



## IMMERSING IN BHUTAN – 7 DAYS

### Overview

Isolated from the outside influence for many centuries, Bhutan opened its doors to modern socio-economic development in the early 1960's. Today, Bhutan has entered the 21<sup>st</sup> century as a unique nation known and has become a model for sustainable development by blending its unique traditions and culture with the forces of modernization. This incentive program includes activities feasible within a span of a week. It offers an opportunity to bond with each other in adventure activities such as short-day hikes as well as visit cultural and spiritual monasteries and museums. Various meetings and conferences can be organized here amidst nature.

### Trip Facts:

Destination: Bhutan  
Theme: MICE  
Activity: Tour  
Difficulty: N/A  
Max Altitude: 3,000 m/ 9,842 ft  
Best Season: September – April

### Highlights:

- Explore Bhutan's architecture within its fortresses & palaces.
- Hike to the famous "Tiger's Nest Monastery", perched on the side of a vertical cliff at 3000 meters.
- Visit Dochula Pass for a breathtaking sight of 108 chortens (shrines) and fluttering prayer flags.



### Itinerary at glance:

Day	Program	Accommodation
1	Arrive in Paro and drive to Thimphu	Hotel
2	In Thimphu	Hotel
3	Drive to Punakha	Hotel
4	Hike to Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten	Hotel
5	Drive back to Paro	Hotel
6	Hike to Taktsang Monastery	Hotel
7	Final Departure	

### Detailed Itinerary:

#### Day 1: Arrive in Paro and drive to Thimphu

Distance: 53kms/ 32 miles

Drive Time: 1 hour approx.

Altitude: 2,250 m / 7,382 ft.

On arrival at the Paro International Airport, our representative will receive and escort you to the hotel in Thimphu, the capital city of Bhutan. The drive takes you through the winding road with lots of beautiful hamlets. Visit Simtokha Dzong on the way; later visit Tashichho Dzong in Thimphu.

According to a legend, **Simtokha Dzong** was constructed to subdue an evil spirit, that was harassing the people in the region, and to guard the place. Simtokha is believed to be the first dzong built in Bhutan and is the gateway to Thimphu Valley.

Once in Thimphu visit **Tashichho Dzong**. This dzong is an impressive building also known as 'the fortress of the Dharma Raja'. It has traditionally been the seat of the Druk Desi, the head of Bhutan's civil government.



*Note: Tashichho Dzong is open during weekdays after office hours (5pm onwards) and from 9am to 5pm on weekends.*

*Overnight at Hotel [-/L/D]*

## Day 2: In Thimphu

Today we will visit the following places in Thimphu.

**The Memorial Chorten**, also known as the Thimphu Chorten is a large Tibetan-style Buddhist Monastery with golden spires and bells. It is a popular landmark and one of the most visible religious structures in Thimphu.

**The National Library of Bhutan** is a four-storied eight-cornered traditional building, which looks like the central tower temple of a Bhutanese Dzong.

**The Folk Heritage Museum** is set inside a 19<sup>th</sup> century three-storied traditional building and was established in 2001. The museum houses different tools, materials, objects, equipment, and artifacts from rural Bhutanese households and gives a good insight of the traditional Bhutanese lifestyle.

**National Institute of Traditional Medicine:** Established in 1988, the National Institute of Traditional Medicine strives to merge the allopathic and traditional systems of healing.

*Overnight at Hotel [B/L/D]*

## Day 3: Drive to Punakha

Distance: 76kms/ 47 miles

Drive Time: 3 hours approx.

Altitude: 1,300 m / 4,265 ft.



Today we will drive to Punakha, enroute we will visit Dochula Pass and upon reaching Punakha we will visit Chimi Lhakhang and Punakha Dzong.

On the way to Punakha from Thimphu, the **Dochula Pass** offers a 360-degree of beautiful panoramic view of the Himalayan mountain range, especially on clear winter days.

**Chimi Lhakhang** flanked with hundreds of prayer flags sits on a round hillock near Punakha. The monastery, built in 1499 is dedicated to Lama Drukpa Kinley, also known as 'the Divine Madman' or the 'Mad Saint'. He is also the saint who advocated the use of phallus symbols as paintings on walls and carved wooden phalluses on house tops.

The majestic **Punakha Dzong**, also known as 'the palace of great happiness or bliss' is the second largest dzong in Bhutan. Constructed on the 8th day and 8th month of the Fire ox year in 1673, the Punakha dzong was the administrative center and the seat of the Government of Bhutan until 1955, when the capital was moved to Thimphu.

*Overnight at Hotel [B/L/D]*

#### Day 4: Hike to Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten

After breakfast we will hike for about an hour's hike to **Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten** which is a fine example of Bhutanese architecture and artistic traditions. Built out on a beautiful ridge above the Punakha valley, this 4-storey temple has been dedicated for the wellbeing of the kingdom, its people and all sentient beings. The Chorten was built to remove the negative forces and promote peace, stability and harmony in the ever-changing world.

*Overnight at Hotel [B/L/D]*



Day 5: Drive back to Paro

Distance: 143kms/ 88 miles

Drive Time: 4.5 - 5 hours approx.

Altitude: 2,250 m / 7,382 ft.

Today we will drive back to Paro and visit National Museum and Paro Dzong.

The **National Museum of Bhutan** is a unique circular building also known as Ta-dzong which is an ancient watchtower above the Paro Dzong.

**Paro Dzong**, also known as Ringpung Dzong means 'Fortress on a heap of jewels'. This impressive dzong is the finest example of Bhutanese architecture and is one of the most popular and well known dzongs in Bhutan.

*Overnight at Hotel [B/L/D]*

Day 6: Hike to Taktsang Monastery

Hike Duration: 4.5 hours approx. (round trip)

Today we will hike to Taktsang Monastery and later visit KyichuLakhang.

**Taktsang Monastery:** Perched on the side of a vertical cliff at 3000 m altitude north of Paro, the beautiful Taktsang Monastery also known as the 'Tiger's Nest' is the most famous and an unofficial symbol of Bhutan.

**Kyichu Lhakhang:** Located close to the Paro Airport, the Kyichu Lhakhang is an important Himalayan Buddhist Temple. Built in the 7th century, this is one of Bhutan's oldest religious sites in Bhutan.

*Overnight at Hotel [B/L/D]*



## Day 7: Final Departure

Today you will be transferred to the airport for your onward journey. [B]

### Trip Ends

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**Note:** All information in this itinerary is accurate to the best of our knowledge but please note that changes to our trips can and do occur. This may be due to our effort to improve our program or logistical reasons such as changes in flight schedules, traffic conditions, weather conditions, or government policies. Dharma Adventures will make every effort to keep you informed of any changes but cannot be held liable for any alterations made to the published itinerary.

[B= Breakfast, L= Lunch, D= Dinner]

### Trip Includes:

- All necessary arrival and departure transfers.
- 2 nights' hotel accommodation in Thimphu – in a twin sharing room on full board basis.
- 2 nights' hotel accommodation in Punakha – in a twin sharing room on full board basis.
- 2 nights' hotel accommodation in Paro – in a twin sharing room on full board basis.
- All the sightseeing tour and transfers as per the itinerary with English speaking guide by private vehicle.
- Bhutan Visa Fees.
- Tourism development fee & Entrance fee in Bhutan.
- Lunch and dinner will be served at selected restaurant as per the program.



### Trip Extras:

- International airfare.
- Insurance and rescue of any form.
- Items of personal nature such as bar bills, alcoholic beverages, laundry, telephone calls, extra mileage, personal gratuities as tips to guide, porters, drivers etc.
- Personal insurance policy – suggested a comprehensive travel insurance covering tour and flight cancellations, loss of valuables, thefts, illness, accidents and hospitalization.
- Excess baggage.
- Gratuities, tipping to guides and drivers.
- Expenses incurred by re-routing, inclement weather, floods, famine, political disruptions, strikes, riots and other disturbances.
- Any items and services not mentioned on program inclusions.