

Wonders of Bhutan Tour



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URL: <https://travelmaxguide.com/trip/wonders-of-bhutan-tour/>

Trip Code

TMG-BT005

Duration

7

Difficulty

Easy

Group Size

12 max

Per Person Cost

USD 1980

Accommodation

Comfort

Highlights

- **Ancient Temples, Monasteries, and Dzongs:** Immerse yourself in Bhutan's rich spiritual heritage by visiting ancient temples, monasteries, and impressive Dzongs (fortresses), each with a story to tell and cultural significance to explore.
- **Educational Exploration:** Gain a deeper understanding of Bhutan by visiting museums and government institutions, offering insights into the nation's history, governance, and culture.
- **Cultural Immersion:** Connect with the warm-hearted Bhutanese people, sharing their customs, traditions, and stories, providing a genuine glimpse into the country's vibrant culture.
- **Scenic Landscapes:** Delight in the breathtaking natural beauty of Bhutan, from its lush

valleys and pristine rivers to majestic mountains, painting a stunning canvas of landscapes.

- **Archery Matches:** Witness the excitement of Bhutan's national sport as you observe thrilling archery matches, a unique blend of skill and tradition.
- **Exploration of Pristine Villages and Farmhouses:** Immerse yourself in the heartwarming hospitality of Bhutan by visiting pristine villages and farmhouses, gaining insight into the authentic rural life of the Bhutanese people and experiencing their warmth and charm.

Trip overview

Embark on an extraordinary 7-day journey through the captivating landscapes and rich cultural tapestry of western Bhutan. The "Wonders of Bhutan" tour, among the most sought-after Bhutanese experiences, promises a comprehensive exploration of this Himalayan kingdom's finest treasures. The adventure commences in Paro, an enchanting valley renowned for its breathtaking beauty. Your arrival at Paro International Airport marks the beginning of a seven-day odyssey that will leave you enchanted. From here, the path unfolds to Thimphu, the vibrant capital, where you'll be greeted by the Tallest Statue of Buddha and a host of cultural gems. As your journey progresses, you'll journey to the picturesque Gangtey/Phobjikha Valley, a place of serene splendor and natural wonders. Here, you'll marvel at the imperial Khamsum Yulley Monastery in Punakha. The following day brings you to Wangdue Phodrang, where you'll encounter Chimi Lhakhang, the "Divine Madman's Temple," an emblem of Bhutan's unique spirituality and history.

The journey then leads you back to the stunning Paro Valley, where you'll undertake an unforgettable trek to the iconic Tiger's Nest Monastery, Paro Taktsang, a pinnacle of Bhutan's spiritual heritage. As the tour unfolds, you'll be immersed in a journey of discovery, enriched by Bhutan's awe-inspiring landscapes, ancient traditions, and deep-rooted culture.

The "Wonders of Bhutan" tour is a meticulous blend of the extraordinary, the spiritual, and the natural, ensuring a profound connection with the essence of Bhutan, the Land of the Thunder Dragon. This 7-day itinerary is a testament to the unforgettable experiences that await, leaving you with cherished memories of Bhutan's wonders and warm wishes for your travels ahead.

Itinerary

Day 01: Arrival in Paro - Enchanting Journey to Thimphu (54km, 1hr)

Upon your arrival at Paro Airport, our attentive guide and driver will welcome you and embark on a picturesque drive to Bhutan's capital, Thimphu. Along the way, we'll pause to visit the ancient Tamchog Monastery, built in the 15th century by Thang Tong Gyalpo. In the afternoon, our exploration of Thimphu commences with visits to the Memorial Chorten, the majestic Tallest Statue of Buddha, the serene Changangkha Lhakhang, and the Takin Preserve Center. As the sun sets, we'll enjoy the tranquility of Sangaygang Viewpoint, explore Dupthop Lhakhang, and have free time to amble through the town. The day concludes with a delightful dinner and an overnight stay in Thimphu.

Day 02: Thimphu - Immerse in the Capital's Culture

Morning in Thimphu begins with visits to the National Postal Museum, Craft Bazaar, Textile Museum, and the School of 13 Arts and Crafts. Your lunch will be a delightful experience at the Simply Bhutan museum restaurant. In the afternoon, you'll witness the excitement of archery matches at Changlimithang Stadium. As the day progresses, explore the regal beauty of Tashichho Dzong, also known as the Royal Secretariat, and conclude with dinner and an overnight stay in Thimphu.

Day 03: Thimphu to Punakha - Journey to the Ancient Capital (76km, 2hrs)

Morning brings a scenic drive to the historic Punakha Valley, Bhutan's ancient capital. On the way, you'll enjoy the breathtaking Dochula Pass at an altitude of 3,140 meters. Our journey continues with a visit to Chimi Lhakhang, built in 1499 to honor Drukpa Kuenley, popularly known as "The Divine Madman." This temple is also fondly called the "Temple of Fertility." In the afternoon, we explore the majestic Punakha Dzong, built in 1637 and currently serving as the winter residence of Je Khenpo and the monk body. Following this, a hike to the stunning Khamsum Yulley Monastery awaits, and in the evening, you'll walk across the longest suspension bridge in Bhutan, spanning 160 meters. The day ends with dinner and an overnight stay in Punakha.

Day 04: Punakha to Gangtey - Embracing the Natural Beauty (75km, 2hrs)

This morning, we set forth to Gangtey, with a brief stop to admire Wangdue Phodrang Dzong along the way. Gangtey, also known as Phobjikha, is a glacial valley renowned for its rare Black-necked Cranes that roost here during the winter. In Gangtey, you'll visit Gangtey Gompa Monastery, founded in 1613 by Gyaltse Pema Thinley, and home to the annual Gangtey Festival and the Crane Information Center. The evening invites you to explore Phobjikha Valley, situated at an altitude of 3,000 meters, and concludes with dinner and an overnight stay.

Day 05: Gangtey to Paro - A Journey of Picturesque Stops (185km, 5hrs)

This morning, we embark on a scenic drive to Paro, pausing occasionally to capture the stunning landscapes through your lens. In the afternoon, you'll explore the Ta Dzong, Bhutan's National Museum, and Rinpung Dzong, a picturesque fortress. The evening brings an authentic experience as you visit a Bhutanese farmhouse, offering insights into the rural life of the Bhutanese people. The day culminates with dinner and an overnight stay in Paro.

Day 06: Paro - The Iconic Tiger's Nest Hike

Today, you'll experience a journey that will remain etched in your memory as you hike to the iconic Tiger's Nest Monastery, Paro Taktsang. The trek, approximately two hours in duration, leads to this breathtaking site perched on a cliff. In the afternoon, explore the historic Drugyel Dzong, a defense fortress built in 1649 by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal. A visit to Kichu Lhakhang, one of Bhutan's oldest monasteries built in 659 AD by Srongtsen Gampo, awaits. The evening provides free time to stroll through town for shopping and photography. The day concludes with dinner and an overnight stay in Paro.

Day 07: Departure - Fond Farewell to the Land of the Thunder Dragon

As your 7-day Bhutan adventure comes to a close, we'll ensure your departure is as seamless as your arrival. After a hearty breakfast, we'll accompany you to Paro International Airport, bidding you farewell with warm wishes and cherished memories. This marks the end of your remarkable 7-day Bhutan tour itinerary.

Includes

- All Meals [Breakfast /Lunch/Dinner and Evening tea].
- Accommodation [twin /double sharing basis]. Single room supplement is extra.
- All transportation within the country including airport transfers.
- Sustainable Development fee (SDF).
- Bhutan visa fee.
- English speaking local guide.
- Sightseeing
- Bottled water.

Excludes

- Entrance fees for museums and monuments.
- [Drukair/Bhutan Airlines](#)
- Insurance premiums.
- Payments for service provided on a personal basis.
- Cost for any services not mentioned in the “Cost Include head”.
- Cost incurred due to mishaps, strikes, political unrest etc.
- Personal expenses such as laundry, soft drinks, camera charges, incidentals, portage, bellboy charges tips or any other services.

Frequently asked questions.

When is the best time to visit Bhutan? Weather & Festival Guide.

Bhutan is a year-round destination. There are four seasons: summer (June to August), autumn (September to November), winter (December to February) and spring (March to May). But because of the range of altitudes in the country, and the influence of the north Indian monsoons, the climate is incredibly varied.

In the south, the humid, subtropical climate is fairly consistent year-round, with temperatures between 15oC and 30oC. Central Bhutan, with its temperate forests, has a more seasonal climate, with warm summers and cool, dry winters. The northern regions are much colder during winter. Because of the high altitude, mountain peaks are snowy year-round and the lower reaches remain cool in summer.

In summer, the Indian monsoon season runs from late June or July to late September, mostly affecting the southern regions. Most farming activities take place in the summer, when crops thrive in verdant landscapes.

Autumn, from late September or early October to late November, follows the rainy season. It is characterised by bright, sunny days and some early snowfall at higher elevations. It's the season of feasts and festivals as farmers reap the fruits of their work.

From late November until March, the crisp, clear and sunny winter sets in, with frost throughout much of the country and snowfall common above elevations of 3,000 metres. The winter northeast monsoon brings gale-force winds at the highest altitudes through high mountain passes, giving Bhutan the name Drukyl, which means Land of the Thunder Dragon in Dzongkha (Bhutan's national language).

Bhutan's generally dry spring starts in early March and lasts until mid-April. It is a botanist's delight, with nature in full bloom. Summer weather commences in mid-April with occasional showers and continues to late June.

Which power plug is standard in Bhutan?

Three different electrical plugs are used throughout Bhutan: the British plug (three square pins, compatible with type G sockets), the European plug (two round pins, compatible with type C socket) and the Indian plug (three thick round pins, compatible with type D sockets). It's a good idea to bring adaptors for all three.

Do I need a visa to enter Bhutan?

Visitors of all nationalities, except those from India, [require a visa](#) before entering Bhutan. For all visitors, except those from Bangladesh and the Maldives, this visa must be applied for and approved in advance of travel. Visitors from Bangladesh and the Maldives also require a visa, but this can be applied for and approved either in advance of travel or upon arrival in Bhutan.

Visitors from India are able to apply for a permit but are required to hold an Indian passport or an Indian voter ID card. For Indian nationals under the age of 18, a passport or a birth certificate can be used to enter and they must be accompanied by a legal guardian.

Nationals from Switzerland and Thailand holding diplomatic or government-official passports are eligible for a visa at their port of entry.

How do I apply for a visa?

You can apply online for a visa by completing [this application form](#), or if you're travelling

with a tour operator, they may apply on your behalf. Read more about the visa [here](#).

Visitors from Bangladesh and the Maldives requiring a visa can apply either [online](#) before travelling or in person upon arrival in Bhutan.

How long does it take to issue my visa?

A correctly input visa application can take up to five days to process.

How much does the visa cost?

There is a one-off fee of US\$40 for the processing of your application. This is payable at the same time as your Sustainable Development Fee (SDF), as part of the process of submitting your visa application.

Can I extend my visa while I'm in Bhutan?

Yes, provided the extension is applied for before the original visa or permit expires.

Visitors can extend their stay via the [online visa application portal](#), using the same log-in details that were used to process their original visa.

The fees for processing your extension application, and daily SDF for the duration of your extended stay, will be payable via the same portal.

Is travel insurance mandatory?

Yes. All visitors must have full, valid travel insurance for the duration of their visit. For all visitors except those from India, Bangladesh and the Maldives, it is required to be in place when you make your visa application.

Visitors from India, Bangladesh and the Maldives have the option to [purchase domestic travel insurance](#) at their port of entry.

If I want to drive my own car into Bhutan, how much does it cost?

There is a charge of Nu. 4,500 per car, per day. A guide is also mandatory and will be at an additional charge.

If guests want to bring their own car, the cars must meet the requirements of Bhutan's Roads Safety and Transport Authority, and must also have a valid driver's license, insurance documentation, pollution control documentation, an entry permit, and a vehicle in reasonable condition. A valid Indian driver's license is accepted for self-driving within

Bhutan. The same fees and rules apply for motorbikes.

In case the vehicle is not owned by the guests travelling to Bhutan, an authorisation letter is required. For more information on this subject please contact our [Hosts](#) team.

How do I get to Bhutan?

The country has one international airport located in Paro. Flights operated by Drukair and Bhutan Airlines arrive and depart from destinations including Bangkok, Delhi, Kolkata, Bagdogra, Bodhgaya, Dhaka, Kathmandu, Guwahati and Singapore. Private jets or charters can fly into Bhutan after obtaining the relevant approvals.

There are also domestic airports in Yonphula in eastern Bhutan, Bumthang in central Bhutan, and Gelephu in south-central Bhutan.

What are the current covid-19 regulations in Bhutan?

Although we recommend all visitors stay up to date with vaccinations against covid-19 to help stop the spread of the disease, there are now no covid-19 vaccination requirements for adults or children to enter Bhutan from September 23rd 2022. There is no quarantine requirement either.

No random covid-19 testing will be undertaken at any port of entry into Bhutan, however this may be done if a guest is showing symptoms or asks for a test.

If a guest tests positive for covid-19 during their stay in Bhutan, they will be admitted entry into the country without any quarantine period, however will be required to wear a face mask at all times and maintain other precautionary measures until they test negative again.

There will be no covid-19 protocols to leave Bhutan, unless the country the guest is travelling to requires them.

Can I go hiking or trekking independently, without a tour operator?

All treks must be undertaken with an accredited tour operator or guide. Your tour operator will assist you with all the necessary logistics and safety precautions.

Is it safe to travel in Bhutan?

Bhutan is a very safe place to visit, even if you're travelling alone. There is very little crime experienced by locals or visitors, although we advise you to take care of yourself and your belongings. In some areas you may encounter stray dogs - please be cautious around them

as they are not domesticated. They normally keep their distance, but please stay away from them as much as possible, especially if travelling with children. Please don't feed or pat these or any other wild animals.

Bhutan's physical environment presents occasional safety hazards, including flooding and landslides. From June to September the monsoons can affect transport and services. Check with your hotel or tour operator for possible disruptions.

What is the SDF and how is it used?

The Sustainable Development Fee (SDF) is a daily levy paid by visitors to support Bhutan's development. Since the kingdom first opened its doors in 1974, guests have played a critical role in our country's growth.

The SDF is collected by the national exchequer and funds are allocated to various projects that create long-term, sustainable opportunities for the Bhutanese people, through free healthcare, education and training, upskilling the tourism and hospitality industry, improved infrastructure, environmental preservation and conservation, cultural preservation programmes and initiatives that support local businesses and economies. The SDF is also a vital means of maintaining the exceptional forest cover and carbon-neutrality for which our small nation is world-renowned and globally critical. The SDF also helps us to ensure that we can continue to offer guests tranquillity and an intimate experience.

How much is the SDF?

The SDF is USD 100 per night for adults from all countries except for India. Children aged between 6 years and who have not yet turned 12 are eligible to pay USD 50 per night. Children who have not yet turned 6 years old do not have to pay any SDF.

The SDF for Indian nationals (showing a valid Indian passport or Voter ID card) is Nu. 1,200 (or the equivalent amount in Indian rupees) per person, per night. Children aged between 6 years and who have not yet turned 12 are eligible to pay Nu./INR 600 per night. Children who have not yet turned 6 years old do not have to pay any SDF.

If I cancel my trip will my SDF be refunded?

Yes, the SDF will be refunded by the Department of Immigration for any cancelled or shortened trips; any bank charges will be deducted from the total refunded. Requests for SDF refunds should be submitted online using the [visa portal](#). The refund will be processed after visitors leave Bhutan.

Where can I exchange currency?

You can change your local currency for ngultrum upon arrival at Paro International Airport or at banks, larger hotels and authorised currency exchange businesses in Thimphu.

How much cash can I bring into Bhutan?

You may bring cash equivalent to US\$10,000 into the country.

Can I use my credit card and ATM card in Bhutan?

ATM and banks accept Visa and Mastercard. International credit cards are widely used in urban areas of Bhutan. However this service may not be available in other parts of the country. Visitors can download the [digital wallet app goBoB](#) launched by the Bank of Bhutan, which can be used with a local SIM card and is widely accepted throughout the country. Another option is the MyPay digital wallet app launched by Bhutan National Bank. Both apps can be connected to international credit cards and used widely.

Cash in US dollars and Indian rupees is also widely accepted. We advise bringing some cash in either of these currencies, or in Bhutanese ngultrum.

Is there good internet connection and Wi-Fi in Bhutan?

Most hotels have Wi-Fi in Bhutan, but we recommend obtaining a guest SIM card for more convenient access to data and a more reliable internet connection. Mobile data in Bhutan can also be expensive. You can find the B Mobile SIM in mobile stores in larger cities, which you can easily top up using the Bank of Bhutan app [goBoB](#). This app also facilitates other payments within the country.

Where can I get a visitor SIM card?

SIM cards can be purchased from the Paro International Airport's visitor information centre on arrival, or from branch offices of Bhutan Telecom and TashiCell, or from authorised agents in towns.

Are there any restrictions on dress?

There are no rules about what visitors should wear. However, if you are planning to visit places of religious significance, respectful smart-casual clothing that covers your body from shoulders to knees is appropriate and appreciated.

Do I need a guide to enter monuments and Dzongs in Bhutan, and are they chargeable?

Yes, a guide is required to enter monuments and Dzongs in Bhutan. While some of the monuments and Dzongs have no entry fee, others have a fee on arrival, which can be paid in cash or via the GoBob app.

Are there certain things I can't take out of Bhutan when I leave?

Keeping important antiques and artefacts in Bhutan is a key part of how we preserve our heritage for future generations. We have a law that sets out which artistic, historic, cultural, religious, social, archaeological and technical objects you may not take with you when you leave. To ensure any items you acquire comply with the law, you will need an Export Permit for Non-Antique Artefacts. [Find out more about the permit and how to apply for one here.](#)

Who should I contact in an emergency?

If it is related to your tourism experience, you can phone the Department of Tourism directly on +975 1712 2257 (or 2300 within Bhutan). If you require one of the emergency services, please telephone 110 for fire, 112 for an ambulance or 113 for police.

Can I use a drone for photography while in Bhutan?

A permit, which must be applied for in advance, is required to fly a drone either recreationally or commercially in Bhutan. Please email media@tcb.gov.bt to find out more about the regulations.

If I drive my own car into Bhutan, do I still need a guide?

Yes. A guide is required at all times for all guests who drive their own cars to Bhutan. It is highly recommended to pre-book guides before arriving at the borders. If you need help with arranging a guide, please contact our host services team [here](#).

Are Route Permits required for guests to move around between areas in Bhutan?

Route Permits are no longer required to move around Bhutan. However, anyone on a business visa or for an official purpose is required to have a Route Permit.

Are permits required to enter National Parks in Bhutan?

Yes, permits are required to enter National Parks in Bhutan. However the process can be

done online and the permit should be issued quickly. Please visit this link for more information: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScM4k5SPaGI_GnV6NJQHstp

Are there any fees to enter monuments or other sites in Bhutan?

While most monuments in Bhutan are free, some are chargeable. For the full list of monument fees, [please click here for more information](#). Children below 18 years will have a 50% concession and children aged five years and below will be exempted. Most monuments are open from 9am – 5pm each day. In June 2023 it was announced that foreign visitors can now visit monuments whenever they are open to the general public, without any restrictions.

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