

BHUTAN & BEYOND

A Taste of Bhutan Itinerary – 6 nights

Best short duration Bhutan private tour for a rewarding experience.

- This private tour visits 3 different valleys Thimphu, Punakha & Paro & features the most important sights in Thimphu city: the splendour of the magnificent Punakha Dzong. Finally, a special pilgrimage hike to Taktsang Monastery (Tigers Nest) in Paro.
- This tour optimises valuable time to see the best sites in each valley.
- The itinerary detailed below is designed for private travellers and can be tailored to suit your exact requirements.
- All hiking is optional to get the most out of a visit to Bhutan you will need to be able to climb one steep set of stairs to gain entry to the magnificent Punakha Dzong.

Tour Itinerary Overview.

- 2 nights Thimphu – exploring, hiking & shopping.
- 2 nights Punakha valley – monastery & Dzong visits plus hiking.
- 2 nights Paro valley – Taktsang Monastery hike, sightseeing & shopping.

Why Book with Bhutan & Beyond?

- Bhutan & Beyond are Bhutan experts with 22 years' experience, service & knowledge.
- Bhutan & Beyond has access to Bhutan's very best Bhutanese guides.
- This private tour affords you time to immerse yourself in the vibrant Buddhist culture of Bhutan.
- We offer the option to choose between [HALF BOARD](#) or [FULL BOARD](#) land package.
- Competitive pricing and [luxury hotel](#) upgrade options.
- Option to substitute [3*](#) hotels for [farm home stays](#) in some valleys.
- Exceptionally well-constructed & flexible itineraries to suit your personal requirements.
- All hiking in Bhutan is optional though you must be able to climb a steep set of stairs to gain entry to the magnificent Punakha Dzong.
- Experts at combining Bhutan with [India](#) & [Nepal](#).
- ATIA (formerly ATAS) Accredited via our parent company MTA Travel.
- Access to our exclusive & celebrated travel app COMPANION.
- We provide a comprehensive pre-departure Bhutan visitor guide which is regularly updated & full support from Bhutan & Beyond.

Your Bhutan **FULL BOARD** Land Package Inclusions:

- Personal guide & driver with SUV or minibus.
- All touring & transfers throughout.
- Traditional 3-star hotels with private bathrooms.
- All meals (breakfast lunch dinner) and two 500 ml bottles of water per person daily.



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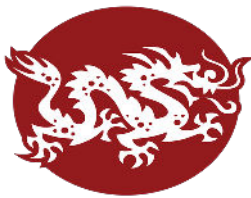


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- All sightseeing as per your itinerary.
- All monument & entrance fees.
- Government Sustainable Development Fee (SDF) & local taxes.
- Bhutan visa fees & processing.
- Bhutan & Beyond bank transfers for payments to Bhutan suppliers.
- Professionally operated by Bhutan Tourism Corp.
- Comprehensive Bhutan visitor guide & full support from Bhutan & Beyond.
- ATAS Accredited via our parent company MTA Travel
- Access to our exclusive travel app COMPANION

Your Bhutan **FULL BOARD** Land Package Excludes:

- Airfares to/from Bhutan.
- Personal bank charges incurred making payments to Bhutan & Beyond.
- Personal items incl laundry, drinks, designer coffee's telephone calls, tips etc.
- Upgrade costs for luxury hotels are additional.
- Travel Insurance - is essential when travelling to Bhutan.
- Any COVID-19 PCR or RAT tests required.

The additional exclusions when travelling on a **HALF BOARD** basis is lunch is at your own expense (please budget @US\$ 10-12 pp per day) along with **all monument and entrance fees**.

Optional Activities: Please ensure your travel insurance covers you for these activities.

- White Water Rafting – Punakha Valley. US\$250.00 for up to 5 persons.
- Archery in Paro town @ US\$7.00 pp.
- Mountain bike hire in Paro & Thimphu from US\$30 pp per ½ day.
- Cooking class at Paro farmhouse & hot stone bath US\$25.00 per person.
- Hot stone bath at Paro Farmhouse US\$18.00 per person.

Cancellation Conditions – Land Tour:

- Deposit date until 45 days prior arrival in Bhutan - Land tour deposit is refundable less B&B service fees.
- 45 days or less prior to arrival in Bhutan - No land tour refund permitted.

Please note: - These conditions cover land travel arrangements only not airfares which are subject to their own cancellation conditions.



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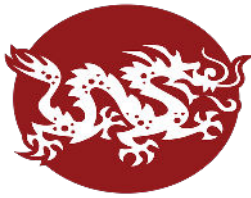


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Day 1: Paro Valley to Thimphu Valley (1 hr 30 mins drive time, altitude 2350 m)

After clearing immigration and customs you will be greeted by your BTCL guide and driver and transferred to Bhutan's capital Thimphu. Travelling through the spectacular countryside, en-route make a stop at the Tachogang Lhakhang (iron bridge). All the houses and buildings in the Kingdom are painted and constructed in traditional Bhutanese style.

On arrival into Thimphu check-in to your hotel and take lunch. Enjoy the remainder of the day to explore Thimphu, both by vehicle and on foot. Your options include visits to the National Memorial Chorten; the celebrated Royal Textile Academy (closed Sun/PH) and the Takin Preserve – home to Bhutan's most unusual national mammal.

Overnight Thimphu – [Bhutanese Style 3* Hotel](#)

Day 2:

Exploring in Thimphu.

Today we highly recommend you visit the following.

The Buddha Dordenma statue located at Kuenselphodrang (just outside the city). The statue is made of bronze and gilded in gold. It is considered the largest Buddha Shakyamuni statue in the world. There is also an excellent 3 km hike option through the adjacent Kuenselphodrang Nature Park which offers sensational valley views.

View the majestic Trashichhoe Dzong, (visits are only possible after business hours on weekdays or at the weekend) the Houses of Parliament, Royal Residences & Supreme Court building. Followed by a visit to 'Simply Bhutan' display village including a traditional Bhutanese lunch. At 'Simply Bhutan' you can experience ara tasting (local spirit); suja tasting (butter tea); try your hand at archery and enjoy a cultural performance of song & dance, plus much more.

Other recommended places to visit, depending on your preference, & in consultation with your guide are.

- Zorig Chusum – the Institute of the 13 Arts & Crafts of Bhutan (closed Sat/Sun/PH & sometimes closed to visitors at other times.)
- The National Library, which holds a vast collection of ancient Buddhist manuscripts. (closed Sat/Sun & PH)
- Hand-made paper making factory. (closed Sun & PH)
- Nado incense factory (closed Sat/Sun & PH)
- Institute of Traditional Medicine - visitors only permitted to the museum & library. (closed Sat/Sun & PH)



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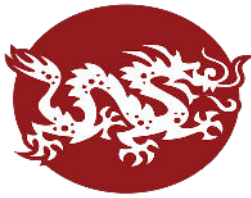


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- Visit the Thimphu Post Office to get your personalized postage stamp printed. (Mon-Fri & Sat am)
 - The daily Centenary farmer's market for fresh produce includes the sale of clothing & homewares & souvenirs (Fri-Sun).
 - Take a wander along Thimphu's main street, Norzin Lam, which offers good shopping
 - The Craft Bazaar which focuses on Bhutanese produced handicrafts
 - The Folk Heritage Museum. (closed PH)
 - The S. Bishwa art gallery is also worth a visit.
 - For those interested in quality weavings and local art visit the Gagyel Lhundrup weaving centre. Here you can interact with the weavers. (closed Sun & PH)
 - The city bars & coffee shops are also worth checking out. Your guide will advise you the best options.
 - Travel up the valley & hike to Tango Monastery which houses a university of Buddhism for monks.
 - There are other 1/2 day/ day hikes possible in the Thimphu valley & your guide will recommend suitable hike options depending on the season and your prior hiking experience.

Overnight Thimphu – Bhutanese Style 3* Hotel.

Day 3:

Thimphu to Punakha Valley. (3 hrs 30 mins, alt 1310m)

This morning you will be transferred by road eastwards to the Punakha Valley. En-route pass the Semtokha Dzong built in 1629 the oldest fortress of its kind that guarded the Thimphu valley, which today is a monastery. Continue ascending to Dochu La (pass) to view 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.

On arrival into the Punakha valley stop and visit Chimi Lhakhang, a monastery built by Lama Drukpa Kuenley (also known as the Divine Madman or Mad Monk) who has a very colourful history, and which is an, easy 20 minute walk across paddy fields. It is believed that childless women who visit the temple will conceive after receiving a “wang” (blessing) from the resident monk.

After lunch enjoy an orientation tour of the valley including the Sangchen Dorji Lhuendrup Lhakhang & Nunnery and, time permitting, consider a visit to the small very traditional village of Talo where you can wander through the serene grounds of the monastery with its beautiful gardens.

Overnight Punakha Valley – [Bhutanese Style 3* Hotel.](#)



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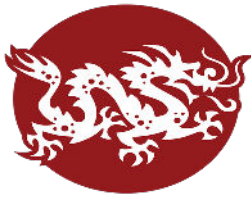


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Day 4:

Exploring & hiking in Punakha today.

This morning enjoy a walk over the Punakha suspension bridge which offers excellent valley & river views, followed by a visit to the dramatic Punakha Dzong, which formerly served as the seat of government and is still the winter residence of the Dratsheng (Central Monk Body). This is Bhutan's most spectacular Dzong and an excellent example of how a medieval fortress and a centre of both monastic and administrative functions, has adapted and evolved for modern day use.

This afternoon we especially recommend you travel northwards up the valley and take a fascinating hike through fields of vegetables and tiny hamlets to Khamsum Yulley Namgyel Chorten. This Chorten holds very special significance being consecrated in 1999 and dedicated to the protection of the former Crown Prince – today's current King, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck.

Alternatively take the afternoon at leisure and don't forget to visit Kaja Throm, the daily produce market. If of interest white-water rafting is available in this valley at extra cost. Your guide will advise if the conditions are suitable. Please ensure your travel insurance covers this activity first!!

Overnight Punakha Valley – Bhutanese Style 3* Hotel.

Day 5:

Punakha Valley to Paro Valley. (4 + hrs drive time, alt 2250m)

Depart Punakha early morning for your transfer westwards to the Paro Valley, once again traversing Dochu La, and arriving in Paro town in time for a late lunch.

This afternoon enjoy an orientation tour of the major features in Paro town including Paro Dzong with its cantilever bridge and the National Museum, to view the fine collection of ancient Thangkha paintings, textiles, weapons and other artefacts, before a visit to the CSI daily market which offers locally produced goods from cottage and small industries in Bhutan. Finally take a wander along the main streets which offer good shopping for jewellery and handicrafts.

Overnight Paro Valley – [Bhutanese Style 3* Hotel](#).



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Day 6:

Hiking Pilgrimage & Exploring in the Paro Valley.

Early this morning take a pilgrimage hike to the very revered Taktsang Monastery (aka as Tigers Nest) is one of the most scared and revered monasteries in the Kingdom and all Bhutanese Buddhists desire to make a pilgrimage visit to Taktsang at least once in their lives. Each step taken towards the monastery gains merit points towards their future.

Choose between a 1.5 to 2 hour round trip hike to the monastery viewpoint or a longer 5 hour and more strenuous hike into the Monastery itself. Tigers Nest clings impossibly to a cliff of rock at over 800 metres above the valley floor and where Guru Rinpoche flew on the back of a tigress to subdue the local demons followed by 3 months meditation in a cave still visible in the monastery. In 1998 the monastery was seriously damaged by fire and has since been painstakingly reconstructed to its original condition and consecrated by the 4th King in 2005.

Returning from the hiking trail, continue down the valley to view the recently restored Drugyel Dzong (14km from Paro). This is the historical site of the Fort of Drukpa Victory, from which the Bhutanese used to repel the Tibetan invaders again and again. Followed by a visit to Kyichu Lhakhang – one of Bhutan’s oldest and most beautiful temples boasting an orange tree that perpetually bears fruit.

Overnight Paro Valley – Bhutanese Style 3* Hotel.

Day 7:

Day of departure.

Early morning departure from your hotel to Paro airport for your onward flight.

END OF TOUR



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