



BHUTAN & BEYOND

## Half Day (TBT) Hikes in Western Bhutan

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### Hiking Information:

- Your guide will hike with you and point out special sights.
- Ideally carry a light day pack for water, snacks, sunscreen (essential), lightweight jacket & camera/phone etc.
- Consider carrying a small medical kit and any essential medications.
- Quality walking shoes/lightweight hiking boots recommended; heavy trekking boots are not essential.
- Walking poles can be supplied on advance application.

### Hiking Fitness Ratings in Bhutan:

Due the altitude in Bhutan it does impact the fitness level required when hiking & we do recommend you allow a 48-hour acclimatization period, after arrival into Bhutan before undertaking moderate or challenging rated hikes.

- Easy - Basic level of fitness is required.
- Moderate - A very good level of fitness is required
- Challenging - A very **HIGH** level of fitness is required.

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- Haa Valley (alt 2801m) to Paro Valley (alt 2380m) hike.

*Hike distance 17kms, hiking time 8 hours, max alt 3932m. Moderate rated hike.*

The TBT follows the beautiful Haa river as it gently ascends out of the Katsho valley, traversing yak pastures before heading into forests of pine and rhododendron. En-route look out for Bjungneydra Taktsang (monastery), hanging on a cliff-edge. This is also known as “The Mini Taktsang”. You can also witness the sky burial site of Kungkarpo. The trail ascends until it reaches Kale la (la means pass) at 3932m. At Kale la, weather permitting, experience stunning views of the eastern Himalaya. On a clear day you will view Mount Chomolhari (7314m), Mt Jichu Drake (6794m) and Mt Tsherimgang (6789m).

From Kale la, the TBT descends through rhododendron and bamboo forest into the Paro Valley. The last few kilometres will be on tracks which meander through traditional Bhutanese farming villages.

The hike ends near Kyichu Lhakhang where you will reunite with your vehicle & driver for your transfer to your overnight accommodation.

### Overnight Bhutanese Style 3\* Hotel

*Breakfast & dinner at your hotel and picnic lunch on hiking trail.*



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## Half Day (TBT) Hikes in Western Bhutan

- Lamgong (alt 2380m) to Damchengang (alt 2826m).

*Hike, distance 16 kms, hiking time 6-7 hours, max alt 2826m. Moderate rated hike.*

This hike is in the Paro Valley region and involves a short drive to/from the start/end points.

The TBT slowly ascends from Lamgong village as it traverses the rice paddies of the Paro valley, before tracking around the northern ridge and descending into the traditional village of Dopshari.

After lunch, re-join the TBT for the ascent up to Damchengang village in Upper Dopshari. Weather permitting, witness stunning views out over the Paro valley. Team up with your vehicle and driver and transfer to your overnight accommodation.

### Overnight Bhutanese Style 3\* Hotel

*Breakfast & dinner at your hotel & picnic lunch on the trail or at a local farmhouse.*

- Buddha Dordenma, Thimphu (alt 2659m) to Dochu La (alt 3114m) hike.

*Hike distance 26.2 kms, hike time 9 hours, max alt 3174m. Challenging rated hike.*

After breakfast at your hotel, transfer to Buddha Dordenma (aka The Golden Buddha) to join the TBT. Descend into the Debsi valley and cross the Thimphu chu (river) on the road bridge. Continue hiking through the town of Babesa until you reach Semtokha Dzong (fortress). Semtokha Dzong built in 1629 is the oldest fortress of its kind that once guarded the Thimphu valley, and which today is a monastery.

From Semtokha, the TBT ascends through market gardens and orchards to the Tibetan (refugee) village of Hongtsho. Here the TBT enters a combination of dense forest and meadows. This is a good area to stop for a picnic lunch. Continue ascending on the TBT until you reach Dochu la (pass) at 3,114m. Mountain passes are sacred places in Bhutan. Local Bhutanese hang colourful prayer flags as a sign of respect to the Gods.

At Dochu la visit the Druk Wangyal Lhakhang (temple), built in honour of His Majesty the Fourth King Gyalpo Jigme Singye Wangchuck. Also wander through the Druk Wangyal Chorten to view the 108 Stupas, commissioned by a former Queen as a memorial to those who lost their lives during a low intensity conflict in late 2002 when Bhutan evicted Indian rebels camped in the jungle on the Bhutan – Indian border. On a clear day you will witness a breathtaking view of the eastern Himalaya.

### Overnight Bhutanese Style 3\* Hotel.

*Breakfast & dinner at your hotel & picnic lunch on hiking trail.*



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## Half & Day (TBT) Hikes in Western Bhutan

- Dochu La (alt 3114m) to Thinleygang (alt 1560m)

*Hike distance 10.5 kms, hiking time 5 hours, max alt 3114m. Easy rated hike.*

This hike fits perfectly when travelling from the capital Thimphu eastwards to the Punakha valley. Dochu la is the pass between Thimphu & Punakha.

From Dochu la, descend into the adjacent valley and join a section of the TBT known as the 'Divine Madman Trail'. You are now following in the footsteps of the Divine Madman himself, Drukpa Kuenley, when he first came to Bhutan from Tibet in the 16th century to fulfill his destiny of suppressing evil energies.

Reaching Thinleygang, visit the Thinleygang Lhakhang (temple), which is where the central monastic body bi-annually overnights on their two-day journey from their summer residence in Thimphu to their winter residence in Punakha.

Reunite with your driver & vehicle and continue by road to the Punakha valley.

### Overnight Bhutanese Style 3\* Hotel.

*Breakfast & dinner at your hotel & picnic lunch on the trail or at a local farmhouse.*

- Dochu La (alt 3114m) to Toeb Village (alt 1560m)

*Hike distance 13.5kms, hiking time 9 hours, max altitude 3114m. Moderate rated hike.*

This hike fits perfectly when travelling from the capital Thimphu eastwards to the Punakha valley. Dochu la is the pass between Thimphu & Punakha.

From Dochu la, descend down into the adjacent valley and join a section of the TBT known as the 'Divine Madman Trail'. You are now following in the footsteps of the Divine Madman himself, Drukpa Kuenley, when he first came to Bhutan from Tibet in the 16th century to fulfill his destiny of suppressing evil energies.

Reaching Thinleygang, visit the Thinleygang Lhakhang (temple), which is where the central monastic body bi-annually overnights on their two-day journey from their summer residence in Thimphu to their winter residence in Punakha.

From Thinleygang continue on the TBT further descending to Toeb village. On arrival visit the Toeb Chandana Lhakhang (temple), also known as the Chandana Lhakhang, meaning 'where the arrow landed'. Legend has it that when Drukpa Kuenley fired an arrow from Tibet to determine his path, it landed here in Toeb Chandana.



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The temple itself was built in the 15th century to ward off the evil energy of a demoness and served as the religious seat of Ngawang Chogyal.

### Overnight Home or Farmstay (basic) close to Toeb village.

*Breakfast at hotel, picnic lunch & dinner at homestay/farmstay.*

- Toeb Village (alt 1560m) to Mendegang Village (alt 1225m)

*Hike distance 13 kms, hiking time 4 hours, max altitude 1778m. Moderate rated hike.*

Farewell your Toeb homestay hosts this morning and return to the TBT. Your hike begins with an uphill section to Sew Drangsa (meaning lunch point) where you will find a clearing marked with prayer flags. This is where monks regularly stop for lunch. From here, the trail descends towards Punakha Dzong (fortress), offering spectacular views of the Punakha Valley and the Punatsangchu hydroelectric project.

On arrival at Mendegang village, team up with your driver and vehicle for your transfer by road to Punakha (20 mins).

### Overnight Bhutanese Style 3\* Hotel.

*Breakfast at farmstay, lunch at local Bhutanese restaurant & dinner at your hotel*



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