Bhutan Shangri-La Cultural Tour

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Bhutan Shangri-La Tour is our effort to introduce you to the rich cultural heritage of this tiny Himalayan kingdom also known as the last Shangri-La. Our week-long tour in Bhutan begins with sightseeing in the country's capital, Thimphu, where we visit the Memorial Chhorten, mini- zoo, National Institute of Traditional Medicine, folk heritage museum and the majestic Tashichho Dzong (fortress). Next, we travel to Punakha via DochuLa pass (3,100m) and tour the Chimi Lhakhang temple on the way. We also visit the Punakha Dzong and explore the amazing Gangtey village before heading to Paro. In the beautiful Paro valley, we visit Rinpung Dzong and Kichu Lhakhang temple. Our tour ends with a hike to the famous Tiger's Nest Monastery which is a perfect way to end one's journey in the last Shangri-La.

Itinerary

Day 01: ARRIVE PARO

Our Tour escort from Bhutan will receive you upon arrival at Paro Airport (7,000ft) and drive you through the valley of Paro to the hotel. After refreshment, take a stroll around the town of Paro.

Day 02: PARO

Drive to the ruins of Drukgyel Dzong. This Dzong is of historical importance, from whose ramparts the Bhutanese repelled Tibetan invaders. On a clear day one can view the sacred Mount Chomolhari, Mountain of Goddess (24,000 ft). After lunch, visit Ta Dzong, the National Museum housed in an ancient watchtower, which has a fine collection of ancient Thangka painting, textiles, weapons and artifacts. Walk to the traditional wooden bridge.

Day 03: PARO - EXCURSION TO TAKTSHANG OR DRIVE TO CHELILA PASS

Drive to Ramthongkha and then hike to the viewpoint of Taktshang, the Tiger's Nest (one and a half hours). This magical monastery clings to a vertical granite cliff 3,000 ft above the valley floor. The monastery unfortunately got burnt in 1998 but it has recently been reconstructed.

Day 04: PARO - THIMPHU

Drive through the beautiful valleys of Paro and Thimphu to the capital of Bhutan – Thimphu. Visit the Zangthopelri Lhakhang, the School of Thangka Painting and the Tashi Nincha folk studio where the traditional folk and mask dance are learned and practiced. Afternoon, visit the Zilukha Nunnery, the TashiChho Dzong and the Handicraft Emporium.

Day 05: THIMPHU - WANGDUE PHODRANG

In the morning, visit the Memorial Chorten and see also some gold and silversmiths at work. After lunch, drive to Punakha through Dochula Pass. Visit Punakha town and visit the Punakha Dzong if the monastic body has shifted to Thimphu for the summer. Evening drive to Wangdue town.

Day 06: WANGDUE PHODRANG - TRONGSA

Visit Wangdue town. After lunch, drive to Trongsa over the Pelela Pass. (Alt 11,155 ft / 3,400 m) in the Black Mountain ranges, which separates the western region from the other regions of the country.

Day 07: TRONGSA - BUMTHANG

Visit to the outside premises of Trongsa Dzong one of the largest Dzongs in the country. Visit also the Ta Dzong (Watch Tower) and stroll through the small Trongsa town. After lunch, drive to Bumthang Valley across the Yutola Pass.

Day 08: BUMTHANG

Drive to Ura – one of the four valleys of Bumthang. Visit the village and explore the beautiful valley. Visit Ura Lhakhang and drive through the picturesque valley of Bumthang to see Kurje Lhakhang, Tamshing Lhakhang and Kuenshusum Lhakhang.

Day 09: BUMTHANG - THIMPHU

Drive to Thimphu. Enroute visit the Rukhubji village. Overnight in Thimphu.

Day 10: THIMPHU -PARO - DEPARTURES

Early morning drive to Paro for departure. Your Bhutan Lha-Yul Tours & Travels escort will see you off at the airport.