



### ***Bhutan Culture Tours, 6 days***

If you have limited time to spare on a vacation, the Short and Sweet tour of 6 days is ideal for you. You will be pleasantly surprised at how, within a short tour, you can catch the element of Bhutan and always cherish the memories.

This tour covers visits to the most sacred monasteries, fortresses, museums and market places in the western region of Paro, Thimphu (the capital city) and Punakha.

**Day 1-** Arrive at Paro –Thimphu: (55 Km, 1 hour)

As you land at Paro, a representative will meet you at airport and drive to the capital city of Thimphu. Check in to Hotel. Authentic Bhutanese Dinner.

Accommodation: Dorji Elements or similar

**Day 2 –** Thimphu

After Breakfast, Thimphu sightseeing. Visit Tashichhoedzong, the fortress of the glorious religion houses the Throne room of His Majesty the King along with Government offices and also the summer residence of *Je Khenpo*, the chief abbot. Visit the National Library, Painting school, Traditional Medicine Institute, Textile and Folk Heritage Museum, Handicrafts Emporium and Memorial Chorten, stupa built in the memory of the third King, His Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, the father of modern Bhutan.

**Day 3-** Thimphu-Punakha( 75 Km, 2 ½ hours)

Drive to Punakha, the previous capital. On the way is the Dochula pass from where a beautiful panoramic view of the mountain range can be seen. The place is further enhanced by the Druk Wangyal Chortens- 108 stupas built by the Queen Mother Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck. Visit Punakha Dzong built by Zhabdrung in 1637. It stands majestically at the junction of the two rivers- Pho Chu and Mo Chu. Visit Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten built by the Queen Mother Ashi Tshering Yangdon Wangchuck, this Chorten is a splendid example of the Bhutanese architecture. It was built over eight and half years and its details have been drawn from religious scriptures. Drive to Wandue Phodrang, this district is located south of Punakha and is the last town before central Bhutan. It is famous for its fine bamboo work, slate and stone carving. Drive back to Punakha and halt.

Accommodation: Meri Phuensum or similar

**Day 4-** Punakha-Thimphu-Paro (125 Km, 4 ½ hours)

Drive to Paro, enroute visit Semtokha Dzong, the oldest fortress in the Kingdom built in 1627. Paro sightseeing, visit Ta Dzong built as a watch tower it was converted into national museum in 1968.

Accommodation: Kichu resort or similar

**Day 5-** Halt at Paro

Hike to Taktshang Monastery, popularly known as the “Tiger’s Nest” is perched on the side of a cliff at a height of 900m above the Paro valley. The excursion takes about 5 hours for a round trip. On the way



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back, visit Kyichu Lhakhang, the monastery date back to the 7th century and is one of the most oldest and sacred.

**Day 6-** Depart from Paro  
Transfer to airport for flight onward.

**Price:**

**Jan-Feb/Jun-Aug & Dec: USD \$1200** per person of minimum 3 pax

**Mar-May/Sept-Nov: USD \$1500** per person of minimum of 3 pax

**Includes:**

- 3\* hotel accommodation based on twin sharing
- 3 meals a day except arrival and departure day
- Transportation within the country by road
- English speaking guide
- Admission

**Excludes:**

- International airfare and taxes
- Travel insurance
- Visa fee
- Personal expenses, e.g. laundry, telephone, minibar...



## *Piece of Heaven on Earth, 10 Days*

The tour is an in-depth visit to the western valleys of Paro, Thimphu, Punakha and extending to the central region of Trongsa and Bumthang. Bumthang is one of the most beautiful valleys in Bhutan and is also considered the spiritual heartland with many sacred monasteries. The tour includes a halt at another beautiful glacial valley of Phobjikha, the winter home of the endangered Black-Necked cranes.

### **Day 1:** Arrive Paro – Thimphu (55 Km, 1 hour)

As you land at Paro, a representative will meet you and drive to the capital city of Thimphu. Check in to Hotel. Authentic Bhutanese Dinner.

Accommodation: Dorji Elements or similar

### **Day 2:** Thimphu

After Breakfast, Thimphu sightseeing. Visit Tashichhoedzong, the fortress of the glorious religion houses the Throne room of His Majesty the King along with Government offices and also the summer residence of *Je Khenpo*, the chief abbot. Visit the National Library, Painting school, Traditional Medicine Institute, Textile and Folk Heritage Museum, Handicrafts Emporium and Memorial Chorten, stupa built in the memory of the third King, His Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, the father of modern Bhutan.

### **Day 3:** Thimphu – Phobjikha Valley

Drive to Phobjikha valley. Enroute visit Wangdue Phodrang Dzong founded by Zhabdrung in 1638. Phobjikha is a glacial valley and is the winter home of the Black-Necked Cranes that migrate from the Tibetan plateau. The birds can be observed from early November to end of March. Visit the Gangtey Goenpa founded by Gyalsey Pema Thinley in 1613. It is on a hill overlooking the green expanse of the entire valley.

### **Day 4:** Phobjikha Valley – Bumthang

Drive to Bumthang, the fascinating valley is the spiritual heartland of the nation and home to some of the oldest Buddhist temples and monasteries. The valley is famous for the production of honey, cheese, apples and Yathra (woolen materials).

Accommodation:

### **Day 5:** Bumthang

Bumthang sightseeing. Visit Jambay Lhakhang, it is one of the 108 monasteries built by King Songtsen Goenpa in the 7<sup>th</sup> century to subdue evil spirits in the Himalayan region. Kurje Lhakhang, it is dedicated to Saint Guru Padsambhava who was supposed to have meditated here in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. Tamshing Lhakhang, it lies on the other side of the river opposite to Kurje Lhakhang. It was built in 1501 by Tertson Pema Lingpa, a re-incarnated disciple of Guru Padmasambhava. Jakar Dzong, it was initially built as a monastery in 1549 and like any other administrative Dzong. It is used for civil and monastic administration.

### **Day 6:** Bumthang – Punakha

Drive to Punakha. Punakha served as the capital of Bhutan until 1955. It has a temperate climate and its



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rich fertile valley is fed by the Pho Chu and Mo Chu rivers.

**Day 7: Punakha**

Visit Punakha Dzong built by Zhabdrung in 1637. It stands majestically at the junction of the two rivers- Pho Chu and Mo Chu. Visit Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten built by the Queen Mother Ashi Tshering Yangdon Wangchuck, this Chorten is a splendid example of the Bhutanese architecture. It was built over eight and half years and its details have been drawn from religious scriptures. Drive to Wandue Phodrang, this district is located south of Punakha and is the last town before central Bhutan. It is famous for its fine bamboo work, slate and stone carving. Drive back to Punakha and halt.

Accommodation: Meri Phuensum or similar

**Day 8: Punakha – Paro**

Drive to Paro, enroute visit Semtokha Dzong, the oldest fortress in the Kingdom built in 1627. Paro sightseeing, visit Ta Dzong built as a watch tower it was converted into national museum in 1968.

Accommodation: Kichu resort or similar

**Day 9: Paro**

Hike to Taktshang Monastery, popularly known as the “Tiger’s Nest” is perched on the side of a cliff at a height of 900m above the Paro valley. The excursion takes about 5 hours for a round trip. On the way back, visit Kyichu Lhakhang, the monastery date back to the 7th century and is one of the most oldest and sacred.

**Day 10: Depart Paro**

Transfer to airport for flight onward.

**Price:**

**Jan-Feb/Jun-Aug & Dec: USD \$2000** per person of minimum 3 pax

**Mar-May/Sept-Nov: USD \$2500** per person of minimum of 3 pax

**Includes:**

- 3\* hotel accommodation based on twin sharing
- 3 meals a day except arrival and departure day
- Transportation within the country by road
- English speaking guide
- Admission

**Excludes:**

- International airfare and taxes
- Travel insurance
- Visa fee
- Personal expenses, e.g. laundry, telephone, minibar...



## *The Ultimate Bhutan, 15 Days*

The Ultimate Bhutan Tour is for those who want to know about Bhutan's culture, history, people, religion and flora and fauna in depth. It includes hike to Taktshang Monastery, visit to the most sacred monasteries, remote temples, farm houses, palaces, monastic schools, Botanical gardens and wild life sanctuaries. The tour starts from the western valley of Paro and ends at the south eastern town of Samdrup Jongkhar.

### **Day 1:** Arrive Paro

As you land at Paro, a representative will receive you. Check in to Hotel. Stroll around the town and visit the handicrafts stores. Authentic Bhutanese Dinner. Overnight in Paro.

### **Day 2:** Paro

Visit Drukgyel Dzong, built in 1649 to commemorate the victory of Bhutanese over the allied Tibetan-Mongolian forces. The Dzong as a defense fortress is said to have housed the finest armory in the country. Ta Dzong, built a watchtower it was converted into national museum in 1968. Rinpung Dzong, it is one of the most impressive and well-known Dzongs and perhaps the finest example of Bhutanese architecture. Scenes from Bernardo Bertolucci's 1995 film, Little Buddha were filmed here.

### **Day 3:** Paro

Hike to Taktshang Monastery, popularly known as the "Tiger's Nest" is perched on the side of a cliff at a height of 900m above the Paro valley. The excursion takes about 5 hours for a round trip. On the way back, visit Kyichu Lhakhang, the monastery date back to the 7th century and is one of the most oldest and sacred.

### **Day 4:** Paro – Thimphu (55 Km, 1 hour)

Drive to Thimphu, the capital city, it is a bustling town on the banks of river Wang Chu. It is home to the Bhutanese Royal Family, the Royal Government and to several foreign missions and development projects. Visit Tashichhoedzong, the fortress of the glorious religion houses the Throne room of His Majesty the King along with Government offices and also the summer residence of *Je Khenpo*, the chief abbot. Memorial Chorten, this stupa was built in 1974 in memory of the third King, His Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuck by his mother.

Accommodation: Dorji Elements or similar

### **Day 5:** Thimphu

Visit National Library, which has a collection of books on Buddhism. Visit Institute of Zorig Chusum, the institute where students learn the 13 traditional Arts and Crafts and The Folk heritage Museum, founded by Her Majesty Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck, the museum portrays the lifestyle of a genteel family in the Thimphu valley in the olden days. The Institute of Traditional Medicine, the complex has the traditional medicine production unit, the treatment hospital and the school. Kuenselphodrang (Buddha Point), the Buddha Dordenma Statue which is 169ft is the world's tallest Buddha statue and it is located about 6kms from Thimphu city.



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**Day 6: Thimphu – Punakha (75 Km, 3 hours)**

Drive to Punakha, the previous capital. On the way is the Dochula pass from where a beautiful panoramic view of the mountain range can be seen. The place is further enhanced by the Druk Wangyal Chortens- 108 stupas built by the Queen Mother Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck. Visit Punakha Dzong built by Zhabdrung in 1637. It stands majestically at the junction of the two rivers- Pho Chu and Mo Chu. Visit Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten built by the Queen Mother Ashi Tshering Yangdon Wangchuck, this Chorten is a splendid example of the Bhutanese architecture. It was built over eight and half years and its details have been drawn from religious scriptures. Drive to Wandue Phodrang, this district is located south of Punakha and is the last town before central Bhutan. It is famous for its fine bamboo work, slate and stone carving. Drive back to Punakha and halt.

Accommodation: Meri Phuensum or similar

**Day 7: Punakha – Gangtey/Phobjikha Valley (70 Km, 3 hours)**

Drive to Phobjikha valley. Enroute visit Wangdue Phodrang Dzong founded by Zhabdrung in 1638. Phobjikha is a glacial valley and is the winter home of the Black-Necked Cranes that migrate from the Tibetan plateau. The birds can be observed from early November to end of March. Visit the Gangtey Goenpa founded by Gyalsey Pema Thinley in 1613. It is on a hill overlooking the green expanse of the entire valley.

**Day 8: Gangtey/Phobjikha Valley – Trongsa (128 Km, 5 hours)**

Drive to Trongsa, it forms the central hub of the Kingdom and is historically the place from where attempts at unifying the country were launched. Drive to Pele la pass (3420 m). Visit the town in the evening. Overnight in Trongsa.

**Day 9: Trongsa – Bumthang (68 Km, 3 hours)**

Morning visit to Trongsa Dzong, it was the ancestral home of the Royal Family, built in 1648. All Kings hold the post of Trongsa Penlop prior to being crowned as the King. Proceed to Bumthang, the fascinating valley is the spiritual heartland of the nation and home to some of the oldest Buddhist temples and monasteries. The valley is famous for the production of honey, cheese, apples and Yathra (woolen materials). Overnight in Bumthang.

**Day 10: Bumthang**

Bumthang sightseeing. Visit Jambay Lhakhang, it is one of the 108 monasteries built by King Songtsen Goenpa in the 7<sup>th</sup> century to subdue evil spirits in the Himalayan region. Kurje Lhakhang, it is dedicated to Saint Guru Padsambhava who was supposed to have meditated here in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. Tamshing Lhakhang, it lies on the other side of the river opposite to Kurje Lhakhang. It was built in 1501 by Terton Pema Lingpa, a re-incarnated disciple of Guru Padmasambhava. Jakar Dzong, it was initially built as a monastery in 1549 and like any other administrative Dzong. It is used for civil and monastic administration.

**Day 11: Bumthang – Mongar (198 Km, 7 Hours)**

Drive to Mongar, the journey from Bumthang to Mongar is one of the most beautiful in the Himalayas, crossing the 3,800m high Thrumshingla pass. Mongar marks the beginning of eastern Bhutan. Visit



Mongar Dzong. Overnight at Mongar.

**Day 12:** Mongar – Trashigang (96 Km, 3 Hours)

Trashigang is the largest district in Bhutan. It was once the center of busy trade with Tibet and India. The nomadic people from Merak and Sakten use Trashigang town as their market place mostly during winter. Visit Trashigang Dzong, it was built in 1659 and it commands remarkable view of the surrounding countryside.

Overnight at Trashigang.

**Day 13:** Trashigang (Excursion to Tashiyangtse)

Tashiyangtse is also home to the Black-Necked cranes especially found in Bumdeling. This is the eastern most part of Bhutan and borders Arunachal Pradesh in India. Visit Gom Kora, it is said that Guru Padmasambhava meditated in this place to subdue a demon that dwelt in a big rock. A temple was then built. Visit Chorten kora, it is similar to the stupa of Boudhanath in Nepal and was built in 1740 by Lam Ngawang Loday. During the second month of lunar calendar an interesting celebration known as “kora” takes place here. The people from neighbouring Arunachal Pradesh also join in the festivities. Overnight at Trashigang.

**Day 14:** Trashigang – Samdrup Jongkhar (180Km, 6 hours)

Samdrup Jongkhar is one of the land entry points to Bhutan. En-route Visit Zangtopelri Temple built in 1978. Visit Blind school and weaving centre in Khaling. Overnight at Samdrup Jongkhar.

**Day 15:** Samdrup Jongkhar – Guwahati

After Breakfast exit from Samdrup Jongkhar to Indian city Guwahati.

**Price:**

**Jan-Feb/Jun-Aug & Dec: USD \$3000** per person of minimum 3 pax

**Mar-May/Sept-Nov: USD \$3750** per person of minimum of 3 pax

**Includes:**

- 3\* hotel accommodation based on twin sharing
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