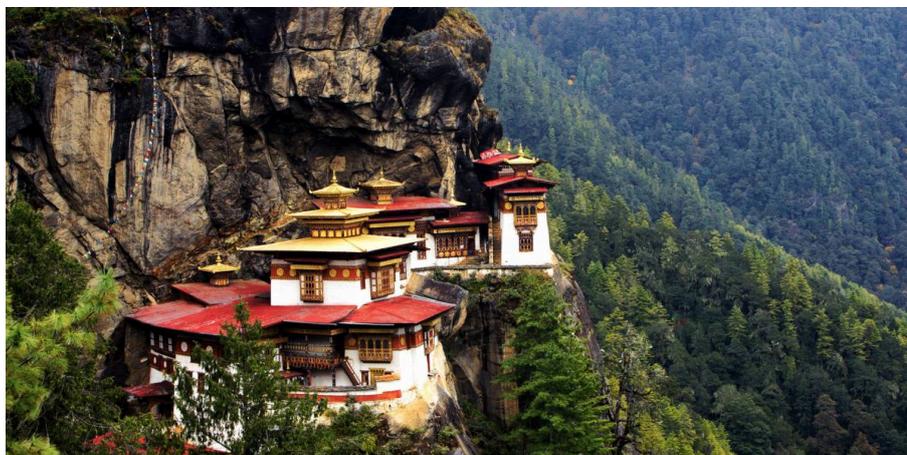


Bhutan Breakaway

7 days | Starts/Ends: Paro



PRIVATE TOUR: Come to the Kingdom of Bhutan! Nestled in the Eastern Himalayas, Bhutan has for centuries remained cautiously aloof from the rest of the world. With incredible scenery, impressive architectural feats including that of Tigers Nest Monastery and hospitable charm has been revealed to travellers hungry for new experiences.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Nalanda Monastery - where you may interact with the monks
- Khamsum Yuelley Namgyal Chorten - a stunning temple located on top of the hill with breath-taking views
- Chimi Lhakang (in Punakha) - the temple of Divine Madman
- Picturesque villages of Talo or Nobgang - where we explore the ancestral home of the Queen Mothers of Bhutan
- Dochula Pass - Himalayan peaks - Masagang, Tsendagang, Terigang, Jegegangphugang, Gangkar Punsum
- Thimphu - National Library, Thimphu Painting School and the Traditional Medicine Institute

- Tiger's Nest Monastery (Taktsang Pelphung Monastery) - spectacular and unmissable, perched some 900m above the Paro Valley floor
- Duntse Lhakang - an incredible 3-storey Chorten-style structure of intricate design

What's Included

- 6 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 6 dinners
- 6 nights - 3 star hotels
- English speaking guide for all scheduled sightseeing
- Airport arrival and departure transfers
- Touring and excursions as per the itinerary
- Entrance fees to all included sites and monuments
- Private chauffeur driven vehicle whilst touring in Bhutan
- All government royalties and taxes
- Bhutan Visa fee and travel Permit (excludes visa admin fee of USD\$20 pp, payable upon arrival)

What's Not Included

- International flights, Bhutan visa administrative fee payable upon arrival USD\$20
- Tipping - an entirely personal gesture

ITINERARY

Day 1 : Paro

Welcome to the Kingdom of Bhutan. There's an included airport transfer from Paro airport to Thimphu, the modern capital city of Bhutan. On arrival at the hotel, the rest of today is at leisure. **Overnight - Thimphu (D)**

Day 2 : Thimphu



Today's full day of sightseeing in Thimphu Valley includes the National Library, which has a vast collection of ancient Buddhist texts and printing blocks for prayer flags. See the Thimphu Painting School, famous for traditional thangka paintings. You'll continue to Kuensel Phodrang, known locally as Buddha Point - the largest Buddha statue in the country. There are marvelous views of the city from this vantage point.

Your tour continues to Memorial Chorten, a beautiful stupa built in the memory of Bhutan's third King. Visit the sprawling monastery of Trashichhodzong and opt to see beautiful

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hand-woven and crafted products at the Handicrafts Emporium. **Overnight - Thimphu** (B, L, D)

Day 3 : Punakha



Thimphu - Punakha. This morning you transfer to Punakha, an old winter capital of Bhutan. En route stop at the lofty Dochu La Pass (3,048m) to view the rugged eastern Himalayas, including Bhutan's highest mountain, Gangkar Punsum (7,550m). The road then drops down into the lush Punakha Valley.

Continue your day with a hike to Chimi lhakhang - the temple of the Divine Madman which was built by Lama Drukpa Kunley in 1499. Legend has it that he subdued the demoness of the Dochu la with his 'magic thunderbolt of wisdom.' A wooden effigy of the Lama's thunderbolt is preserved in the Lhakhang and childless women go to the temple to receive a wang (blessing) from the saint. Continue across rice fields to the tiny settlement of Pana. There are very few monks at the temple, which is surrounded by a row of prayer wheels and beautiful slate carvings.

This afternoon visit the impressive Punakha Dzong, the 'Palace of Great Happiness', which is located on the confluence of two rivers (Phochu and Mochu). It was built in 1637 and serves as the winter residence for the Chief Abbot - the religious head in Bhutan. The building was damaged and rebuilt several times due to flooding, fire and earthquakes. It is an exemplary masterpiece of Bhutanese architecture.

Overnight - Punakha (B, L, D)

Day 4 : Excursion to Khamsum Yuelley Namgyal Chorten



Today you hike to Khamsum Yuelley Namgyal Chorten, a stunning monument and temple located on top of a hill, with breathtaking views of the valley, paddy fields and the Mo Chu River.

After lunch, drive to the picturesque villages of Talo or Nobgang to explore the ancestral home of the Queen Mothers of Bhutan. The villages are scattered along a ridge above the Punakha Valley at an altitude of around 2,800m. Sangchen Dorji Lhendrup Nunnery is your next stop - perched on a ridge with spectacular views of the Punakha and Wangdue Valleys. The temple houses a complex for higher studies and is a meditation centre for nuns. It is also home to a 14 foot bronze statue of Avalokiteshvara, one of the biggest in the country. The statue was handcrafted exclusively by local artisans.

The final stop of the day is Nalanda Monastery, where monks pursue higher Buddhist studies. They will be delighted to speak with you to further their English studies.

Overnight - Punakha (B, L, D)

Day 5 : Paro Valley sightseeing



Punakha - Paro. Travel back to Paro today via the scenic Doch La Pass, enjoying spectacular views of the towering Bhutan Himalayas. Enjoy a sightseeing tour of the Paro Valley and visit the National Museum, which is housed in an old Ta Dzong (watchtower) and holds an intriguing collection of artefacts. Discover Duntse Lhakang, an incredible three story Chorten-style building which was constructed in 1433 and the beautiful 7th century Kichu Lhakang, one of the oldest and most sacred temples in Bhutan. **Overnight - Paro** (B, L, D)

Day 6 : Trek to the Tigers Nest Monastery



Taktshang Pelphung Monastery or Tiger's Nest Monastery, is the most famous site in Bhutan. It's located on the face of a sheer 900m cliff above the floor of Paro Valley. Today you'll take a scenic hike to view this spectacular and unmissable sight. The monastery is only accessible on foot or you can ride a pony part of the way (this must be arranged in advance by your guide). Take a steep one hour walk up to a cafeteria where you can enjoy refreshments and wonderful views of Taktshang.

Those who wish to proceed further must travel on foot. The trail continues uphill for

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another 45 minutes to a high observation point (3140m) where there is a stupa with incredible views of the monastery. Continuing down a flight of cliff-hanging steps on the narrow trail you'll reach a beautiful waterfall that plunges down the deep chasm. Then climb up the flight of steep steps to the monastery. At any point on this walk, you can always return if you find it too difficult. Once inside the monastery, there are several shrines to see with few monks in residence. After exploring the monastery walk back to the cafeteria for lunch, before retracing your steps and returning to Paro.

If you have more time and are ready for a more challenging day, there are several monasteries, temples and retreat houses in the surrounding area of Taktshang. The most notable among them are Zangdopelri and Ugyen Tsemo.

Overnight - Paro (B, L, D)

Day 7 : Paro

Your holiday concludes after breakfast and an onward departure transfer to Paro Airport for your international flight.

(B)

PRICES / DATES INFO

The 'Twin Share' price is per person when there are 2 persons sharing a room. The 'Solo Room' price is applicable when a single room is required. Prices are based on a travelling party of at least 2 adults. If travelling solo, an additional '1-person' supplement will apply.

PRICES / DATES 2021

Date	Twin Share	Single
26 Feb	CAD 3,795	CAD 4,385

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