

DESTINATION ITINERARY

Bhutan

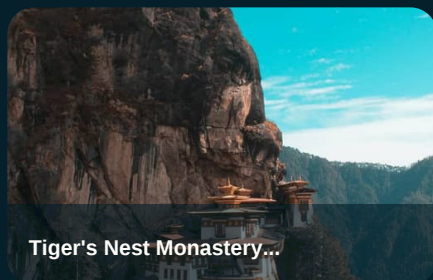
6-8 Days

From INR 35,000 per person

Best: Mar, Apr, May, Sep, Oct, Nov

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FEATURED IN THIS JOURNEY



Tiger's Nest Monastery...



Thimphu (Buddha...



Punakha Dzong

INTERNATIONAL HOLIDAY PLANNING BRIEF

Destination overview

Bhutan sits along the eastern Himalaya and can be reached by air through Paro or overland through approved border points such as Phuentsholing. It is a small Buddhist kingdom of steep forested valleys, whitewashed farmhouses and fortress-monasteries called dzongs that still work as both district offices and religious centres. Development here is deliberately measured: the country talks about Gross National Happiness, keeps much of its land under forest, and has never chased volume tourism. The rhythm of a trip is set by mountain roads rather than distances, so days are long, winding and unhurried. Bhutan suits travellers drawn to Buddhist art and architecture, walkers who want a demanding but achievable climb to Paro Taktsang, and families comfortable with cool weather, slow drives and evenings that end early.

PACKAGE DURATION

6-8 Days

STARTING PRICE

From INR 35,000 per person

BEST TIME

Peak: Mar, Apr, May, Sep, Oct, Nov | Shoulder: Jan, Feb, Dec | Avoid: Jun, Jul, Aug

TRIP TYPES

hill, heritage

8 APPROVED SUBLOCATIONS

Places you'll visit


Tiger's Nest Monastery (Paro Taktsang)
MONASTERY | HALF DAY

Bhutan's best-known monastery, built onto a cliff face high above the Paro valley at a site associated with Guru Padmasambhava. Reaching it means a steep uphill walk of two to three hours through pine and rhododendron forest, followed by a descent and climb of stone steps across a waterfall gorge.


Thimphu (Buddha Dordenma, weekend market)
MONUMENT | FULL DAY

Bhutan's capital, a low-rise town spread along a river valley and famously without traffic lights. The gilded Buddha Dordenma statue looks down from a ridge to the south, while the riverside weekend market gathers farmers selling red rice, chillies, ferns and datshi cheese beside textile and handicraft stalls.


Punakha Dzong
HERITAGE SITE | 2-3 HOURS

A large whitewashed fortress-monastery on the spit of land where the Pho Chhu and Mo Chhu rivers meet, and once the seat of Bhutan's government. Visitors cross a cantilever bridge, walk through successive courtyards past an old bodhi tree, and see intricately painted assembly halls and carved woodwork.



Dochula Pass

VIEWPOINT | 1 HOUR

A high pass on the road between Thimphu and Punakha, marked by 108 memorial chortens arranged in tiers on a knoll. On clear winter mornings the eastern Himalayan peaks stand out across the valley; for much of the year cloud closes in. A cafe and a small temple sit alongside.



Chele La Pass

VIEWPOINT | HALF DAY

One of the highest motorable passes in Bhutan, reached by a winding drive through fir forest from Paro towards the Haa valley. The ridge is strung with prayer flags and looks over both valleys, with Jomolhari visible in clear weather. It is cold and windy, and short walks lead along the ridge.



Rinpung Dzong (Paro)

HERITAGE SITE | 1-2 HOURS

The fortress that dominates Paro town, approached across a traditional covered wooden bridge over the Paro Chhu. Inside are stepped courtyards, a central tower and galleries of religious murals; the dzong houses both a monastic body and district offices, and hosts the spring Paro tsechu festival.



Buddha Dordenma

MONUMENT | 1-2 HOURS

The large seated Buddha above Thimphu combines a major religious site with broad valley views. Visitors come for the scale, surrounding halls and perspective over the capital; dress respectfully and allow time for the approach.



Paro Valley

VALLEY | 1 DAY

Paro brings together the international gateway, traditional townscape, Rinpung Dzong and the starting point for the Tiger's Nest walk. It works best as a base rather than a rushed transit stop.

6 DAYS

Suggested day-by-day plan

01

DAY 1

Tiger's Nest Monastery (Paro Taktsang)

Visit Tiger's Nest Monastery (Paro Taktsang).

02

DAY 2

Thimphu (Buddha Dordenma, weekend market)

Visit Thimphu (Buddha Dordenma, weekend market).

03

DAY 3

Punakha Dzong

Visit Punakha Dzong.

04
DAY 4
Dochula Pass

Visit Dochula Pass.

05
DAY 5
Chele La Pass

Visit Chele La Pass.

06
DAY 6
Rinpung Dzong (Paro)

Visit Rinpung Dzong (Paro).

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Travel essentials

CURRENCY

The Bhutanese ngultrum is the local currency and Indian rupees are widely accepted. Cards work in larger hotels, but carry cash for smaller towns and monasteries.

LANGUAGE

Dzongkha is the national language. English is the medium of instruction and is spoken widely, while Nepali and Hindi are understood in many border towns.

TIME DIFFERENCE

Bhutan is 30 minutes ahead of Indian Standard Time (IST).

WEATHER

A Himalayan climate that changes sharply with altitude: clear, pleasant springs and autumns, monsoon rain through summer, and cold, crisp winters in the higher valleys.

CONNECTIVITY

Indian roaming works in the main valleys; local Bhutan Telecom or TashiCell SIMs are simple to buy. Signal thins on mountain passes and remote trails.

VISA AND PERMITS

Indian nationals do not need a visa but must obtain an entry permit. Carry a valid Indian passport or voter identity card; confirm documentation for children and the current permit process before travel.

Food and culture

Bhutanese cooking treats chillies as a vegetable: ema datshi pairs them with cheese, while potato or mushroom versions are gentler and red rice is common. Halal choices are limited outside Thimphu. Remove shoes and hats in temples, walk clockwise around sacred structures and ask before photographing.

AIR, RAIL AND ROAD

Getting there from India

AIR

Paro is Bhutan's international air gateway, reached from selected Indian cities according to the current airline schedule.

RAIL

There is no through railway into Bhutan. Indian railheads such as Hasimara support an overland entry through an approved border point.

ROAD

Approved land borders connect Bhutan with India. Phuentsholing is widely used, but the onward mountain journey is slow and should be sequenced carefully.

Official guidance: Bhutan Department of Immigration entry guidance - <https://www.doi.gov.bt/?lang=en> and page_id=609 (checked 2026-08-30)

FROM OUR PLANNERS

Practical notes

- The ngultrum is pegged one-to-one with the Indian rupee and Indian notes are widely accepted, though high denominations can be refused - carry INR 100 notes.
- Cover shoulders and knees inside dzongs and temples; sleeveless tops, shorts and hats are not acceptable, and photography is usually barred within shrine rooms.
- Bhutan drives on the left, but roads are single-lane and constantly winding, so a hundred kilometres can take three to four hours - plan by hours, never by distance.
- Smoking in public is restricted and tobacco sales are tightly controlled, so do not carry cigarettes casually across the border at Phuentsholing.
- March to May and late September to November give the clearest mountain views; the June to August monsoon brings landslides and cloud over every pass.
- Cards are accepted only in larger hotels, so carry cash; guides and drivers are increasingly given a modest amount at the end of the trip, though tipping is not traditional.

**PLAN WITH ORBITZ HOLIDAYS**

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Explore
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Remember

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