

Wonders of Bhutan - ADWB

10 days: Paro to Paro

What's Included

- Arrival and departure transfer
- Visit the Rimpung Dzong, a school for Monks
- Hike to Punakha Dzong monastery and fertility shrine
- Visit the town of Wangdue and walk to Khamsum Yuele Chorten shrine
- Visit the village of Khewa
- Walk to the monastery of Gangtey Goempa and visit a Community School
- Walk across Phobjikha Khewa Valleys
- Visit the National Library, the Institute for Zorig Chusum (Art and Craft) and the Memorial Chorten
- Hike to Kila Goempa nunnery
- Explore the Haa Valley including the Wangchuk Lo Dzong shrine and the Lhakhang Nagpo and Lhakhang Karpo Temples
- Visit the fortress of Drukgyal Dzong and hike to Taktsang monastery (Tiger's Nest)
- Visit Kyichu Lhakhang Temple and the local archery grounds
- All transport between destinations and to/from included activities

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and G Adventures. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

VERY IMPORTANT: Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

VALIDITY: Valid for all trips departing January 1st, 2014 - December 31st, 2014

Itinerary



What's Included

Arrival and departure transfer. Visit the Rimpung Dzong, a school for Monks. Hike to Punakha Dzong monastery and fertility shrine. Visit the town of Wangdue and walk to Khamsum Yueley Chorten shrine. Visit the village of Khewa. Walk to the monastery of Gangtey Goempa and visit a Community School. Walk across Phobjikha Khewa Valleys. Visit the National Library, the Institute for Zorig Chusum (Art and Craft) and the Memorial Chorten. Hike to Kila Goempa nunnery. Explore the Haa Valley including the Wangchuk Lo Dzong shrine and the Lhakhang Nagpo and Lhakhang Karpo Temples. Visit the fortress of Drukgyal Dzong and hike to Taktsang monastery (Tiger's Nest). Visit Kyichu Lhakhang Temple and the local archery grounds. All transport between destinations and to/from included activities.

Highlights

Visit one of the most remote countries in the world, Take a moment to reflect at ancient Buddhist temples and shrines, Hike along peaceful nature trails and thrilling cliffs, Experience the pristine and peaceful nature of the 'Dragon Kingdom'.

Dossier Disclaimer

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Itinerary Disclaimer

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.

Important Notes

1. Please note there may be times during your visit to Bhutan when the use of video and/or still cameras may be inappropriate. Local people may consider that filming is too intrusive and in these circumstances we will request that you do not film. At all times be aware and sensitive to the impact of photography and seek permission before taking photographs of people and respect their wishes if they refuse.
2. Please note that there is a lot of walking and light hiking on this trip and some of it at higher altitudes. Please ensure you are in decent physical condition and able to walk for extended periods of time.
3. Bhutan, being a Buddhist country believes in ahimsa so the barking of dogs (and there are a lot of them) at night can be annoying. It's advisable to bring earplugs. If you are able to travel with a lot of patience and a good sense of humour, then we know that you - like all of us - will be captivated by what Bhutan has to offer.
4. The prime requirement for clothes you bring on Bhutan trip is that they are comfortable and appropriate to the weather conditions that you are likely to meet. For protection against cold, particularly at night, a number of relatively thin layers is better than a few thick ones. Thermal underclothes, being small and light, can be very useful. Bhutan is very conservative and you should dress accordingly. As a general guideline, shoulders and knees should be covered at all times. The wearing of shorts is not allowed as it will restrict your entry into buildings of a religious nature and family homes. A water and windproof jacket, a hat and sunscreen are essential.

Group Leader Description

All G Adventures group trips are accompanied by one of our Chief Experience Officers (CEO). The aim of the CEO is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. They will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the countries visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. We also use local guides where we think more specific knowledge will add to the enjoyment of the places we are visiting - we think it's the best of both worlds.

Group Size Notes

Max 16, Avg 10.

Meals Included

9 breakfasts, 8 lunches, 9 dinners.

Meals

Most meals in Bhutan are included in the cost of the trip - some are in the accommodation where it is the best quality/availability option. Most meals are served buffet-style with a selection of traditional Bhutanese food, some western-style (often pasta) as well as some Chinese. Fresh local vegetables are in abundance and while Bhutan is almost mostly vegetarian, there usually is one meat dish available (on some occasions, there can be shortages, as all meat is imported from India).

Meal Budget

Allow USD100-150 for meals not included.

Transport

Private vehicle, walking, hiking.

About our Transportation

Traveling by road in Bhutan is certainly not what people are used to in Western countries. The roads in the mountains might not be the best but our drivers always keep the safety of the passengers first. Most roads consist of a series of switchbacks going up and back down mountain passes and can be quite bumpy. If you do suffer from motion sickness, we recommend you bring medication for the drives.

Solo Travellers

We believe single travellers should not have to pay more to travel so our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers joining group trips are paired in twin or multi-share accommodation with someone of the same sex for the duration of the trip. Some of our Independent trips are designed differently and single travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

Accommodation

Comfort hotels/lodges (9 nts).

My Own Room

Please note that if you have booked the "My Own Room" option for this tour, you will receive your own single room for all night stops

About Accommodation

Hotels/Lodges and guest houses are used in Bhutan - these can vary in terms of service and efficiency, but offer quaint, local charm and flavour. In many instances they might not be like what you are used to back home. Accommodation is generally located in rural areas or outside town centres - they are traditional in architecture, style and its services to the guest. Electricity, wifi and water can often be sporadic and in some locations, wood stoves may be used.

Joining Hotel

Hotel Olathang
P.O.Box No: 1214
Paro, Bhutan,
Phone Number: 00 975 8 271304

Joining Instructions

Airport arrival transfer is included in the package. Hence Bhutanese CEO's will always be at the airport to receive the clients.

**Please note, the arrival and departure transfers included occur on the first and final days of the tour. If you plan to arrive before and/or depart after the tour dates, you will be required to arrange pre and/or post-tour accommodation through G Adventures to be eligible for the airport transport. Due to customer experience and quality considerations, all services related to the tour must be continuous.

Arrival Complications

We don't expect any problems, and nor should you, but if for any reason you are unable to commence your group trip as scheduled, as soon as possible please contact your starting point hotel, requesting that you speak to or leave a message for your CEO. If this is unsuccessful, please refer to our Emergency Contact. If your included airport transfer has not arrived within 30 minutes of clearing customs and immigration, please make contact with our representative. We then recommend that you make your own way to the Starting Point hotel, following the Joining Instructions. Please contact your travel agent on your return for a refund of the transfer cost if this occurs.

Emergency Contact

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call either the G Adventures Local Representative (if one is listed below) or our G Adventures Local Office. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, so they may return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

AIRPORT TRANSFER

If you have purchased an arrival through G Adventures or if an arrival transfer is included in the cost of your tour, please note that:

Your arrival transfer has been arranged based on flight information provided to us. If you are advised of a flight schedule change within 48 hours of your scheduled arrival time, we will do our best to rearrange your arrival transfer however we cannot guarantee this. If your arrival transfer does not arrive within 30 minutes after you have exited the arrivals area please take a taxi to your start point hotel.

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

G Adventures Local Office (Delhi)

G Adventures South Asia Manager, Rishab (Delhi, India)

Emergency number:

From outside of India: +91 99 7179 5447

From within Delhi: 99 7179 5447

From within India, but outside Delhi: 099 7179 5447

G Adventures Office Bangkok, Thailand

During Office hours (Weekdays, 9am-5pm Local Time): +66-02-3815574

If you are unable for any reason to contact our local office, please call the numbers listed below, which will connect you directly with our 24 hour Sales team, who will happily assist you.

Toll-free, North America only: 1 888 800 4100

Calls from UK: 0844 272 0000

Calls from Germany: 01805 70 90 30 00

Calls from Australia: 1 300 796 618

Calls from New Zealand: 0800 333 307

Outside North America, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

What to Take

We suggest that you pack as lightly as possible as you are expected to carry your own luggage. As a rule we try not to have to walk more than 15-20 minutes with your bags which is why we recommend keeping the weight of your bags between 10-15kg/22-30lb. Most travellers carry a backpack or rolling bag of small to medium size (no XXL ones please!). You will also need a day pack/bag to carry water, cameras and other electronics like ipods and mobile phones.

Checklist

Documents:

- Passport (with photocopies)
- Travel insurance (with photocopies)
- Airline tickets (with photocopies)
- USD cash
- Credit or debit card (see personal spending money)
- G Adventures vouchers, pre-departure information and trip details
- Any entry visas or vaccination certificates required

Suggested Items:

- Fleece or wool jumper/jacket
- Windproof/waterproof jacket
- warm hat and gloves
- Small towel and swimwear
- 4 shirts/t-shirts, cool and breathable
- Long-sleeved shirt/turtleneck or sweater for evenings
- 2 pairs of long trousers
- 1 pair hiking pants
- Sturdy walking shoes/ hiking shoes or boots
- Sport sandals
- Sun hat, bandanna
- hand sanitizers/ antibacterial wipes
- Tampons (Can be difficult to buy in rural areas)
- Sunblock
- Sunglasses
- Watch or alarm clock
- Water bottle
- Pocketknife
- Flashlight or Headlamp (with extra batteries and bulbs)
- Money belt
- Toiletries (biodegradable)

- Camera and extra memory card/film
- Extra batteries (recommended)
- Electricity Plug Adapter
- First-aid kit (should contain Lip balm with sunscreen, Aspirin, Ibuprofen, malaria pills, band aids/plasters, tape, anti-histamine, antiseptic cream, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, re-hydration powder, insect repellent, extra prescription drugs you may be taking)

Optional Items:

-reading/writing material, binoculars, cover for dapsacks, Maps, guidebooks

Laundry

Laundry facilities are offered by some of our hotels for a charge. There will be times when you may want to or have to do your own laundry so we suggest you bring non-polluting/biodegradable soap.

Visas

For Bhutan, G Adventures will arrange the visa for you. The cost of the visa is included in the tour price. The Bhutanese visa is issued to your passport on arrival, on submission of 2 passport sized photographs.

In order to arrange the Bhutan visa, you must provide G Adventures with the following:

- Scanned colour passport copy
- Arrival and Departure flight details for Paro

These details need to be submitted to us 35-40 days before departure.

We will then arrange the Bhutanese visa for you. A visa letter will be forwarded to you 15 days before departure. We cannot get the visa letter issued any sooner. Please print out the visa letter, you will be required to show this before boarding your flight to Paro.

Important: If you are planning to extend your stay in Bhutan, pre- and post-tour accommodation must be booked through G Adventures in order to for us to issue a valid visa for the duration of your stay.

If arriving and departing Paro from India, please note that the Indian government has recently made some changes to visa regulation due to misuse of the Tourist visa. We encourage all passengers to contact the Indian consulate or embassy in their home country to get up to date information on entry requirements. This is especially important for those that are planning on entering India multiple times in a two month period.

Foreigners holding a Indian Tourist Visas, who after initial entry into India plan to visit neighboring Nepal, Bhutan or Sri Lanka and then re-enter into India within 2 months need to get special authorization.

Spending Money

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

Money Exchange

There are ATMs in larger cities in Bhutan, and they will accept only Mastercard or Visa. As well, credit card can be used at larger hotels and shops but please note most places charge from 3-5% fees to use cards. The Ngultrum (local currency) is valueless outside of Bhutan so make sure that you change back all excess Bhutanese currency before you leave. It is possible to use Indian Rupees in Bhutan.

Emergency Fund

Please also make sure you have access to at least an additional USD \$200 (or equivalent) as an 'emergency' fund, to be used when circumstances outside our control (ex. a natural disaster) require a change to our planned route. This is a rare occurrence!

Tipping

It is customary in Asia to tip service providers such as waiters, at approximately 10%, depending on the service. Tipping is expected - though not compulsory - and shows an expression of satisfaction with the people who have assisted you on your tour. Although it may

not be customary to you, it is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. There are several times during the trip where there is opportunity to tip the local guides or drivers we use. You may do this individually, or your CEO will offer to collect the money and tip as a group. Recommendations for tipping drivers and local guides would range from USD1-2 per person per day depending on the quality and length of the service; ask your CEO for specific recommendations based on the circumstances and culture. Also at the end of each trip if you felt your G Adventures CEO did an outstanding job, tipping is appreciated. The amount is entirely a personal preference; however as a guideline USD20-30 per person, per week can be used.

Optional Activities

We suggest you bring along USD80 for additional sightseeing.

Health

Please note inoculations may be required for the country visited. It is your responsibility to consult with your travel doctor for up to date medical travel information well before departure.

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information well before departure. We recommend that you carry a First Aid kit and hand sanitizers / antibacterial wipes as well as any personal medical requirements. Please be aware that sometimes we are in remote areas and away from medical facilities, and for legal reasons our leaders are prohibited from administering any type of drug including headache tablets, antibiotics, etc. In Asia pharmacies tend to stock the same western drugs as you get at home but they are usually produced locally so please bring the full drug name with you when trying to purchase a prescription drug. When selecting your trip please carefully read the brochure and itinerary and assess your ability to cope with our style of travel. Please refer to the Physical and Culture Shock ratings for trip specific information. G Adventures reserves the right to exclude any traveller from all or part of a trip without refund if in the reasonable opinion of our CEO they are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group.

Safety and Security

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage. When travelling on a group trip, please note that your CEO has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns. Your CEO will accompany you on all included activities. During your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your CEO will assist you with options available in a given location please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and we offer no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Although the cities visited on tour are generally safe during the day, there can be risks to wandering throughout any major city at night. It is our recommendation to stay in small groups and to take taxis to and from restaurants, or during night time excursions.

Protests and Demonstrations- Protests and demonstrations, even those that are well intended, have the potential to turn violent with no warning. Counter protests can also turn violent. Action by security forces to disperse demonstrators and protesters may occur at any time. If you are in an area where demonstrators or protesters are gathering, avoid the temptation of staying for a good photo opportunity and leave the area immediately.

Water based activities have an element of danger and excitement built into them. We recommend only participating in water based activities when accompanied by a guide(s). We make every reasonable effort to ensure the fun and adventurous element of any water based activities (in countries with varying degrees of operating standards) have a balanced approach to safety. It is our policy not to allow our CEOs to make arrangements on your behalf for water based activities that are not accompanied by guide(s).

Swimming, including snorkeling, is always at your own risk.

We take all prudent measures in relation to your safety. For ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling, please visit:

www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/

Medical Form

Our small group adventures bring together people of all ages. It is very important you are aware that, as a minimum, an average level of fitness and mobility' is required to undertake our easiest programs. Travellers must be able to walk without the aid of another person, climb 3-4 flights of stairs, step on and off small boats, and carry their own luggage at a minimum. Travellers with a pre-existing medical condition are required to complete a short medical questionnaire, which must be signed by their physician. This is to ensure that travellers have the necessary fitness and mobility to comfortably complete their chosen trip. While our CEOs work hard to ensure that all our travellers are catered for equally, it is not their responsibility to help individuals who cannot complete the day's activities unaided. Please refer to the physical ratings in this Trip Details document for more information.

The medical questionnaire can be found online at:

www.gadventures.com/medical-form.

A Couple of Rules

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on any trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for our travellers. Our philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter, and in particular the local people who make the world the special place it is. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our CEOs have the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance: Travel insurance is compulsory in order to participate on any of our trips. When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance has been sighted by your CEO, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy please bear in mind that all clients must have medical coverage and that we require a minimum coverage of USD 200,000 for repatriation and emergency rescue. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. If you have credit card insurance we require proof of purchase of the trip (a receipt of credit card statement) with a credit card in your name. Contact your bank for details of their participating insurer, the level of coverage and emergency contact telephone number.

Planeterra-The G Adventures Foundation

Through our commitment to responsible tourism we have developed the Planeterra Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of people and communities around the world through support of international charities, local organizations and community projects in the places that we visit on our tours. G Adventures matches all individual donations and pays all administration costs, which means that 100% of each donation is doubled and goes directly to support our projects. For more information about Planeterra and the projects we support, or to make a donation, please visit www.planeterra.org

Planeterra Dollar-A-Day Program

Our Dollar-A-Day Program provides travellers with the opportunity to help us give back to the people and places visited on our tours by donating one dollar per day for the duration of their tour. 100% of these proceeds will go directly to support our Planeterra projects.

To participate in this program please indicate at the time of booking that you would like to participate in G Adventures' Dollar-A-Day program, either by clicking the check box online, or by advising your G Adventures specialist or travel agent. (Note: Donation will be charged in the currency of your booking)

Local Dress

Many Bhutanese people still wear traditional clothes and dress modestly.

Feedback

After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us that you'll receive a special discount code for free online prints and we'll give you 5% off the price of your next G Adventures trip if your feedback is completed on-line within 30 days of finishing your trip. Please visit <http://www.gadventures.com/evaluations>

Newsletter

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from G Adventures, subscribe at www.gadventures.com/newsletters/

Stay current on how our company invests in our global community through our foundation – Planeterra. Sign up for [Planeterra's monthly news](#) to learn more about how to give back and support the people and places we love to visit.

Travel Forum - The Watering Hole

Be sure to stop by [The Watering Hole](#), our adventure travel forum. If you're interested in meeting others booked on your upcoming trip, check out the [Departure Lounge](#) section of our forum and introduce yourself. Otherwise, just drop in at anytime to share some travel tips, ask questions, meet other travellers and quench your thirst for travel. Our forum is located at wateringhole.gadventures.com.