

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

Day 1: Arrival in Paro

Upon your arrival at Paro International Airport, our warm and friendly tour guide will be waiting just beyond the arrival hall to greet you. We'll embark on a short but scenic drive to Thimphu, the vibrant capital of Bhutan, where your hotel awaits. Thimphu is the ideal starting point for your journey, offering a gradual transition from the familiar to the extraordinary. We'll set out to explore Thimphu's most significant sites, starting with the National Memorial Chorten. Built in 1974, this stupa serves as a place of meditation, a tribute to Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, Bhutan's revered third king. Next, you'll visit the Thimphu TashichhoDzong, a captivating fortress-monastery along the Wang Chhu river. This distinctive Bhutanese architectural masterpiece houses the civil government's head and the King's offices. We'll conclude the day with a scenic drive to Buddha Point at Kuenselphodrang Nature Park, home to the awe-inspiring 169-foot-tall bronze statue of Buddha Dordenma. This colossal statue, one of the world's largest sitting Buddha statues, offers panoramic views of the valley and the surrounding mountains, a sight particularly enchanting at night. As evening descends, you can explore Thimphu's charming streets, dotted with shops, bars, and cafes.

Day 2: Tour of Thimphu

After a hearty breakfast, we will visit the National Folk Heritage Museum, a haven for Bhutanese folk arts preservation. Housed in a renovated 19th century building designed as a traditional rural household, this museum boasts three stories filled with cultural relics, artifacts, and demonstrations showcasing Bhutanese life over the centuries. Next, we will visit Royal Textile Museum, and gain insight into the intricate designs and vibrant colors of Bhutanese textiles. We will then visit Takin Preserve, where you'll encounter one of the world's most peculiar creatures, the takin. The day concludes with a visit to Simtokha Dzong, constructed in 1629 as Bhutan's first fortress of its kind. Its interior boasts intricate Buddhist murals and carvings, offering a glimpse into Bhutan's spiritual and historical heritage.

Day 3: Thimphu to Punakha

Today, we embark on a scenic journey from Thimphu to Punakha, a breathtaking expedition through Dochula Pass. This renowned pass is adorned with 108 chortens, a splendid tribute initiated by Bhutan's beloved Queen Mother Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck. These chortens commemorate Bhutan's victory over Indian militants and serve as a spiritual refuge for lost souls. Our next destination is Punakha Dzong, a masterpiece of Bhutanese architecture dating back to 1637. Nestled at the confluence of two rivers, this fortress conjures the ambiance of a medieval city. Though it endured fires and glacial floods over the years, meticulous restoration has preserved its splendor, showcasing Bhutanese craftsmanship.

Our journey continues to Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten, a marvel conceived by Queen Mother Ashi Tshering Yangdoen Wangchuck. This architectural wonder, born of inspiration drawn from religious scriptures, took eight and a half years to complete and stands as a unique treasure in the world.

Day 4: Punakha to Paro

Our day begins with a visit to Chhimi Lhakhang, a serene temple nestled amidst terraced fields. To reach this sacred site, we embark on a picturesque 20-minute walk through the village of Sopsokha. This temple, erected in the 15th century by Ngawang Chogyel, honors the "divine Madman" Drukpa Kuenley, who once erected a small chorten here. Our journey takes us further as we explore the newly constructed Wangduephodrang Dzong, a majestic fortress perched dramatically on a hill, overlooking the confluence of the Tsang Chu and Dang Chu rivers. This fortress, with its rich history, tells the tales of Bhutan's enduring past. We then set forth on a drive to Paro.

Day 5: Paro Tshechu

On this memorable day, we immerse ourselves in the vibrant celebrations of the Paro Tshechu, one of Bhutan's most captivating festivals. As with all Tshechu festivals, it pays homage to Guru Padma Sambhawa, the precious yogi and saint credited with introducing Tantric Buddhism to the Himalayas. The festival's mesmerizing masked dances are performed by monks adorned in colorful brocade attire, accompanied by chants and the recitation of sacred Buddhist scriptures. The festival reaches its pinnacle with the unveiling of an immense cloth thangka, a sacred scroll depicting Padma Sambhawa and captivating imagery from the Buddhist pantheon. Bhutanese locals, dressed in their finest and most colorful national attire, add an extra layer of vibrancy to this already lively event.

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

Today, we embark on a journey that has stirred the imagination of countless travelers: the exhilarating hike to Taktsang Monastery, famously known as the Tiger's Nest. This iconic structure clings to the edge of a sheer cliff, perched 900 meters above the Paro Valley. The trek itself is an adventure through pine-scented forests, across picturesque wooden bridges, and along trails adorned with colorful prayer flags, believed to ward off evil spirits. The story of Guru Padmasambhava, who meditated in these caves for three years, is woven into the very fabric of this sacred site. Legend has it that he arrived here on the back of a tigress. As you ascend, you'll reach a charming mountainside cafeteria, offering a perfect vantage point to marvel at the monastery's breathtaking location. The views of the valley below are nothing short of awe-inspiring.

Arriving at the Tiger's Nest, you'll be overcome with a profound sense of achievement as you take in the astounding vistas and the architectural marvel itself. The monastery clings to the cliffs like an eagle's nest, a testament to Bhutanese architectural ingenuity and a place where spirituality and natural beauty converge, leaving an indelible mark on your soul.

Day 7: Departure from Paro

It's time to bid a fond farewell to this enchanting land. After breakfast, we'll accompany you to the airport for your onward journey, your heart brimming with cherished memories and the profound experiences of Bhutan.