

Cultural Tour Programme for 9N/10D

Day 1, Bangkok-Paro

Paro (alt. 2200m/7218ft) - The beautiful valley of Paro encapsulates within itself a rich culture, scenic beauty and hundreds of myths and legends. It is home to many of Bhutan's oldest temples and monasteries, National Museum and country's only airport. The flight to Paro is considered one of the most spectacular flight experiences in the world. While flying in and out of Bhutan, one can see Mt. Everest, Kanchenjunga, Makula, and other high peaks such as Jumolhari, Jichu Drakey, and Tsrin Gang.



A representative from **Kidh-Chong Travels** will receive you at the airport.

Visit following places in Paro:

- 1) [Paro Taa Dzong \(museum\)](#)
At the top of the hill above Paro Ringpung Dzong is an old Watchtower which was built in 17th century to watch over the Paro Ringpung Dzong and now turned into national museum of Bhutan.
- 2) [Paro Ringpong Dzong \(fortress\)](#)
Beautiful fortress of Paro District dates back to 17th century which was built under the order of Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel (founder of country Bhutan). The fort was used on numerous occasions to defend the Paro valley from Tibet invasions.
- 3) [Paro Kyichu Lhakhang \(temple\)](#)
Dates back to 7th century, built by Songtshen Gyongpo who is said to be the first great Tibetan Buddhist King. The two great renowned 7th century temple built by Songtshen Gyongpo can be found in Bhutan, Jambay Lhakhang in Bumthang (towards central part of Bhutan) and another one in Paro Kyichu Lhakhang.

Overnight in Paro.

Day 2, Paro- Hike to Taktshang (Tigers Nest)

Breakfast in Hotel.



Bhutan's most scenic icon or the most important landmark; Taktshang clings to the side of a steep cliff which is 800 meters above Paro valley. The landmark was first visited by great Indian saint know as Guru Rimpoche, founder of tantric form of Buddhism in Himalayan regions in 8th century. It is believed that he meditated there for three months and three days in order to overcome great evil forces. The original temple was built in 17th century but tragically, it was consumed by fire in 1998. Like a phoenix, the temple was rebuilt to its fullest glory in 2003. Taktshang is considered to be the 10th holiest place in the world.

Lunch in Taktshang Cafeteria.

After a day hike Farm House visit.

Overnight in Paro

Day 3, Paro – Thimphu

Breakfast in Hotel.



Drive to Thimphu and visit following places:

- 1) **Memorial Chorten (Stupa)**
Dates back to 20th century, which is built in the memory of our 3rd king. The fantastic sight of Memorial Chorten is located in the heart of Thimphu city. It's a rare piece of stupa in a form temple inside; many elderly Bhutanese citizens are seen chanting prayers and prostrating towards stupa.
- 2) **Buddha Point**
Its newly built huge sited Buddha statue in Kuensel Phodrang area of 50 m height facing whole Thimphu capital city. The statue fulfills the prophecy of flourishing the happiness and peace in the entire world.
- 3) **Takin Reserve**
National animal of Bhutan, Takin can be seen in Reserve Park. The reason for declaring Takin as a national animal of Bhutan on 25 November 2005 (*Budorcas taxicolor*) is attributed to a legend of the animal's creation in Bhutan in the 15th century by Lama Drukpa Kunley.
- 4) **National Institute of 13 Arts and Crafts**
This institute, commonly known as 'the painting school' operates four to six year courses that provide instruction in Bhutan's 13 traditional arts.
- 5) **Post office**
Visiting post office is refreshing time and a fantastic art to create your own stamps and to post internationally.

Leisure time in down town with our local guide. Going around the town is immense experience to interact with local people and see the beautiful incorporated architecture designs of the house.

Lunch at Local restaurant in Thimphu.

Overnight in Thimphu.

Day 4, Thimphu – Punakha (3 hours drive)

Breakfast in Hotel.



Sightseeing in Punakha:

- 1) [Dochula](#)
Pass between Thimphu and Punakha, if the weather favors you can see splendid panoramic view of Himalayan Mountains covered with snow from Dochula and the 108 stupa.
- 2) [Chimi Lhakang \(temple\)](#)
It's a pleasant 20 minute walk across the fields and the yellowed roofed Chimi Lhakhang was built in 1499 by the cousin of Lama Drukpa Kuenley in his honor after he subdued the demoness of the nearby Dochula pass with his 'magic thunderbolt of wisdom'.

Lunch in local restaurant.

- 3) [Punakha Dzong \(fortress\)](#)
The heavenly fort on earth which is second oldest and largest fort in the Kingdom. It was established in 17th century under the order of Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel fulfilling the prophecy of Guru Rimpoche. Zhabdrung established a monk body with 600 monks in Punakha Dzong and passed away in Punakha Dzong in 1651. The fort is used for winter residence for Dratshang (official monk body).

Overnight in Punakha.

Day 5, Punakha - Punakha

Breakfast in Hotel.



Sightseeing in Punakha:

- 1) [Khamsum Yulley Hike:](#)
Hike to Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten is about 20-25 minutes and worth to visit the site and the temple which was built during 1990s, which almost took 9 years to complete the temple. Climbing up to the top floor of the temple gives you the bird eye view of the Punakha valley.
- 2) [Suspension Bridge:](#)
The longest suspension bridge in Bhutan connecting two valleys of Pho-chu (Male River). Great experience to walk across the bridge over Pho-chu and a short photo tour.
- 3) [Sangchhen Dorji Lhendup Nunnery:](#)
It's a brilliant white Stupa upon the ridges covered with pines and splendid view of Wangdue district valley. The nunnery houses 14 foot bronze statue of Chenrizig (God of love and compassion), which is the biggest statue in the Country. The temple complex provides nuns trainings such as embroidery, tailoring, sculpture and thangka paintings.

Overnight in Punakha

Day 6, Punakha – Bumthang (8 hours drive, including sightseeing in Trongsa)

Breakfast in Hotel.



We will be going to Bumthang via Trongsa (proper central part of Bhutan), a good lunch in Trongsa local restaurant and sightseeings.

1) [Trongsa Ta Dzong museum](#)

The watchtower or Ta Dzong on the hill above the Trongsa Dzong has been converted into the excellent museum by the Austrian- financed team. The museum gives you good experience and spectacular view of Buddhist art and the history of the monarchy, and the tour starts with an audiovisual presentation.

2) [Trongsa Dzong,](#)

The oldest, largest and longest Dzong or fort in Kingdom. Trongsa Dzong has a rich history dating back to the 16th century.

After reaching Bumthang, check in hotel have a good rest and leisure time in hotel.

Day 7, Bumthang - Bumthang

Breakfast in Hotel.



Sightseeing Bumthang:

1) [Jakar Dzong](#)

This roughly translates as ‘castle of the white bird’. The Zhabdrung’s great –grand father, Ngagi Wangchuk founded the monastery which dates back to 17th century.

2) [Wangdicholing Palace](#)

First palace built in Bhutan on the battle camp of Jigme Namgyel, father of first king Ugyen Wangchuk.

1) [Jambay lhakhang \(temple\)](#)

Dates back to same century with Kyichu Lhakhang which was built by the same king Songtshen Gyongpo. It is believed that he built 108 temples in a day in and around Tibet in order to subdue the evil force body lying on the Himalayan itself.

2) [Kurjey Lhakhang \(temple\)](#)

Active and important temple complex is named after the body (kur) print (jey) of Guru Rinpoche, which is preserved in a cave inside the oldest of the three buildings that make up the temple complex.

3) [Hike to Tamshing Lhakhang](#)

After the visit of Kurjey Lhakhang, it is always better and refreshing to take a short 20 minutes hike or walk towards next destination that is **Tamshing Goemba (temple of the Good Message)**. It was established in 1501 by Terton Pema Lingpa and the most important Nyingma Goemba in the Kingdom.

4) [Membartsho \(The Burning Lake\)](#)

Five minutes' walk from the parking spot. Terton Pema Lingpa found many treasures (terma) of Guru Rinpoche; it is lovely spot where nature, religion and mythology blur into one.

Leisure time in Bumthang Chamkhar town.

Overnight in Bumthang

Day 8, Bumthang – Phobjikha (5 Hours drive)

Breakfast in hotel



Drive to Phobjikha Valley and sightseeing to be done in Phobjikha:

1) [Nature trail hike](#)

Famous hike Nature trail hike of Phobjikha Valley through villages, blue pine forest and trees covered with lichen (know as old man's beard) and beautiful landscape of valley. During the month of Nov, Dec and Jan you are bound to see fantastic view of Black necked crane on the vast area of Phobjikha valley.

2) [Visit to Crane Centre](#)

Crane information centre of the Royal Society for Protection of Nature's (RSPN), which has informative displays about the black-necked cranes and the valley environment. You can use the centre's powerful spotting scopes and check what you see against its pamphlet *Field Guide to Crane Behavior*.

Overnight in Phobjikha.

Day 9, Phobjikha- Paro (5 Hours drive)

Breakfast in hotel



Drive to and check in hotel to get a few hours rest, refresh and ready for following sightseeing:

1) **Farm house visit:**

Farm house visit makes you experience the authentic life style of Bhutanese people. If interested for hot stone traditional bath farm house people will arrange a hot stone bath for the guest. Hospitality in farm house is in traditional style either with Ara (local rice wine) or Butter tea (Suja) with some Bhutanese cereals.

2) Leisure time in down town with our local guide. Going around the town is immense experience to interact with local people and see the beautiful incorporated architecture designs of the house.

Overnight in Paro

Day 10, Thimphu - Thimphu

Breakfast in hotel

Departure from Paro Airport

Tashi Delek