and winding lanes at an elevation of 6,700 feet above sea level. Surrounded by rice and tea terraces, Darjeeling is a town that is really more a collection of villages. The resultant distinctive Darjeeling tea is internationally recognized and ranks among the most popular of the black teas. Views are amazing from here, so take a walk and get your bearings of the area. One can observe the spectacular views of Kangchenjunga, the world's third-highest mountain, and the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The cool climate and slow pace of life here are an abrupt contrast to the rest of India. It's a pleasant place to explore, with monasteries and tea plantations to visit and Tibetan craft shops and markets to browse through.

### **Day 7 : Full day sightseeing tour in Darjeeling**

Early in the morning, drive to Tiger Hill to see the spectacular sunrise view. You can also see the incredible view of Mount Kanchenjunga, the third highest mountain in the World. Take a scenic ride on the famous Darjeeling Himalayan Railway up to Ghoom, the highest train station in India. The views are fantastic from here, looking down onto the rivers below with Mount Kanchenjunga in the background – and on a clear day even Mount Everest can be seen in the distance. Perhaps visit the Tibetan Refugee Self Help Centre near Darjeeling, a home, hospital, and craft center for Tibetans who have fled persecution and taken sanctuary in India. You can also visit the huge and colorful Dali Monastery near Darjeeling, the residence of the supreme head of the Kagyupa sect of Buddhism. Visit the Japanese Peace Pagoda in Darjeeling, one of a series of stupas built worldwide to promote world peace and non-violence. Explore the Happy Valley Tea Estate, the oldest tea plantations in Darjeeling, and learn all about the tea industry for which the area is famous. See the museum at the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, containing many exhibits from mountaineering history and the grave of Tenzing Norgay, one of the first men to summit Mount Everest.

### **Day 8 : Drive Darjeeling to Siliguri**

Retrace your steps back to Siliguri today. If you want, you can explore the nearby tourist spots. Perhaps visit Triratna Monastery, 15 – 20 minutes from Siliguri a monastery in the Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. Visit Dudhia, a picturesque tourist spot. Explore Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary, a wildlife sanctuary at the foothills of the Himalayas. One can hire a vehicle and enter the sanctuary at a minimal entry fee. Different types of wild animals are found here. However it is famous for its wild elephants and peacocks. However, the sanctuary is closed during monsoon seasons, i.e. 15th July to 15th September. Visit North Bengal Wild Animals Park, which contains, a leopard, tiger, rhino, deer and Himalayan black bear safari, bird aviaries, small cats compound, crocodile ponds and a botanical trail. Possibly visit Sed-Gyued Institute of Buddhist Studies, Salugara, inaugurated by the Dalai Lama in 1999; this institute is in the Gelepu tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. The compound includes a 100-foot Tashi Gomang Stupa.

### **Day 9 : Drive Siliguri to Phuntsholing – approx. 6 hrs. drive**

The Bhutan Government buses depart for Phuntsholing at 7:30 am and 1:30 pm every day from the bus station. There are more frequent Indian buses to the border town of Jaigaon. From this border you'll exit India and enter Bhutan kingdom. There you will be welcomed by our Bhutanese guide. If you haven't got the Visa then our leader will collect your entire passport to get the visa process underway, in order to save time in the morning. In the evening, if you are not really tired then you can explore the beautiful town.

### **Day 10 : Drive Phuntsholing to Paro (2,250m / 7,382ft), 180km – approx. 6/7 hrs. drive**

This morning, enjoy a leisurely breakfast while the visa process is underway. Once officially inside Bhutan, drive from the warmer climates of Phuntsholing up to dragon kingdom Paro, nestled in the foothills of the Himalayas. Paro is a beautiful valley and is home to many of Bhutan's oldest monasteries and temples, and the country's only international airport. Today's driving time will take around six to seven hours. Before dinner, at the hotel there will be an orientation on Bhutanese etiquette by your guide.

### **Day 11 : Sightseeing tour around Paro and drive to Thimphu (2,320m/7,610ft) – 2 hrs. drive**

After breakfast, 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. Dzong's are large monasteries and district administrative centers, which were once strategic forts. 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. On a clear day we can see Mount Chomolhari, Bhutan's second-highest mountain, at 7,314 meters.

## **Day 12 : Full day sightseeing tour in Thimphu**

After appetizing breakfast, proceed for full day sightseeing tour in Thimphu. Initially, we start our sightseeing tour with a visit to National Memorial Chorten. This temple was first initiated by the Third King 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. If you want to see Takin, the national animal of Bhutan then you can proceed onto mini-zoo. 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. After sightseeing of these sites, if you still have some time left then you can visit to 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 chilies, cheese and a variety of greens. (This market is open only from Friday-Sunday).

## **Day 13 : Drive Thimphu to Punakha (1,250m/4,100 ft.), Wang due via Dochu la, 76 km – approx. 2/3 hrs. drive**

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. It 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 summer and pleasant winter. 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. If time permits, the journey can be broken with a visit to Tamchhu Lhakhang built by Than tong Gyalpo, the so-called Iron Bridge Builder. You can continue down the winding pass to the town of Wang due Phodrang.

### **Day 14 : Drive Punakha to Bumthang – approx. 8/9 hrs. drive**

On the following day, we drive to Trongsa. Trongsa is the gateway to central Bhutan at 2,180 metres. Set amid spectacular scenery, Trongsa Dzong, the ancestral home of Bhutan's royal family, commands the eye from miles away. You'll also be able to visit Ta Dzong, which is the newly opened museum in the watchtower. Dedicated to the Wangchuk dynasty, it tells the stories of the Dzong and the valley, featuring personal belongings of the kings and queens of Bhutan. Continue through some of Bhutan's most idyllic landscapes to Bumthang, an area of high valleys that sits between 2,580 – 3,100 metres. On arrival at Bumthang, you will stay in a local farmhouse where you'll experience a genuine slice of Bhutanese life and hospitality. The facilities here are quite basic, but the accommodation is exactly how a typical Bhutanese family live; and the food are in no way adapted for tourists.

### **Day 15 : Sightseeing tour in Bumthang**

Sightseeing tour in the spiritual heartland of Bhutan includes many legendary monasteries, temples and palaces. Take a beautiful 6-hour hike into the hills above Bumthang to visit the peaceful and remote Padtshaling Monastery. Visit the incredible Trongsa Dzong, the largest Buddhist fortress in Bhutan set against the stunning backdrop of the Black Mountains. You can also visit sacred sites including Jamba Lhakhang, Kurjey Lhakhang and Tamshing Lhakhang, followed by a visit to Membar Tsho (Burning Lake), one of Bhutan's most important pilgrimage sites. You can also visit Bhutan's largest Dzong, Jakar, with its picturesque location overlooking the Chokhor Valley.

### **Day 16 : Drive Bumthang to Gangtey – approx. 6 hrs. drive**

Drive for about six hours to reach Gangtey. Gangtey is situated at the height of 2,900 metres above sea level. On arrival, enjoy the immense views of the remote Phobjikha Valley and the Black Mountains. Move onto visit Gangtey Gumpa (one of Bhutan's oldest and recently renovated monasteries) and explore the valley where the villagers continue to live a traditional Bhutanese rural lifestyle. This is the site where black-necked cranes visit in their hundreds in November of each year, after spending the summer in Tibet. Explore the colorful, recently-restored Gangtey Gumpa, a monastic college famous for its annual festival to welcome the migration of black-necked cranes.

### **Day 17 : Drive Gangtey to Paro – approx. 4/5 hrs. drive**

Hike up to the hilltop village of Rinchengang and learn about its interesting history. Rinchengang is picturesquely situated on a steep ridge near Wangdi and then drive to Paro. Upon arrival at Paro, you can visit impressive Paro Dzong, one of the finest examples of Bhutanese architecture.

### **Day 18 : Hike to Taktsang monastery (3180 m) drive to Thimphu.**

On the eighteenth day of your tour in Bhutan, you will have a short hike up to Taktsang monastery. Taktsang is a prominent sacred Buddhist site and temple complex perched on the edge of upper Paro



Valley. It is also known as the Tiger's Nest. This magical monastery clings to a vertical granite cliff 300 meter above the valley. Legend has it that the great Guru Padmasambhava flew to this spot on back of a tigress and meditated in a cave during the 8th century. When the Guru finished his meditation, he instructed that the monastery to be built. The temple was built around the cave and is a hallowed shrine for Bhutanese pilgrims. The spectacular view along the way and the historical sites draw many tourists to this imposing monastery. There are also a number of temples scattered along the route. Later we'll turn to the Paro Dzong, a large Buddhist monastery and fortress, which is considered the best example of Bhutanese architecture. Now it also houses the district Monastic Body and government administrative offices. On the hill above the Dzong stands an ancient watchtower called Ta Dzong, which is the National Museum of Bhutan. Visit Ta Dzong Museum housing many religious relics, works of art and handicrafts offering a great orientation into Bhutan's historical, cultural, and religious past. This Dzong was converted into the National Museum in 1968. The museum boasts antique thangkhas, textiles, weapons and armor, household objects and rich assortment of natural and historic artifacts. Here you can also learn about Bhutan's history. After this hike and a short sightseeing tour, we drive to Thimphu following the Pachu River. Once a rustic village sitting in a broad, fertile river valley, Thimphu is today the nation's bustling capital. We will stay overnight at Thimphu.

## Day 19 : Departure

Ending our trip, you will be transferred to the airport for your flight back to home. During the flight you will enjoy breathtaking views of the Himalayan peaks that include sacred Bhutanese mountains such as Jomolhari and Jitchu Drake.

## Inclusions

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### What is included?

One hour mountain flight from Kathmandu, Nepal.

Accommodation twin sharing bed basis of full board Meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinner) in Bhutan.

Accommodation twin sharing bed basis on B/B Plan in Nepal and India. ( Bed and Breakfast)

International grounded transportation (Kathmandu - India - Bhutan ).

All the grounded transportation from Nepal , India and Bhutan during the tour.

English-speaking, government-licensed local guide for sightseeing in Nepal and Bhutan.

Entry and permit fees during a Sightseeing tour

India and Bhutan visa fee and special permit from Nepal to Bhutan tour.

### What isn't included?

Any Lunch and dinner in Nepal.

Entry Visa fees - at present \$25 for 15 day, US\$ 40 for 30 day, and US\$ 100 for three month visa on entry into Nepal.

Travel and medical insurance.

Personal expenses (laundry, bar bills, snacks, phone calls, internet.)

Tips for guide and driver (tipping is expected)

Loss, theft or damage to baggage and personal effects. (We strongly advise you to get personal travel insurance.)

## **Complimentary**