

Bhutan Grand Tour

12 Day Tour to Thimphu, Punakha, Trongsa, Bumthang, Gangtey & Paro



Day 1 Arrival Thimphu

Meal: D

The flight to Paro is one of the most spectacular in entire Himalayas. Upon arrival, you will be met by our representative and drive to Thimphu, the capital town of Bhutan with en-route stop at Chuzom, the confluence of Thimphu and Paro rivers. On arrival Thimphu check into the hotel. Evening an exploratory walk around Thimphu city centre. Overnight at the hotel in Thimphu.

Day 2 Day in Thimphu

Meal: B/L/D

After breakfast, drive to visit Memorial Chorten. Afterwards visit to Buddha Point (Kuensel Phodrang). It holds one of the largest Buddha's statue in the country & Changangkha Lhakhang, built in 12th century by Lama Phajo Drukgom Shigpo. Later drive to upper Motithang in Thimphu to visit Takin Preserve. The Takin is the national animal of Bhutan, and looks like a cross between a cow and a goat. Post lunch, sightseeing in Thimphu valley including visit to the following : the National Library, the Institute for Zorig Chusum (commonly known as the Painting School), Textile Museum, Folk Heritage Museum & Trashichhoedzong, or 'the fortress of the glorious religion'.

Evening at leisure in Thimphu city centre. Also explore the Local Crafts Bazaar, to browse through example of Bhutan's fine traditional arts. Overnight at the hotel in Thimphu.

Day 3 Drive Thimphu – Punakha & Wangdue (approx 3 hours drive) Meal: B/L/D

After breakfast, drive up to Dochu-la pass stopping briefly here to take in the view and admire the chorten, mani wall, and prayer flags. Punakha was former capital of Bhutan and seat of the Government until 1955 when the capital was moved to Thimphu. On arrival check into the hotel. Afternoon visit Punakha Dzong or 'Palace of Great Happiness or Bliss, built at the junction of the Phochu and Mochu

rivers in 1637 by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal. Your guide will illuminate your understanding of this intricate culture that is exotic, though long established here. After exploring Punakha city centre, embark on a short walking excursion to Chimi Lhakhang. Evening drive pass Wangdue town and its market. Overnight at the hotel in Punakha & Wangdue.

Day 4 Day in Punakha & Wangdue Meal: B/L/D

A beautiful hike takes one to the regal Khamsum Yuelley Namgel Chorten (approx 2 hours round trip walk). After lunch, visit Sangchhen Dorji Lhuendrup Lhakhang (Nunnery). Perched on a ridge amid pine trees and overlooking valleys of Punakha and Wangdu gleams Sangchhen Dorji Lhuendrup temple. Then drive on to Talo village. The beautiful farm houses of the village have its own flower gardens and on the hill slope corns and sweet peas are grown in abundance. Also visit Talo Sangnacholing, built on a plateau and has majestic view of surrounding villages. Overnight at the hotel in Punakha & Wangdue.

Day 5 Drive Punakha & Wangdue – Trongsa Meal: B/L/D

We will drive to Trongsa. It is 128 kilometers and 5 hours drive from Wangdue. The road will climb all the way to the Pele-la pass. On the way we will come across Yak herders camps and encounter Yaks especially during winter. We will see high Himalayan villages like Rukubji and Chendebji. The road then descends through Rukubji village further down to Chendebji village. Here you will see the 18th century Nepalese style stupa built by saint Shida. The drive to Trongsa from here is about an hour and half with great views of the historical Dzong and valley. Overnight at the hotel in Trongsa.

Day 6 Drive Trongsa – Bumthang Meal: B/L/D

In the morning we drive to Kuenga Rabten, which was the winter Palace for our beloved 2nd King Jigme Wangchuk. It is 23 kilometers from Trongsa and it takes about 2 hours by car. We visit Trongsa Dzong, built at different periods on a spur overlooking the Mangdu-Chu River and it is one of the longest & most impressive Dzongs in Bhutan along with Trashi Chhodzong in Thimphu. The evening drive to Bumthang will climb all the way to the Yotong la pass 3400m. It will be the highest pass on your trip to Bhutan. After the pass we will go down through the Chhumey valley before we reach Jakar. Overnight at the hotel in Bumthang.

Day 7 Day in Bumthang Meal: B/L/D

After breakfast make a hike to Thangbi Mani countryside with a visit to an old monastery with Gomchens & the local community school. After lunch we visit Jambay Lhakhang, Kurjey Lhakhang, Tamshing Lhakhang, Guru Lhakhang and the Swiss Cheese Processing Unit. Here they produce cheese, apple juice and herbal brandies etc. Visit Jakar Dzong and more if time permits. Overnight at the hotel in Bumthang.

Day 8 Excursion to URA Valley Meal: B/L/D

Excursion to the Ura valley is (48Km) that takes us across blue pine forests & wonderful views of the Choskar & Chhumey valleys. Ura is one of the most beautiful and interesting villages in Bumthang. The landscape of the Ura valley is different to others, with round sweeping slopes, rich pasture and wide fields. At the bottom you will see the large and unusual village with its cluster of big houses united by paved alleys of stone, a rare sight in Bhutan. The big community monastery dominates the village. Overnight at the hotel in Bumthang.

Day 9 Drive Bumthang – Gangtey Meal: B/L/D

Gangtey Goemba was built on a small hillock surrounded by blue pine trees which was found by the descendant of Pema Lingpa, the great Bhutanese saint from Bumthang in the 16th century. At the end of 17th century it was enlarged once and at present it is headed by the 9th reincarnation called Gangtey

Trulku. Further down you will reach the Phobjikha valley, which is reserved for the migration of the black Neck Crane; the fields and marshes of this undisturbed valley are alive with the sight of these rare cranes. Overnight at the hotel in Gantey.

Day 10 Drive Gangtey –Thimphu – Paro

Meal: B/L/D

An early breakfast then drive to Thimphu. En route visit Simtokha Dzong, the oldest fortress of the country constructed by Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel in 1629. Continue drive to Paro. Overnight at the hotel in Paro.

Day 11 Day in Paro

Meal: B/L/D

After breakfast excursion to Taktshang Monastery (approx. 5 hours round trip walk). It is one of the most famous of Bhutan's monasteries, perched on the side of a cliff 900m above the Paro valley floor. The hike to the monastery makes a splendid half day excursion. Later, proceed to visit Ta Dzong, originally built as Watchtower, which now houses National Museum. Then walk down the trail to visit Rinpung Dzong, meaning ("fortress of the heap of jewels"), which has a long and fascinating history. Evening take a stroll around interesting city centre of Paro.

Day 12 Paro Departure

Meal: B

Free time until in time transferred to the airport for your flight exit.

Travel Period	Group Size		Single Supplement
	2 people	3-7 people	
Rest of the year	\$4580	\$3650	\$820
Mar, Apr, Sep, Oct	\$4980	\$3750	\$890

Prices above is per person

Inclusions:

Twin share at 4* hotel total 6 nights; fully inclusive tour with English speaking guide, all transfers, entrance fees and meals (breakfast and dinner at hotel; lunch at local restaurant) as per itinerary, Bhutan visa fee; 2 bottles of water every day.

Exclusions:

Any air tickets; personal expenses, insurance, tipping etc.

Remarks: A minimum of 2 participants requested for guaranteed departure.

4* hotel for your references:

Thimphu: Ariya/ Osel/ Namgay Heritage/ Migmar

Punakha: Drubchhu/ Zhingkhram/ Khuru Resort

Trongsa: Tendral / Yangkhil Resort

Bumthang: Jakar Village lodge

Gangtey: Odyana/ Dewachen

Paro: Tashi Namgay/ Drukchen