Journey Across Bhutan Tour

Trip information · Nord Extreme Himalaya Pvt. Ltd. · delightful-orange-chimpanzee.tarevirjungleresort.com · Updated 22 November 2026

DURATION	**15 Days**
DIFFICULTY	**Moderate**
MAX ALTITUDE	**3900m**
GROUP SIZE	**10 People**
BEST SEASON	**September–November and March–May**
START / END	**Kathmandu / Kathmandu**
PRICE FROM	**USD 3,999 per person**

Trip overview

Journey Across Bhutan Tour – Discover the Dragon Kingdom from West to East

Bhutan, a peaceful Himalayan kingdom known for its rich cultural heritage and stunning landscapes, remains one of the world's most unique travel destinations. The Journey Across Bhutan Tour is a longer, more immersive experience that takes you from the western valleys of Paro and Thimphu through central Bhutan to the untouched eastern regions of Mongar, Trashigang, and beyond. Spanning around 14 to 18 days, this tour is the most complete way to explore the diverse geography, spiritual soul, and cultural depth of Bhutan.

Geography

Bhutan's geography is both spectacular and diverse. The country stretches from the subtropical lowlands near the Indian border to snow-covered Himalayan peaks to the north. The Journey Across Bhutan covers all three main geographic zones:

- Western Bhutan (Paro, Thimphu, Punakha): Known for iconic sites like the Tiger's Nest Monastery and Punakha Dzong.
- Central Bhutan (Trongsa, Bumthang): The cultural and spiritual heartland with picturesque valleys and ancient temples.
- Eastern Bhutan (Mongar, Trashigang, Trashi Yangtse): Less visited, but incredibly rich in indigenous culture, traditional crafts, and unspoiled nature.

Traveling across Bhutan offers not just changes in landscape, but also variations in architecture, dialects, and customs—each region preserving its unique identity within a shared national culture.

People and Climate

Bhutanese people are known for their hospitality, humility, and deep-rooted spirituality. The population includes Ngalops in the west, Sharchops in the east, and Lhotshampas in the south. Across the country, life is centered around Buddhism, with monasteries and chortens dotting every hilltop and valley.

The climate varies significantly depending on altitude and region. Western and central Bhutan have a

temperate climate, while the east is warmer and more humid. Spring (March–May) and autumn (September–November) are the best times to travel, with clear skies and comfortable temperatures, especially for long drives and mountain views.

Transportation

The tour begins with your arrival at Paro International Airport, Bhutan's only international gateway. From there, your journey proceeds by road in a private vehicle with a dedicated driver and guide.

Bhutan's road network winds through mountains and forests, offering breathtaking views but requiring patience. Distances that seem short on a map can take hours to cover. However, the drives are part of the adventure, with stops at monasteries, villages, and viewpoints like Pele La and Thrumshing La Pass (3,750m) offering unforgettable moments.

In the east, domestic flights between Trashigang (Yonphula Airport) and Paro may be available for those preferring a shorter return, depending on weather and flight schedules.

Highlights

- The 'Journey Across Bhutan' cultural tour is ideal for those who want to discover the true Bhutan. This ultimate tour explores the cultural valleys of the west, the spiritual heart of Bhutan, and the rugged east,
- Explore cultural Vally of Bhutan-"Cultural Heartland"
- Explore Bhutan's central valleys, rich with ancient historical and sacred Buddhist sites,
- Journey to the rugged, remote and seldom visited Eastern Districts,
- Discover some of the most sacred Buddhist monasteries and temples in the Himalaya,
- Visit ancient palaces and museums featuring historical memorabilia of Bhutan's Royal Family,
- Experience Bhutan's unique culture up-close with farmhouse visits and village excursions,
- Drive over high mountain passes affording sensational views of the Himalayan peaks,
- Visit many cultural attractions including medieval fortresses (Dzongs), markets and museums,
- Hike up to the famous Taktsang Monastery, perched on a cliff 900m above the valley floor,
- Marvel at the exquisite ancient murals and carvings in the dzongs and temples,
- Traverse beautiful landscapes from lush valleys to dense forests.

Day-by-day itinerary

Day 1 : Arrive Paro

The flight to Paro is one of the most spectacular mountain flights in the world, with a constantly changing panorama of some of the highest mountains on earth. Our BJPTT representative will meet you at Paro airport exit doors following customs formalities. After lunch enjoy afternoon sightseeing around Paro, including a visit to the Ta Dzong Museum housing many religious relics, works of art and handicrafts offering a great orientation into Bhutan's historical, cultural, and religious past. Next, visit the Rimpong Dzong to see the painting of the great saint Milarepa. Dzong's are large monasteries and district administrative Centre's, which were once strategic forts. Before dinner at the hotel there will be an orientation on Bhutanese etiquette by your guide. Overnight at your hotel in Paro.

Day 2 : Paro - Full Day Sightseeing

After breakfast hike to Taktsang Monastery. The walk of approximately 1.5 to 2 hours uphill takes you almost a kilometer above the Paro valley floor (for those who cannot hike we will arrange a horse for transfer up to cafeteria). The view of Taktsang Monastery built on a sheer cliff face 900 meters above the valley floor is a spectacular sight. The Monastery is an important pilgrim site for Buddhists. The great Guru Rimpoche is said to have flown here on the back of a tigress when he brought the teachings of the Buddhist Dharma to Bhutan in the 8th Century. Afterwards drive to the ruins of the 17th Century Drukgyel Dzong, and 7th Century Kyichu Lhakhang, one of the 108 temples constructed by the Tibetan king Songtsen Gampo. Overnight at your hotel in Paro.

Day 3 : Paro- Full Day Sightseeing

Enjoy a day trip to the Haa Valley, one of the most picturesque districts in Bhutan. Reached via the beautiful Chelila Pass (3900m), Haa Valley is characterized by its surrounding rugged and mountainous terrain and unique architecture. Overnight at your hotel in Paro.

Day 4 : Drive from Paro to Thimphu

Drive to the capital, Thimphu (1.5 hours). Once a rustic village sitting in a broad river valley, Thimphu is today the nation’s capital. Enjoy a full day of sightseeing, including a visit to the National Memorial Chorten, completed by the Royal Queen Mother as a memorial stupa for the Third King. Continue on to 12th century Changangkha Temple and the Zilukha Nunnery. If your visit coincides with the weekend, you can walk through the Thimphu Market. Overnight at your hotel in Thimphu.

Day 5 : Thimphu- Full Day Sightseeing

Continue sightseeing in Thimphu. Visit the School for Arts and Crafts, The National Library housing the collection of Bhutanese scriptures dating back to the 8th century, the Traditional Paper Factory and a fascinating replica of a medieval farmhouse at the Folk Heritage Museum. If there is time, you may visit the nursing pen for the Takin, the national animal of Bhutan, and Tashichho Dzong, ‘the fortress of the glorious religion’ housing some ministries, His Majesty’s secretariat, and the central monk body. Other options for the day include a hike to Tango and Cheri Monasteries (45 min.), two of the most ancient monasteries in the Thimphu region. Overnight at your hotel in Thimphu.

Day 6 : Drive from Thimphu to Punakha

Drive over the Dochu-La pass (3,100 meters), which on a clear day offers an incredible view of Himalayan peaks before descending into the Punakha valley (3 hrs.). In the Dochu-La area there are vast Rhododendron forests that grow to tree size and bloom in late April/early may covering the mountains in a riot of glorious spring color.Punakha was the ancient capital of Bhutan. On arrival, visit Punakha Dzong, built in 1637 by the Shabdrung, the ‘Unifier of Bhutan’. The three story main temple of the Punakha Dzong is a breathtaking example of traditional architecture with four intricately embossed entrance pillars crafted from cypress and decorated in gold and silver. After lunch, enjoy a walk to Chimi Lhakhang, temple of Drukpa Kuenly. He inherited the Divine Madman title since he revolted against the orthodox Buddhism in his time. Overnight at your hotel in Punakha/ Wangdue.

Day 7 : Drive from Punakha to Phobjikha Valley

Transfer to Phobjikha Valley (3 hrs.) via the bustling market town of Wangduephodrang. Drive up a winding mountain road through oak and rhododendron forests, and over a high pass down into the

picturesque Phobjikha Valley. Phobjikha is one of Bhutan's few glacial valleys, and chosen winter home of black necked cranes (November – March) migrating from the Tibetan plateau. After lunch visit the Phobjikha Sanctuary to view the majestic black necked cranes (Nov-Mar only) and Gangtey Gompa (Monastery), dating back to the 16th century. Overnight at your hotel in Phobjikha.

Day 8 : Drive from Phobjika Valley to Trongsa

Depart over the Pele La pass (3,420m) on the Black Mountain range towards Trongsa. In route visit the beautiful 18th century Chendebji Chorten. Trongsa is the ancestral home of Bhutan's ruling dynasty. Visit Trongsa Dzong, the largest Dzong in Bhutan and the Ta Dzong museum housing a collection of historical artefacts of the Royal Family. Overnight at your hotel in Trongsa.

Day 9 : Drive from Trongsa to Bumthang

After breakfast proceed towards Bumthang (2.5 hrs.), the spiritual heart of the kingdom. Bumthang is home to some of Bhutan's oldest Palaces, Buddhist temples and monasteries. On arrival, visit Jakar Dzong (Dzong of the White Bird) and 16th century Tamshing Lhakhang containing ancient Buddhist wall paintings. After lunch visit Kurje Lhakhang, one of the most sacred places in the kingdom and 7th Century Jambay Lhakhang. Overnight at your lodge in Jakar, Bumthang.

Day 10 : Bumthang- Full Day Sightseeing

Enjoy a day exploring some of the many sites around Bumthang, including the 16th century Tang Ugyen Chholing Palace museum containing an overview of traditional rural life in Bhutan and the pool of Mebartso (The Lake of Fire) where Pemalingpa (founder of the Nyingmapa sect) is said to have found treasure hidden by Guru Rinpoche. Overnight at your lodge in Jakar, Bumthang.

Day 11 : Drive from Bumthang to Mongar

The journey to Mongar takes about 6 hours with spectacular views in route. Drive through Ura village before climbing sharply to the highest point on Bhutan's road network, Thrumsing-La Pass (4,000m). From here, the road gradually passes through picturesque alpine valleys, pine forests, maize fields and hamlets to reach Mongar town. Visit Mongar Dzong, built in the 1930's using the traditional process without either plans or the use of nails. Overnight at your lodge in Mongar.

Day 12 : Drive from Mongar to Trashigang

Drive to Trashigang (3 hrs.) through leafy forests filled with ferns and over Kori-La Pass (2,450m) before descending through cornfields and banana groves to reach the famous road zigzag just below Yadi. Trashigang is the main township of the largest district in the country. After lunch visit Trashigang Dzong. Overnight at your lodge in Trashigang.

Day 13 : Drive from Trashigang to tashiyangtse

Visit the temple of GomKora and Doksum Village where you can see women busily weaving traditional Bhutanese fabric before reaching Tashiyangtse, the administrative Centre for this district. The area is famous for its unique wooden crafts. Visit the Tashiyangtse Dzong, and the dazzling white stupa of Chorten Kora and the nearby institute for ZorigChusum, where student is trained in Bhutan's 13 traditional arts and crafts. Overnight at your lodge in Trashigang.

Day 14 : Drive from Trashigang Samdrup Jongkhar

After breakfast drive to Samdrup Jongkhar, the gateway to eastern Bhutan and to Assam, India. It is

about 9 hours' drive from Trashigang with many beautiful villages and landscapes on the way. Overnight at your hotel in Samdrup Jongkhar.

Day 15 : Drive from Samdrup Jongkhar to Guwahati for your onward flight

After breakfast, your guide will arrange an Indian vehicle your transfer to Guwahati, the capital town of the Indian north-eastern state of Assam, for your onward flight.

What's included

1. Visa & Fees

- Visa & SDF: Bhutan visa processing and the Sustainable Development Fee (SDF) for tourism in Bhutan.

2. Accommodation & Meals

- Hotel Accommodation: Comfortable hotel stays throughout the tour with all meals included.
- Meals: All meals included during the tour (Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner – BLD).

3. Staff

- Guide: Knowledgeable English-speaking guide to assist, provide information, and ensure a smooth travel experience.

4. Transportation

- Transport: Comfortable private vehicle for all transfers and sightseeing during the tour.

Not included

1. Flights

- International Airfare: Flights to and from Bhutan.

2. Travel Insurance

- Travel Insurance: Comprehensive travel insurance covering unforeseen circumstances, medical emergencies, and trip cancellation.

3. Personal Expenses

- Personal Nature Expenses: Costs for shopping, additional personal items, and individual expenditures.

4. Tips & Gratuities

- Tips & Gratuities: Optional but customary for guides, drivers, and support staff.

Dates & prices

- 02 Mar 2027 – 16 Mar 2027 · USD 3,999 · Available
- 16 Mar 2027 – 30 Mar 2027 · USD 3,999 · Available
- 06 Apr 2027 – 20 Apr 2027 · USD 3,999 · Available

- 20 Apr 2027 – 04 May 2027 · USD 3,999 · Available
- 04 May 2027 – 18 May 2027 · USD 3,999 · Available

Best time to visit

Best months: March–May and October–November. Spring (March–May) brings rhododendrons and the Paro Tsechu festival; autumn (September–November) has clear Himalayan views and the Thimphu Tsechu. Winter is cold but bright, and the summer monsoon is green with fewer visitors.

What to bring — packing checklist

Clothing

- [ ] Moisture-wicking base layers (top and bottom)
- [ ] Fleece or light insulated mid-layer
- [ ] Down jacket (–10 °C rated for high trails)
- [ ] Waterproof, breathable shell jacket and trousers
- [ ] 2–3 trekking shirts and 2 pairs of trekking trousers
- [ ] Warm hat, sun hat or cap and buff
- [ ] Light liner gloves and warm insulated gloves
- [ ] Underwear and sports bras

Footwear

- [ ] Broken-in waterproof trekking boots with ankle support
- [ ] Camp shoes or sandals for teahouse evenings
- [ ] Hiking socks (4–5 pairs) and warm wool socks for nights

Equipment

- [ ] Daypack 30–35 L with rain cover
- [ ] Sleeping bag rated to –10 °C (we can provide one)
- [ ] Trekking poles
- [ ] Sunglasses with UV protection
- [ ] Duffel bag for the porter (provided by Nord Extreme)

Health & personal

- [ ] Personal medication and a small first-aid kit
- [ ] Altitude medicine (Diamox) after consulting your doctor
- [ ] Water bottles or a 2–3 L hydration bladder, purification tablets or filter
- [ ] Sunscreen SPF 50, lip balm with SPF
- [ ] Hand sanitiser, wet wipes, quick-dry towel
- [ ] Headlamp with spare batteries, power bank

Documents & money

- [ ] Passport valid for 6+ months, plus copies
- [ ] Travel insurance policy (covering helicopter evacuation)
- [ ] 4 passport photos for permits
- [ ] Cash in USD / Nepali rupees for tips, snacks and extras
- [ ] Credit or debit card

Down jackets and sleeping bags can also be rented in Kathmandu.

Essential information

Duration

The Journey Across Bhutan Tour is an immersive cultural and scenic adventure that typically lasts 10–14 days, allowing travelers to explore the country's diverse landscapes, historic towns, sacred monasteries, and remote valleys. This comprehensive itinerary provides an in-depth experience of Bhutan's rich cultural heritage, stunning Himalayan scenery, and traditional way of life from western to central Bhutan.

Tour Grade

This is an Easy to Moderate cultural tour suitable for travelers of all ages with a reasonable level of fitness. The itinerary includes comfortable road journeys, guided sightseeing, nature walks, and optional hikes to monasteries and viewpoints. No trekking or technical experience is required, making it an excellent choice for couples, families, photographers, and cultural enthusiasts.

Altitude

The tour travels through elevations ranging from 1,200 metres to 3,400 metres. The highest point is generally Pele La Pass (3,420 m), one of Bhutan's most scenic mountain passes, offering magnificent views of the surrounding Himalayan ranges. The gradual journey through varying elevations allows travelers to acclimatize comfortably while enjoying Bhutan's spectacular mountain landscapes.

Destinations

The journey covers Bhutan's most significant cultural and natural attractions, including Paro, Thimphu, Punakha, Phobjikha Valley, Trongsa, Bumthang, and, depending on the itinerary, Mongar or eastern Bhutan. Each destination offers unique experiences, from ancient monasteries and impressive dzongs to peaceful valleys and traditional villages.

Accommodation

Accommodation is provided in carefully selected 3-star, 4-star, or luxury hotels and boutique lodges, depending on your preferred travel style. Each property offers comfortable rooms, modern facilities, excellent hospitality, and an authentic Bhutanese atmosphere, ensuring a relaxing stay throughout the journey.

Meals

Daily breakfast, lunch, and dinner are included throughout the tour. Guests can enjoy authentic Bhutanese cuisine alongside Indian, Asian, and Continental dishes prepared with fresh local ingredients. Vegetarian, vegan, and other dietary preferences can be accommodated upon request.

Transportation

The tour is operated using comfortable private tourist vehicles with experienced professional drivers. All airport transfers, sightseeing excursions, and intercity transportation are included, allowing guests to enjoy Bhutan's scenic mountain highways, winding valleys, and picturesque countryside in comfort and safety.

Best Time to Visit

The Journey Across Bhutan Tour can be enjoyed throughout the year, although the most favorable

seasons are March to May and September to November. During these months, visitors enjoy pleasant temperatures, blooming rhododendrons, crystal-clear mountain views, vibrant landscapes, and colorful cultural festivals.

Permits and Visa

All international visitors require a valid passport, a Bhutan tourist visa, and must travel through a licensed Bhutanese tour operator. All visa arrangements, government permits, and travel documentation are organized before arrival, ensuring a seamless and hassle-free travel experience.

Travel Insurance

Comprehensive travel insurance is strongly recommended and should include coverage for medical expenses, emergency evacuation, trip cancellation, travel delays, and personal belongings.

Additional information

Cultural Highlights

The Journey Across Bhutan Tour offers a fascinating exploration of Bhutan's living Buddhist heritage. Visitors discover magnificent dzongs, sacred monasteries, ancient temples, traditional villages, and colorful local markets while learning about Bhutan's unique customs, royal history, and the philosophy of Gross National Happiness, which guides the nation's development.

Scenic Highlights

Traveling from western to central Bhutan reveals an incredible variety of landscapes, including fertile valleys, dense forests, high mountain passes, glacial rivers, and rolling alpine meadows. Highlights include the breathtaking views from Dochula Pass, the tranquil beauty of Phobjikha Valley, the dramatic setting of Trongsa Dzong, and the spiritual charm of Bumthang, often regarded as Bhutan's cultural heartland.

Historic Monasteries and Dzongs

Throughout the journey, visitors explore some of Bhutan's most treasured landmarks, including Tiger's Nest Monastery (Paro Taktsang), Punakha Dzong, Tashichho Dzong, Trongsa Dzong, Gangtey Monastery, Jambay Lhakhang, Kurjey Lhakhang, and several other historic temples that showcase Bhutan's remarkable architectural and spiritual heritage.

Local Life and Traditions

The tour provides meaningful opportunities to experience everyday Bhutanese life by visiting traditional villages, local farms, handicraft centers, and bustling markets. Travelers can observe traditional farming practices, interact with friendly local communities, and gain insight into Bhutan's enduring customs and rural lifestyle.

Flora and Fauna

The route passes through diverse ecological zones, from subtropical valleys to cool temperate forests and alpine landscapes. Visitors may encounter rhododendron forests, blue pine woodlands, prayer-flag-covered mountain passes, black-necked cranes (seasonally in Phobjikha Valley), Himalayan birdlife, langur monkeys, yaks, and Bhutan's national animal, the Takin, at the Motithang Takin Preserve.

Weather and Climate

Weather conditions vary with altitude and season. During spring and autumn, daytime temperatures generally range between 15°C and 25°C, while mornings and evenings remain cool, especially in the mountain regions. Layered clothing is recommended to ensure comfort throughout the journey.

Communication and Currency

Mobile phone coverage and internet services are available in most towns and hotels, although connectivity may be limited in remote regions. The local currency is the Bhutanese Ngultrum (BTN), and Indian Rupees are widely accepted. Credit cards are accepted in many hotels and larger establishments, while carrying cash is advisable for purchases in rural areas.

Responsible Tourism

Bhutan follows a High Value, Low Volume tourism policy that protects the country's environment, culture, and traditions. Visitors are encouraged to respect local customs, dress modestly when entering monasteries, reduce plastic waste, support local businesses, and help preserve Bhutan's unique cultural and natural heritage through responsible travel practices.

Packing Recommendations

Recommended items include comfortable walking shoes, lightweight clothing, a warm fleece or jacket, waterproof outerwear, sunglasses, sunscreen, a hat, reusable water bottle, camera, binoculars for wildlife viewing, personal medications, and modest clothing suitable for visits to monasteries and religious sites.

Why Choose the Journey Across Bhutan Tour?

The Journey Across Bhutan Tour is the ultimate cultural discovery of the Kingdom of Bhutan, offering an extraordinary combination of spectacular Himalayan landscapes, ancient monasteries, majestic dzongs, peaceful valleys, vibrant traditions, and genuine Bhutanese hospitality. Ideal for travelers seeking a deeper understanding of Bhutan beyond the main tourist centers, this journey provides an unforgettable experience through one of the world's most fascinating and well-preserved Himalayan kingdoms.

Frequently asked questions

How difficult is the Journey Across Bhutan Tour?

The Journey Across Bhutan Tour is graded Moderate — suitable for most active travellers. Expect 5–7 hours of walking on most days on mountain trails with plenty of ascents and descents. Regular cardio training — hiking, running, cycling or stair climbing — for 6–8 weeks before departure makes the trip far more enjoyable.

What is the best time for the Journey Across Bhutan Tour?

For the Bhutan region the best months are March–May and October–November. Spring (March–May) brings rhododendrons and the Paro Tsechu festival; autumn (September–November) has clear Himalayan views and the Thimphu Tsechu. Winter is cold but bright, and the summer monsoon is green with fewer visitors.

What permits do I need for the Journey Across Bhutan Tour?

You need your Bhutan visa and the Sustainable Development Fee (SDF), which must be arranged through a licensed operator. Nord Extreme arranges every permit for you before the trip starts — check the "Includes" section above for exactly what is covered in the price. Just bring your passport and a few passport-size photos.

What is the accommodation like on the Journey Across Bhutan Tour?

In Kathmandu you stay in a comfortable hotel; on the trail we use the best available family-run teahouses and lodges with twin-share rooms, shared or attached bathrooms and a warm dining room. Upgrades to luxury lodges are possible on popular routes such as Everest and Annapurna.

Can I book the Journey Across Bhutan Tour as a private trip or join a group?

Both. You can join one of the fixed departures listed under "Dates & Prices", or book a private trip for just you, your family or friends on any date. Solo travellers are welcome — you will always have your own licensed guide.

Do I need travel insurance for the Journey Across Bhutan Tour?

Yes, travel insurance is compulsory. It must cover medical treatment and emergency helicopter evacuation up to the trip's highest altitude, plus trip cancellation. Please send us your policy details before departure.

What should I pack for the Journey Across Bhutan Tour?

See the "What to bring" checklist on this page for the full list. The essentials are broken-in boots, warm layers, a down jacket, a waterproof shell, sun protection and a daypack. Down jackets and sleeping bags can be rented cheaply in Kathmandu, and a porter carries your main bag (up to 10–12 kg).

Ready to book or have a question?

Trip page:
https://delightful-orange-chimpanzee.tarevirjungleresort.com/holiday/package/journey-across-bhutan-tour/

Contact our team in Kathmandu: sonam@nordextreme.com · +977 9851078748 · delightful-orange-chimpanzee.tarevirjungleresort.com