PALACE TOURS
Travel Like Royalty

PALACE TOURS

Bhutan: A Cultural Adventure

4 Nights • Luxury Experience

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Overview

On this adventure-filled journey through Bhutan, you can experience marvelous landscapes, the rich Bhutanese culture, and several wonderful temples, including the breathtaking Taktshang "Tiger's Nest" Monastery built on the face of a sheer cliff. In five days, voyage through the country’s important cities, Paro, Thimphu and Punakha. Immerse yourself in the daily life of the Bhutanese as you journey through this land which remains relatively untouched by the outside world.

DAY BY DAY

Your Itinerary

DAY 1

PARO / THIMPHU

You are welcomed upon arrival in Paro by our friendly representative who takes you on a one-hour drive directly to Thimphu. Check in to your hotel, and if time permits, proceed on a sightseeing tour of Thimphu where you may visit the Handicrafts Emporium, Zilikha nunnery and the Dechen Phodrang Monastic School.

DAY 2

PUNAKHA / THIMPHU

This morning, enjoy a visit to the School of Arts and Crafts, Folk Heritage Museum and the 12th century Changagkha Temple. Later, drive to Punakha over the scenic Dochula Pass, which reaches an elevation of 3,200 meters. If the weather is clear, you may be able to see a marvelous panoramic view of the entire Himalayan mountain range toward the northern border. Enjoy your lunch en route at Dochula Cafeteria. This afternoon, hike to Chimi Lhakhang, the beautiful temple of fertility, and later this evening visit the serene Punakha Dzong fortress, the second-oldest dzong in Bhutan.

DAY 3

PARO / PUNAKHA

Take a morning drive towards the north end of the valley, and enjoy a refreshing hike to Khamsung Yulley Namgyal Choling Monastery on the ridge of the hill. Pause to enjoy the view of the long narrow valley. After your hike back from the monastery, visit the souvenir making center supported by the Youth Development Fund in Bhutan, and then return to Paro.

DAY 4

PARO

Early this morning, prepare yourself for a 2-hour hike to the famous Taktshang “Tiger’s Nest” monastery which hangs on a cliff 700 meters from the valley floor. Its nickname comes from the legend that Padmasambhava (Guru Rinpoche) flew there on the back of a tiger. Take some time to visit the temples within the monastery, and then head back to town to visit the National Museum and Paro Dzong. You may also have the opportunity to visit Kichu Temple and the ruins of Drugyel Dzong. Dinner is served at the Red Rice Restaurant or somewhere similar.

DAY 5

PARO

Check out of your hotel this morning after breakfast and prepare for your departure flight back home. Transfer to the airport, where your tour guide bids you a fond farewell.

HELPFUL INFORMATION

Tips & Travel Guide

<P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"><STRONG>What are the visa requirements for visiting <?xml:namespace prefix = st1 ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:smarttags" /><st1:country-region w:st="on"><st1:place w:st="on">Bhutan</st1:place></st1:country-region>?<?xml:namespace prefix = o ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" /><o:p></o:p></STRONG></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif">Visas are required for entry into <st1:country-region w:st="on"><st1:place w:st="on">Bhutan</st1:place></st1:country-region>. After booking your tour, you will be sent our Visa Application Form, and two weeks prior to your arrival into <st1:country-region w:st="on">Bhutan</st1:country-region>, you will be sent a visa clearance letter which will let you board your flight to <st1:country-region w:st="on"><st1:place w:st="on">Bhutan</st1:place></st1:country-region>. The actual visa is approved upon your arrival at the airport.</FONT></P><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"></FONT> </P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"><STRONG>I am flying to Bhutan from India. Do I need a re-entry permit for India?</STRONG> </FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif">If you are planning to enter India multiple times within a 2-month period, recent updates to Indian visa regulations may impact your travel. Further clarification was issued stating that if the visa holder is traveling to multiple countries on the same itinerary, no permit is needed, as long as the trip follows the itinerary exactly. The visa holder must carry a copy of their itinerary to show the Immigration Officer upon their first entry to India. </FONT> <o:p></o:p></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><o:p><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"> </FONT></o:p></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"><STRONG>What is the best time of year to visit <st1:country-region w:st="on"><st1:place w:st="on">Bhutan</st1:place></st1:country-region>?</STRONG><SPAN style="mso-spacerun: yes"> </SPAN><o:p></o:p></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif">Peak seasons are from mid-February to mid-June and August to mid-November. The weather is a bit cooler from November to February, but the views of the snow-capped peaks during this time are stunning. Mid-June to mid-August is monsoon season, where the landscape changes dramatically with greener trees and paddy fields everywhere. Our tours run year-round.<o:p></o:p></FONT> </P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><o:p><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"> </FONT></o:p></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"><STRONG>Are there any particular monuments or sights that are closed on specific days?<o:p></o:p> </STRONG></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif">Yes, the <st1:place w:st="on"><st1:PlaceName w:st="on">National</st1:PlaceName> <st1:PlaceType w:st="on">Museum</st1:PlaceType></st1:place> in Paro is closed on Sundays and Mondays. The <st1:PlaceName w:st="on">Painting</st1:PlaceName> <st1:PlaceType w:st="on">School</st1:PlaceType> and National Library in <st1:place w:st="on">Thimphu</st1:place> are both closed on Sundays.<o:p></o:p></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><o:p><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"> </FONT></o:p></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"><STRONG>What is your policy on children taking the tour?<o:p></o:p></STRONG></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in

their parents. Children between the ages of 6 and 12 enjoy a 50% fare. <o:p></o:p></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><o:p><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"> </FONT></o:p></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"><STRONG>Is there a timed itinerary available?<o:p></o:p></STRONG></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt">
<FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif">There is no timed itinerary currently available, which means that you can vary the time spent at a particular monument/sight. <o:p></o:p></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><o:p><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"> </FONT></o:p></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"><STRONG>How strenuous are the hiking excursions?<o:p></o:p></STRONG></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif">The hiking excursions, specifically to the "Tiger's Nest" are quite strenuous, and are not recommended for guests in poor health. For an average hiker, this steep uphill hike will take approximately 2 hours.<o:p></o:p></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><o:p><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"> </FONT></o:p></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt">
<FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"><STRONG>What type of vehicle transport is utilized?<o:p></o:p>
</STRONG></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif">For 1-2 passengers, we use a new Toyota Prado, Hyundai Tuscon or Santa Fe SUV. For 3-7 passengers, we use a Toyota Hiace minibus. For groups larger than 7 passengers, a Toyota Coaster bus is utilized. As <st1:country-region w:st="on"><st1:place w:st="on">Bhutan</st1:place></st1:country-region> is a mountainous country with cooler temperatures, air-conditioning is not necessary; however, all of our vehicles are equipped with heaters.<o:p></o:p>
</FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><o:p><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"> </FONT></o:p></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"><STRONG>What type of cuisine is served on the tour?<o:p></o:p></STRONG></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif">During the peak touring season, the hotels we will stop at have buffet meals consisting of at least five dishes with dessert. During dinner, soup is also served. If you have special dietary requirements, please inform Palace Tours at the time of booking so that we may ensure that your requests (ie: vegetarian) can be accommodated. The food served throughout the tours is mostly continental mixed with Chinese, Indian or Bhutanese.<o:p></o:p></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><o:p><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"><STRONG> </STRONG></FONT>
</o:p></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif">
<STRONG>Is the water safe for drinking?<o:p></o:p></STRONG></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif">We recommend that you do not drink the tap water. Bottled water will be provided in all of the hotel rooms and in the sightseeing/touring vehicles.<o:p></o:p></FONT>
</P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><o:p><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"> </FONT></o:p></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif">
<STRONG>Is there internet or telephone access?<o:p></o:p></STRONG></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif">Internet facilities are available at most of the hotels, and you may make international calls at the hotels as well (on your own account). Cell phone service may be limited in <st1:country-region w:st="on">Bhutan</st1:place></st1:country-region>.<o:p>
</o:p></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><o:p><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"> </FONT></o:p></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"><STRONG>What is the recommended gratuity?<o:p></o:p></STRONG></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif">Gratuities are at your discretion and should be extended based on your enjoyment of the journey and quality of service provided. As a general guideline, you might expect to tip approximately $50-$100 per week, per couple.<o:p></o:p></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><o:p><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"> </FONT>
</o:p></P> <FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt">

exchange facilities available?<o:p></o:p></STRONG></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"> <FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif">International currency can be exchanged at Bhutan Bank to the local currency, however, the US dollar bill ($) is accepted everywhere, including the small shops. The exchange rate for smaller USD bills ($1-$20) has less value than larger bills. Unfortunately, there are no ATM's. The only credit card that is accepted is Visa, and this is at only very few of the larger stores.<o:p></o:p></FONT></P></FONT> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><o:p><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"> </FONT></o:p></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"><STRONG>Is there a dress code or recommended clothing for the tour?<o:p></o:p></STRONG></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif">There is no dress code; however, you must wear clothes that fully cover your body when visiting the temples. Please dress according to the weather conditions for your time of travel. <o:p></o:p></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><o:p> <FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"> </FONT></o:p></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"><STRONG>Are there any customs to be aware of?<o:p></o:p> </STRONG></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif">Yes. Shoes are not permitted inside temples and photography is not permitted inside the temples. It is considered highly disrespectful to point fingers at others. Your guide will inform you of other customs as you are taking the tour.<o:p></o:p></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><o:p><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"> </FONT></o:p></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"><STRONG>What types of electrical outlets are there?<o:p></o:p></STRONG></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif">The electric outlets are mainly 220v and use round pin. You will be required to bring your own converter, as they are not provided at the hotels. <o:p></o:p></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><o:p><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"> </FONT></o:p></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"><STRONG>Is travel insurance required?<o:p></o:p></STRONG></FONT> </P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif">It is not required for the cultural tours, but is absolutely ESSENTIAL if undertaking a tour that involves trekking.<o:p></o:p> </FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><o:p><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"> </FONT></o:p></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"><STRONG>What is the level of safety that passengers can expect?<o:p></o:p></STRONG></FONT></P> <P class=MsoNormal style="MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt"><FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif">We have a very clean history with no robberies, etc. Your baggage is safe in the hotels and in the vehicles, however we do advise that you carry your passports and wallets with you at all times.</FONT></P>

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Terms & Conditions

PAYMENT TERMS:

(i) 25% of total tour cost due at the time of booking

(ii) 75% or balance no later than 65 days prior to date of the first service sold by TRAVBUZZ / PALACE TOURS

CANCELLATION FEES:

(i) 20% of the total tour value if cancelled more than 65 days prior to date of first service sold by TRAVBUZZ / PALACE TOURS

(ii) 50% of the total tour value if cancelled 64-30 days prior to date of first service sold by TRAVBUZZ / PALACE TOURS

(iii) 100% of the total tour value if cancelled 29-0 days prior to date of first service sold by TRAVBUZZ / PALACE TOURS

Ready to Book Your Journey?

Contact Palace Tours for personalized rates and departure dates

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