

**Punakha Tshechu**  
**7days/6 nights**  
**Paro, Thimphu & Punakha**

**Day 1: Arrival in Paro**

Upon arrival at Paro International Airport, your guide will greet you warmly. Today is all about acclimatization to the breathtaking altitude that characterizes this Himalayan Kingdom. A scenic drive takes you to Thimphu, Bhutan's vibrant capital city. Upon arriving, you check into your hotel, and then explore Thimphu. Our first stop is the National Memorial Chorten. Here, you'll join the elderly Bhutanese citizens in their serene circumambulation around this sacred monument, an essential daily ritual. Next, you will visit the Royal Textile Museum. Here, you'll be entranced by the intricate artistry of traditional weaving. Witness firsthand the skill and craftsmanship that go into creating Bhutan's distinctive textiles. But the true highlight of your day awaits at the Institute of Zorig Chusum (School of 13 Traditional Arts & Crafts). Here, you'll have the privilege of interacting with novices who are mastering the 13 traditional arts and crafts of Bhutan. It's an immersive experience that will connect you deeply with the artistic traditions that define this land.

**Day 2: Thimphu to Punakha**

Today, you embark on a picturesque journey from Thimphu to Punakha, traversing the awe-inspiring Dochula Pass. This iconic pass features 108 chortens, a stunning tribute constructed by Bhutan's beloved Queen Mother Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck. These chortens symbolize Bhutan's victory over Indian militants and serve as a spiritual haven for lost souls. Our next stop is Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten, a marvel built by the Queen Mother Ashi Tshering Yangdoen Wangchuck. This architectural gem is a one-of-a-kind structure in the world, constructed over eight and a half years with inspiration drawn from religious scriptures.

**Day 3: Punakha Tshechu**

The tshechu is held at the courtyard of Punakha Dzong, a masterpiece of Bhutanese architecture, dating back to 1637. Set amidst the confluence of two rivers, this fortress exudes the aura of a medieval city. Tshechu or festival of mask dances is a vibrant celebration that honors Guru Padmasambhava, the revered saint who brought Tantric Buddhism to the Himalayas. The festival's essence lies in the mesmerizing masked dances performed by monks, adorned in splendidly colorful brocade attire. The pinnacle of the festival is the unveiling of a colossal cloth thangka, a sacred scroll bearing images of Padmasambhava and depictions from the Buddhist pantheon. It's a spectacle that transports you through time and space, connecting you to Bhutan's profound spiritual heritage.

**Day 4: Punakha to Paro**

Today's adventure takes you deeper into Bhutan's heartland as you visit Chhimi Lhakhang, a temple nestled amidst terraced fields. To reach this sacred site, you embark on a picturesque 20-minute walk through the village of Sopsokha. The

temple was built in the 15<sup>th</sup> century by Ngawang Chogyel, inspired by the "divine Madman" Drukpa Kuenlay, who erected a small chorten in this very location. On your journey, you will visit the newly constructed Wangduephodrang Dzong, a fort perched dramatically on a hill, overlooking the confluence of the Tsang Chu and Dang Chu rivers. You will then drive to Paro.

### **Day 5: Paro**

The day begins with a visit to Paro Dzong, also known as Rinpung Dzong. This massive fortress and monastery, dating back to the 15th century, not only serves as a remarkable architectural wonder but also houses the administrative center of the dzonkhag. As you explore its intricate courtyards, you'll feel the palpable sense of history etched into every stone. Next, you visit Ta Dzong, originally a watchtower that has been transformed into the National Museum since 1968. Within its walls, you'll encounter a treasure trove of antique Thangka paintings, textiles, weaponry, household artifacts, and a rich array of natural and historic relics. You will also visit the 7<sup>th</sup> century Buddhist temple Kyichu Lhakhang.

### **Day 6: Hike to Taktsang (Tiger's Nest)**

The grand finale of your Bhutanese adventure awaits as you embark on a thrilling three-hour hike to Taktsang Monastery, more famously known as the Tiger's Nest. This iconic structure clings to the edge of a sheer cliff, 900 meters above the Paro Valley. Legend has it that Guru Padmasambhava arrived here on the back of a tigress, making this spot sacred. The trek through pine-scented forests and across wooden bridges offers breathtaking vistas at every turn. Prayer flags flutter in the mountain breeze, and the distant sound of monks chanting in the monastery adds to the mystique of the journey. As you ascend, you'll reach a charming cafeteria perched on the mountainside, providing a perfect vantage point to marvel at this architectural marvel. Arriving at the Tiger's Nest, you'll feel an overwhelming sense of accomplishment as you take in the astounding views of the valley below. The monastery itself is a testament to Bhutanese architectural ingenuity, clinging to the cliffs like an eagle's nest. It's a place where spirituality and natural beauty converge, leaving an indelible mark on your soul.

### **Day 7: Departure from Paro**

After breakfast, you will leave for the airport for your onward journey.

### **What is included:**

- Double room on twin sharing basis in government approved 3 star hotels \*
- Single room supplement will incur additional charges.
- All three meals
- Bottled mineral water for the entire trip
- Afternoon tea and snacks
- English speaking certified guide
- Comfortable SUV and a tourism department certified driver

- Entrance Fees to Museums & Tigers Nest
- Visa fee and processing charges
- Sustainable Development Fee
- Government taxes
- Full service & assistance before, during, and after your Bhutan trip

\* Four & Five Star hotels & ultra luxury accommodation available at additional costs.

### **What is not included:**

- Airfare to and from Bhutan (tickets can be arranged if required )
- Any other beverages (alcoholic or non-alcoholic), including bottled water ordered in restaurants and hotels by guests.
- Travel Insurance (Travel Insurance is mandatory and can be purchased on arrival at the airport or can be arranged while processing visa or travel permit)
- Wire Transfer fees
- Laundry
- Tips for guides and drivers

### **Terms & Conditions:**

- Package per day per person rate is for minimum two pax. Additional rates applicable for solo travellers.
- Tour costs need to be paid in full to confirm bookings.

### **Tour Payment Refund Policy**

- 95% Refund for tour cancelled 90 days prior to arrival, transfer charges will be deducted.
- 85% refund for tour cancelled 60-45 days prior to arrival, transfer charges will be deducted.
- 75% refund for tour cancelled between 30 to 45 days prior to arrival.
- No refund for tour cancelled for less than 30 days of arrival.
- For luxury hotels & resorts, hotel cancellation policy will be applicable.

### **Tour Date Change or Replacement Policy:**

#### 1. Date Change Option:

We understand that plans can change, and we are happy to accommodate date changes at no additional cost for travel during non-peak seasons. However, please note that a surcharge will apply for bookings during peak seasons, festivals, or for hotel upgrades. To facilitate a smooth date change, we kindly request our customers to notify us as soon as possible regarding their desired travel date adjustments. It's important to note that refunds will not be possible for no-shows after arrival due to hotel cancellation policies.

## 2. Seat Replacement:

If you wish to minimize cancellation costs, you have the option to replace individuals traveling with you, whether they are friends or family members, or anyone else interested in taking your reserved seats on the originally confirmed dates. Once the replacement has been confirmed, the payment for the replaced seats will be directed to your bank account. Please note that for flights booked to Bhutan, specific policies may apply. To process the necessary visa or name change formalities, we kindly request a notification of the replacement at least 10-15 days prior to the scheduled arrival date.