



Day 1	13th February 2016	Thimphu
<p>You will be welcomed by our Druk's Representative at Paro Airport. Paro is a picturesque valley, home to the Tigers Nest (Taksang) monastery. Situated at 2280m above sea level. With the lovely scenery view surrounding us, we will drive to Thimphu which is at 2,400m. It is about 1.5 hours drive.</p> <p>Thimphu is Bhutan's capital. One of the world's most intriguing destinations. After reaching Thimphu, we will visit the Semtokha Dzong, which is the first Dzong built by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal, the founder of Bhutan. Overnight at Thimphu.</p>		

Day 2	14th February	Thimphu
<p>Today is dedicated to exploring the capital – Thimphu. We will visit the massive sitting Buddha on a hill above the town. Also we will visit the Memorial Chorten, the weekend market, the Changangkha temple (popular fortress-like temple perched on a ridge above central Thimphu) and Trashi Choe Dzong (this fortress is an important administrative and religious centre of Bhutan. It houses the Royal Throne, National Assembly and the seat of the Chief Abbot of the central monastic body). Overnight at the same place as the previous night.</p>		

Day 3	15th February 2016	Thimphu
<p>After breakfast, we drive to Paro. This short journey offers beautiful views of the Paro valley. On arrival in Paro we hike to the famous Tiger's Nest monastery which sits atop a sheer cliff face at 3000m above sea level. The trip should take around 5 hrs round trip, depending how long we stay at the top. This monastery is built around a meditation cave of Guru Rinpoche to which he flew on the back of a tigress! It is certainly awe inspiring and is considered Bhutan's top attraction.</p> <p>Later in the day, time permitting, we will visit Kyichu Lhakhang - one of the oldest temples in Bhutan dating back to the seventh century. Overnight</p>		

Day 4	16th February 2016	Punakha
<p>After breakfast, we will drive via Dochu-la Pass to Punakha (1,450m). Punakha was the old capital of Bhutan until 1955. On a clear day one see the Himalayan ranges at Dochu-la Pass (3050m) and here at this high point there are 108 beautiful stupas. Here we may also attend the Punakha Serdra, the great procession and witness the casting of the jewels into the water by the Central Monastic Body. Overnight Punakha.</p>		

Day 5	17th February 2016	Punakha
<p>After breakfast, we will attend the first session of the Punakha Tsechu - the annual religious dance festival of Punakha Dzong. This beautiful and enlightening Tsechu, like all such festivals in Bhutan, is performed in honor of Guru Padmasambhava, also known as Guru Rinpoche, the precious yogi who is credited with having introduced Tantric Buddhism throughout the Himalayas. In the afternoon we visit Khamsum Yueley Namgyel Chorten. This Chorten (stupa) was built by the third Queen Mother Ashi Tshering Yangdon Wangchuck. It is a splendid example of Bhutanese architecture and art. Overnight Punakha.</p>		

Day 6	18th February 2016	Phobjikha
<p>After breakfast, we drive approx. for 3.5 hrs to Phobjikha (2,900 m). En route, we take a short hike to Chhime Lhakhang, a temple dedicated to the crazy yogi known as the Divine Madman. Phobjikha is one of the most important wildlife reserves in the country and at this time of year the famous and beautiful long necked black cranes migrate to this location. Overnight at Phobjikha.</p>		

Day 7	19th February 2016	Phobjikha
<p>Early in the morning, you will be escorted on a walk to view the black necked cranes. After breakfast, we will drive to Gangtey and visit Gangtoe Goenpa Monastery. We then head for the Gangtey nature trail hike, which passes by the crane roosting area. (1.5 hours approx.) Afternoon at leisure. Overnight Phobjikha.</p>		

Day 8	20th February 2016	Bumthang
<p>After breakfast, we drive approx 6 hrs to Bumthang. Situated at 2,600 m. En route we visit the majestic Trongsa Dzong. Bumthang is a very sacred mountain area comprised of 4 valleys. This is the religious heartland of the nation and home to some of its oldest Buddhist temples and monasteries. A brief stopover at Chumey Yathra weaving Centre and we will see the production of Yathram - handwoven, colourful woollen strips of cloth, often with geometric designs. Some of Bhutan's best weavers are here. Overnight at Bumthang.</p>		

Day 9	21st February 2016	Bumthang
<p>After breakfast we attend the birthday celebration for the Fifth King. Cultural events will be performed beautifully by local students. We will also visit Tamzhing Monastery - the most important Nyingma gumpa in Bhutan and Kencho Sum Lhakhang (under construction). Overnight at Bumthang.</p>		

Day 10	22nd February 2016	Bumthang
<p>Today, we will explore more of Bumthang. Visits include Jakar Dzong, Jambay Lhakhang, and Kurjey Monasteries. Jakar Dzong - the 'Fortress of the White Bird,' was constructed in 1667 after a group of lamas, searching the area for a suitable site for the new dzong, saw a single white bird continuously circling overhead before settling on the top of a hill. This was considered a good omen, and the hill was selected as the site for the dzong. Jambay Lhakhang is one of the 108 temples built by the Tibetan King Songtsen Gonpo in 659 AD. Kurjey monastery is blessed by Guru Rinpoche - here he left his body imprint inside the cave, thus giving it the name Kurjey (Body Imprint). Above the Monastery is a tall cypress tree that is believed to have sprouted from the walking stick of Guru Rinpoche. Meditation sessions are included in the tour, especially as we have time in Bumthang. Overnight at Bumthang.</p>		

Day 11**23rd February 2016****Paro**

Today, we fly back to Paro after breakfast. While here on our final days we will visit the National Museum and Paro Dzong. The National Museum is situated atop the hill above Paro Dzong. It is an old watchtower that was renovated in 1968 to house the National Museum. It consists of 3,000 artworks and masterpieces that display more than 15,000 years of cultural heritage of Bhutan. Paro Dzong is one of the Bhutan's most impressive and finest examples of Bhutanese architecture. In 1644, H.H Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal ordered the construction of the Dzong on the foundation of a monastery built by Guru Rinpoche. Overnight at Paro.

Day 12**24th February 2016****Thimphu**

After breakfast, we will drive to Thimphu. En route visit Dra Kagpo, a sacred temple perched on a cliff face. Overnight at Thimphu.

Day 13**26th February 2016****Thimphu**

After breakfast, we drive to Dodenna, an important historical place dating back to the Phajo Drukgom Zhigpo period, 13th century. Thereafter head for an excursion hike to Chari Monastery (one hour approx each way). This was the very first Drukpa Kagyud school in Bhutan, started by Shabdrung Rinpoche in the early seventeenth century. Later it became the Central Monastic Body. Today, Chari serves as the retreat centre for the Central Monk Body. Sometimes one can see the wild cliff goats grazing near the temples. Overnight at Thimphu.

Day 14**27th February 2016****Onward Destination**

After breakfast, you drive to Paro airport and say goodbye to beautiful Bhutan as you depart for your onward destination. May you carry indelible and blissful memories home!



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