

Day 1: Arrive at Paro-Thimphu

You will board on the Druk or Bhutan airline, the only two airlines that fly into Bhutan. During the flight, you can see breath taking views of Mountain Everest, Klanchanjunga, and most of the high Himalayan Mountains in Nepal and Bhutan. Upon reaching the airport, you will go through the customs. Upon your arrival, you will meet your guide and then go to the hotel. We will have lunch in town at a local restaurant. After lunch, we will visit the Rimpung Dzong, the 17th century fortress, which now houses the religious community and is also a small part of the office of the governor (Dzongda) and the district court.

The Dzong was damaged by an earthquake in 1897 and a massive fire in 1905. We will then drive onward to the capital city of Thimphu. We will have time to stroll through the city and enjoy our overnight lodging at the hotel in Thimphu.

Accommodation: Hotel

Activity: 2 hours drive

Transportation: Private van transfer

Meals: Lunch, Dinner

Day 2: Thimphu-Punakha

We will visit the national library with manuscripts dating back to the 13th century. The library contains manuscripts of Buddha's teaching. Visit the traditional medicine hospital, where they practice natural healing with plants, minerals, and acupuncture. Visit the painting school where young children learn the 13 national crafts like, painting, woodcraft, slate carving, weaving, embroidery, metalwork, and sculpture. After lunch, we drive to Punakha (3 hours), over the Dochula pass, about 3000mtrs. On a clear day, you can view eastern parts of the Himalayas ranges, including Ganger Phensum (7600mts), one of the highest in Bhutan and the only one that has never been climbed in the Himalayan range.

Accommodation: Hotel

Activity: 3-hour drive and sightseeing

Transportation: Private van transfer

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 3: Punakha to Bumthang.

Today we have a long drive (8-9 hours). But it's a very scenic drive, where you

pass through many villages, as high as 3550 mts—views of High snowcapped mountains, maybe some wildlife, etc. Visit Tongsa dzong, one of the biggest Dzong; the three kings ruled the country from this dzong until 1955. We can also visit the Ta-dzong Museum.

Accommodation: Hotel

Activity: Drive 8-9 hours.

Transportation: Private van transfer

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 4: Sightseeing in Bumthang

Today we take beautiful sightseeing in Bumthang Valley. The first valley that was converted to Buddhism in Bhutan. So, we will visit a few temples and monasteries. Bumthang is a stunning valley with a broad valley and low hills full of blue [pines. Because of this valley, few tourists compare the country to Switzerland. A few Swiss are married to the Bumthabs and have businesses like Swiss farms selling Swiss cheese. They also bred Swiss cattle.

Accommodation: Hotel

Activity: Sightseeing

Transportation: Private van transfer

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5: Bumthang to Punakha Via Gangtey Gompa.

Today is another long day drive, the same one you already have been. But we drive for another hour to visit Gangtey Valley—where the endangered, black-necked Crane's migrant from the Tibet plateau in winter.

Accommodation: Hotel

Activity: 8–9-hour drive

Transportation: Private van transfer

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 6: Punakaha to Thimphu

Today we drive back to Thimphu over the Dochula and spend time in Thimphu visiting a few places that we missed at the last visit. We will drive back to Paro overnight.

Accommodation: Hotel

Activity: 2–3-hour drive

Transportation: Private van transfer

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7: Sightseeing in Thimphu

Today we spend our day in the Capital city of Bhutan. Thimphu sightseeing includes visiting the Arts and Crafts School, Traditional hospital, Changangkha Temple, Traditional handmade paper factory, Memorial Stupa, Buddha Statue, and the tour of Thimphu city.

Accommodation: Hotel

Activity: Sightseeing

Transportation: Private van transfer

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 8: Thimphu to Paro.

This morning we will drive to Paro and start hiking to Taktsang Monastery. Taktsang (tiger nest), a monastery, was built in the late 17th century over the cave that Guru Rinpoche used to meditate and converted the valley into Buddhism in the 8th century. This place is built on a high-hanging cliff that drops about 1000 meters. People who come and live in this monastery mainly come for retreat or day-to-day offering prayers and worship. It is one of the most religious pilgrim sites in Buddhist history.

We have lunch at the restaurant at the Taktsang viewpoint and drive to Drugyel Dzong ruin in the afternoon. A massive fire has destroyed another Dzong, and now in ruins. In the 1914 national geographic magazine, Drugyel Dzong was shown in glory. This was the first time Bhutan spread in the Western news, which probably gave rise to the idea of building the University of Taxes, El Paso, in the style of a Dzong. If we have time, we can stop to see the Guru Temple, which was built by Guru Khentse, who was one of the highest teachers in Buddhism. We will also visit the 7th-century temple, Kichu. One of the oldest temples was built here before Buddhism's introduction in Bhutan.

Accommodation: Hotel

Activity: 2-hour drive and four hours hike

Transportation: Private van transfer

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 9: Depart from Paro.

We will escort you from your hotel to the airport for completion of your once in lifetime journey to Himalaya and depart on homeward-bound flights. Or extend your explorations by combining this trip with another SMA adventure in Asia! You can add Nepal or see more of Bhutan.