

7Nights/8 Days

Bhutan Dom-116

Overview Bhutan Dom-116

Nestled in the folds of the Eastern Himalayas, remaining in self-imposed isolation for centuries, Bhutan opened up to the world in a glacial pace. The population lived in close harmony with nature, evolving a unique identity, derived largely from a rich religious and cultural heritage. This country of 700,000 people, roughly the size of Switzerland, is the world's only Mahayana Buddhist country. The Buddhist respect for all sentient beings helped Bhutan protect its pristine ecology and wildlife.

Day 1 ARRIVE PARO BY AIR & TRANSFER TO THIMPHU (55 KMS / 1½ HRS DRIVE)

The flight to Paro is one of the most spectacular in entire Himalayas. Flying along the Himalayan range from Kathmandu, the journey offers fascinating views and an exciting descent into the Kingdom. Bhutan's first gift, as you disembark from the aircraft will be cool, clean fresh mountain air. After immigration formalities and baggage collection, you will be met by our representative, and afterwards drive to Thimphu, the capital town of Bhutan with enroute stop at Chuzom, the confluence of Thimphu and Paro rivers. Three different style of stupas; Tibetan, Nepalese and Bhutanese adorn this confluence. Shortly before reaching Chuzom, you will see on your left TachogangLhakhang, "the temple of the excellent horse". It is a private temple, built in 15th century, as the result of visitation from Balaha, the excellent horse, a manifestation of Chenrezig, the compassionate Buddha. On arrival in Thimphu, check into the hotel. The capital town of Bhutan and the centre of Government, religion and commerce, Thimphu is a unique city with unusual mixture of modern development alongside ancient traditions. With the population of about 90,000 it is perhaps still the world's only capital city without a traffic light. Evening an exploratory walk around Thimphu Main Street and market area. Also visit the Local Crafts Bazaar, to browse through example of Bhutan's fine traditional arts. Here you can buy hand-woven textiles, Thangka paintings, masks, ceramics, slate and wood carvings, jewellery, interesting items made from local materials. Overnight at the hotel in Thimphu (Altitude 2400m).

Day 2 THIMPHU

After breakfast, sightseeing in Thimphu valley including visit to the following: The National Library, housing an extensive collection of priceless Buddhist manuscripts; the Institute for Zorig Chusum (commonly known as the Painting School) where students undergo a 6-year training course in Bhutan's 13 traditional arts and crafts. Later visit Textile Museum, which provides insight into Bhutan's one of the most distinct art form. Also visit Simply Bhutan, a living museum and studio encapsulating the cultural heritage of the Bhutanese people. After lunch take a short drive (15 km) to Pangri Zampa, 16th century one of the oldest monasteries in Bhutan located just north of Thimphu. Here is a monastic school where Buddhist student's monks learn Lamaism and astrology based on Buddhist philosophy. Afterwards visit to Buddha Point (Kuensel Phodrang). Located at a short drive from Thimphu city centre, visitors can get a good overview of the Thimphu valley from the Buddha point (KuenselPhodrang). You can pay your obeisance and offer prayers to the Buddha, the largest statue in the country and then walk around and take a glimpse of the valley. King's Memorial Chorten continuously circumambulated by people, murmuring mantras and spinning their prayer wheels. Construction of this landmark was the idea of Bhutan's third king, His Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuk ("the father of modern Bhutan") who has wished to erect monument to world peace and prosperity. Completed in 1974 after his untimely death, it serves both as a memorial to the Late King and as a monument to peace. Later visit to Trashichhoedzong: This impressive fortress/monastery houses Secretariat building, the throne room of His Majesty, the King and various government offices. It is also the summer residence of Chief Abbot and central monk body. Overnight at the hotel in Thimphu.

Day 3 THIMPHU – GANGTEY (150 KMS / 05 HRS DRIVE)

After breakfast, check-out from the hotel & drive Gangtey (Phobjikha) enroute visiting Dochula Pass (Altitude 3080m). In Bhutan, the passes are marked by a large Bhutanese Chorten and prayer flag. Dochula pass offers the most spectacular view over the high peaks of the eastern Himalayas on a clear day. And also via Wangdue Phodrang, where you can visit the local market and explore newly developed town. The district of Wangdue Phodrang is also famous for its bamboo products, slate and stone carvings. Further ahead pass through dense forests and oak, rhododendron tress, reaching at Gangtey (Phobjikha). The valley of Gangtey is one of the most beautiful spots in Bhutan. The surprise of finding such a wide, flat valley without any trees after the hard climb through dense forests is augmented by an impression of vast space, and extremely rare experience in Bhutan where most of the valleys are tightly enclosed. After lunch, take a walk around Gangtey village and visit Gangtey Goempa. Perched on a small hill that rises from the valley floor, the Gangtey Monastery is the only Nyingmapa monastery on the western side of the Black Mountain's Gangtey valley, Bhutan and also the biggest Nyingmapa monastery in Bhutan. The Monastery is surrounded by a large village inhabited mainly by the families of the 140 Gomchens who take care of the Monastery. Overnight at the hotel in Gangtey

Day 4 GANGTEY – PUNAKHA (75 KMS / 03 HRS DRIVE)

After early breakfast, enjoy the Gangtey Nature Trail (Distance: 5.5 km, Time: approx. 2 hours, Difficulty level: Easy). This pleasurable walk provides opportunity to get nice feel of Phobjikha valley. From the small hilltop overlooking Gangtey Goemba, you head downhill through flower meadows to Semchubara village and from here through beautiful forests and into open valley. The trail ends at the local community school after passing a chorten and Khewal Lhakhang. Later continue drive to Punakha, upon arrival; check into the hotel. Later visit Punakha Dzong, a massive structure built at the junction of two rivers. It was the capital of Bhutan until 1955, and still serves as the winter residence of the monk body. Overnight at hotel in Punakha

Day 5 PUNAKHA

After breakfast, hike up through fields of chilies, cabbages and rice along the banks of the Mo Chhu to Khamsum Yuelley Namgyal Chorten, a stunning monument recently built by the Queens and consecrated in 1999. Later visit to Sangchhen Dorji Lhuendrup Lhakhang Nunnery. Perched on a ridge amid pine trees and overlooking valleys of Punakha and Wangdue Phodrang, gleams the magnificent structures of Sangchhen Dorji Lhuendrup Lhakhang(Temple). The temple houses a 14-foot main bronze statue of Avalokiteshvara (Chenrigzig chagtong chentong). Other statues include those of Guru Padma Sambawa, Gautama Buddha, Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel, Tsela Namsum, the 21 Taras and Tsepamay (Buddha of longevity). The Avalokiteshvara statue, one of the biggest in the country, was the handiwork of entirely local Bhutanese artisans. The temple complex also houses a permanent higher learning and meditation centre for nuns where, apart from religious trainings, it provides life skill training such as tailoring, embroidery, statue making and thangka painting. Overnight at the hotel in Punakha

Day 6 PUNAKHA – PARO (120 KMS / 4½ HRS DRIVE APPROX)

After breakfast, proceed to for short walking excursion to Chimi Lhakhang, from hotel it is about 15 mins' drive till motor able road and then walk starts through paddy fields and villages. This is total about 1½ hrs walk, including both way). The Chimi Lhakhang, situated on a hillock in the centre of the valley, also known as the temple of fertility. It is widely believed that couples who do not have children and wanting one, if they pray at this temple, they are usually blessed with a child very soon. The trail leads across rice fields to the tiny settlement of Pana, meaning 'field'. A walk through the village near the temple will give you rare glimpses into the daily life and lifestyle of the villagers. Continue drive to Paro along scenic highway, enroute visit SimtokhaDzong, the oldest fortress of the country built in 1627 which now houses the School for Buddhist studies. On arrival in Paro, check into the hotel. After lunch, proceed to visit Ta Dzong, originally built as Watchtower, which now houses National Museum. The extensive collection includes antique Thangkha paintings, textiles, weapons & armour, household objects and a rich assortment of natural and historic artifacts. Ta Dzong visit immediately followed by a short walk down the trail to visit Rinpung Dzong (ParoDzong), meaning ("fortress of the heap of jewels"), which has a long and fascinating history. Along the wooden galleries lining the inner courtyard are fine wall paintings illustrating Buddhist lore such as four friends, the old man of long life, the wheel of life, scenes from the life of Milarepa, Mount. Sumeru and other cosmic Mandala. Overnight at the hotel in Paro.

Day 7 PARO

After breakfast excursion to Taktshang Monastery or Tiger's Nest (approx. 5 hours walk): It is one of the most famous of Bhutan's monasteries, perched on the side of a cliff 900m above the Paro valley floor. It is said that Guru Rinpoche arrived here on the back of a tigress and meditated at this monastery and hence it is called 'Tiger's Nest'. This site has been recognised as a most sacred place and visited by ShabdrungNgawangNamgyal in 1646 and now visited by all Bhutanese at least once in their lifetime. On 19 April, 1998, a fire severely damaged the main structure of building but now this Bhutanese jewel has been restored to its original splendour. Afternoon drive to Drukgyel Dzong, a ruined fortress where Bhutanese warriors fought Tibetan invaders centuries ago. The snowy dome of sacred Chomolhari, "mountain of goddess" can be seen in all her glory from the approach road to the Dzong. Evening, visit the 7th century Kyichu Lhakhang, one of the 108 temples built in the Himalayas by Tibetan King, Songtsen Gampo. The building of this temple marks the introduction of Buddhism in Bhutan. Overnight at the hotel in Paro.

Day 8 DEPART PARO BY AIR

After early breakfast at the hotel, drive to the airport for flight to your onward destination. Our representative will help you with exit formalities and then bid you farewell.

TOUR COST INCLUDES

- Accommodation in Double/Twin sharing basis with Single room supplement as per the mentioned Hotels
- Meal Plan MAP (Bed, Breakfast & Dinner)
- SDF(Sustainable development fee)- INR 1200 per person per Night
- Experienced English Speaking Tour Guide licensed by the Tourism Council of Bhutan
- Transportation
- All transfers and sightseeing as per the itinerary
- Pick & Drop to Paro Airport

TOUR COST EXCLUDES

- Air ticket(flight fare) both International and Domestic
- Travel Insurance/ Insurance of any kind
- Entrance Fees
- Lunch at Local Restaurant
- Festival Sur Charge
- Museum, monuments entrance fees all applicable taxes
- Medical expense
- Expenses of personal nature (like Gratuities tipping, laundry, Telephone/fax calls, bar bills camera/video fees etc).
- Horse charge for Tiger's Nest hike
- Bhutanese traditional hot stone bath.
- Beverages (alcoholic / non– alcoholic)
- Airfare & airport taxes

CANCELLATION/NO SHOW POLICY

- As per the Booking Conditions of the Tour, the cancellation charges will be applicable for any cancellation request of the tour, either by the customer or any member of the group. This will be intimated at the time of booking. In any other case, including 'No Show', the Company shall make no refund to the customer.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Ta Dzong – Paro (National Museum): closed on Government Holidays
- National Library – Thimphu: Closed on Saturday, Sunday & on Government holidays
- Textile Museum – Thimphu: Closed on Government Holidays & on Sunday. On Saturday, it open from 9.00 AM to 4 PM
- Institute of Zorig Chusum (Arts & Crafts School) - Thimphu: Closed on Sunday & Government holidays. On Saturday, it open from 10 AM to 12 o'clock. Also closed in winter (from December – early March)
- Simply Bhutan – Thimphu: Closed on Sunday & on Government holidays
- Tiger's Nest Monastery – Paro: Closed on all Tuesdays
- Folk Heritage Museum: Closed on all Sunday & on government holidays
- Rooms are subject to availability and rates are subject to change
- Supplement / hike charges will be extra on per head basis
- Unimoni Travel & Holidays reserves the right to change/modify or terminate the offer any time at its own discretion and without any prior notice

- Hotel Check in / Check out times – 1400Hrs. /1100 Hrs
- Refund on cancellation strictly depends upon the concerned hotel's and Vehicle cancellation policy.
- The package cannot be combined with any other offer
- If there is any step increase in Fuel prices, there will be an prorate increase in the rates
- All guests have to carry valid id at the time of check in to the hotel (Mandatory)
- Guests must check all their belongings before check-out. Further claims will not be entertained
- Pls be ready 10 minutes before pick up schedule
- Sightseeing places one time visit only & Midnight driving will not be provided.
- Sightseeing will be provided as per the itinerary only. It will not be provided as per the client's interest.
- Baggage space is limited to the type of transportation booked
- Standard type rooms will be offered in all category hotels
- For Vehicle, Ac will be operated only while running the vehicle and not during halt.
- Damage caused to our property due to carelessness of guests, their children or wards must be compensated by guest
- Any itinerary missed due to unforeseen conditions like weather, blocked roads, strikes, delay in Flight or Train timings the guests have to bear any additional expenses incurred due to the same directly
- Kindly maintain cleanliness in the vehicle and carry spare clothes and towels for visits to the beaches and for water sports activities.
- Consumption of alcohol in the vehicle is prohibited. Your cooperation is solicited.
- Offering alcoholic drink or beverage to the Driver is Strictly Prohibited
- For travel related sickness, please inform the driver immediately
- ALL SIGHTSEEINGS STRICTLY SUBJECT TO WEATHER CONDITIONS & AVAILABILITY OF TIME.