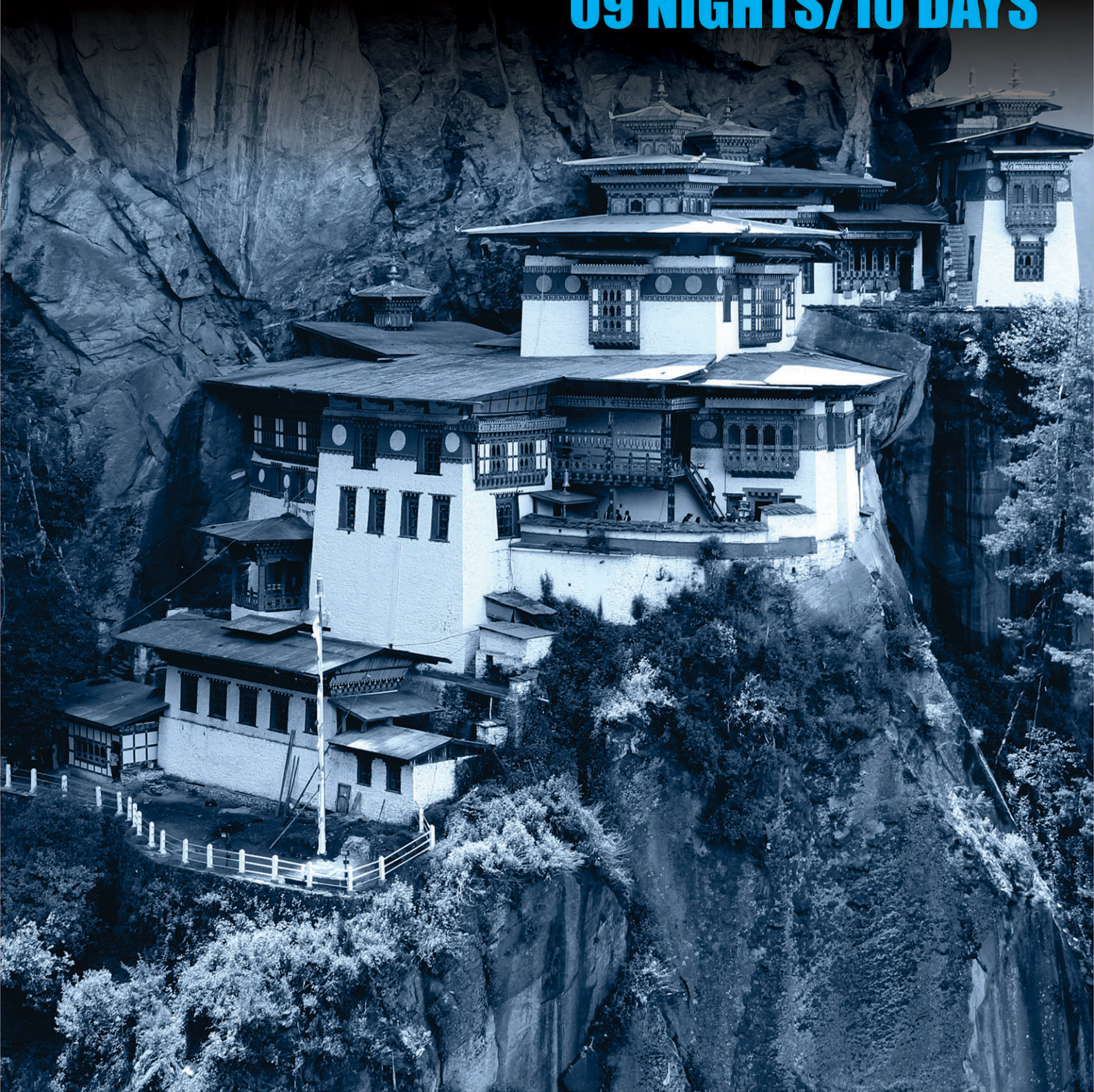


Scenic

BHUTAN



09 NIGHTS/10 DAYS





ARRIVE PARO

- Fly into Bhutan by Druk Air, Bhutan's National Air Carrier. Upon arrival, meet our representative and drive to the Hotel. Check into the Hotel, refresh and relax.
- Paro is a historic town with many sacred sites and historical buildings scattered through the area. In addition, the Paro Valley is wide and verdant and is recognized as one of the most beautiful in all Bhutan. Prefer to stay in Paro if you are someone who is fond of nature and would like to spend quiet and peaceful time.
- Evening time free to walk around.
- Overnight stay at the Hotel.



PARO EXCURSION & SIGHTSEEING

- After breakfast take an excursion to Taktsang Monastery, the most famous of Bhutanese monasteries precariously perched on the edge of a 1,200 meter cliff, this monastery creates an impressive sight, and is the unofficial symbol of Bhutan. Taktsang was established as a sacred place for meditation by Guru Rinpoche who visited the site on his second visit to Bhutan in 747 CE, though the first monastery was not constructed until 1694. In 1998 a tragic fire destroyed most of the original buildings, but these have since been painstakingly restored to their former glory. The excursion to monastery takes about 5 hours for round trip.
- Overnight at the Hotel in Paro.

Day
3

PARO-THIMPU

(55 KMS/2 HRS)

- After breakfast, check out and drive to Thimpu, the capital city of Bhutan. Upon arrival, check into the Hotel, refresh & relax.
- Situated in the western central part of Bhutan. The city is spread out laterally in a north-south direction on the west bank of the valley formed by the Raidak River, which is known as the Wang Chuu or Thimphu Chuu in Bhutan. Thimphu is spread over an altitudinal range between 2,248 metres (7,375 ft) and 2,648 metres (8,688 ft). The culture of Bhutan is fully reflected in Thimphu in respect of literature, religion, customs, and national dress code, the monastic practices of the monasteries, music, dance, literature and in the media.
- Overnight at the Hotel in Thimpu.



- After breakfast, the schedule for the day is to go for a sightseeing to various good and historic places i.e. : the National Library, housing an extensive collection of priceless Buddhist manuscripts; the Institute for Zorig Chusum (commonly known as the Painting School) where students undergo a 6-year training course in Bhutan's 13 traditional arts and crafts. Later visit Textile and Folk Heritage Museum, a fascinating testimony of the Bhutanese material culture and living traditions. Back to Hotel for Lunch.
- After lunch, visit King's Memorial Chorten continuously circumambulated by people, murmuring mantras and spinning their prayer wheels. Construction of this landmark was the idea of Bhutan's third king, His Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuk ("the father of modern Bhutan") who has wished to erect monument to world peace and prosperity. Completed in 1974 after his untimely death, it serves both as a memorial to the Late King and as a monument to peace. The other places to be seen are the government-run Handicrafts Emporium and local crafts shops, Trashichhoedzong, "fortress of the glorious religion". This is the center of government and religion, site of monarch's throne room and seat of Je Khenpo or Chief Abbot. Built in 1641 by the political and religious unifier of Bhutan, Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal
- Overnight at the Hotel in Thimpu.



THIMPU-PUNAKHA

(77 KMS/3 HRS)

- After early breakfast, drive up to Dochu-la pass (3,088m/ 10,130 ft) stopping briefly here to take in the view and admire the chorten, mani wall, and prayer flags which decorate the highest point on the road. If skies are clear, the following peaks can be seen from this pass (left to right): Masagang (7,158m), Tsendagang (6,960m), Terigang (7,060m), Jejegangphugang (7,158 m), Kangphugang (7,170 m), Zongphugang (7, 060 m), a table mountain that dominates the isolated region of Lunana - finally Gangkar puensum, the highest peak in Bhutan at 7,497m.
- Later visit to Punakha Dzong, Built strategically at the junction of Pho Chhu and Mo Chhu rivers in 1637 by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal to serve as the religious and administrative centre of the region, Punakha Dzong has played an important role in Bhutan's history. Damaged by four catastrophic fires and an earthquake, the dzong is fully restored in the recent times.
- Overnight at the hotel at Punakha.



- After breakfast, drive across Pelela pass (3100m). En route visit to Chendbji Chorten, the stupa patterned on Swayambhunath in Kathmandu with eyes painted at four cardinal points. It was built in the 18th century by Lama Shida from Tibet, to cover the remains of an evil spirit that was subdued at this spot. Drive further and visit the striking Trongsa Dzong, ancestral abode of Bhutan's royal family, built in 1648 as the seat of power over central and eastern Bhutan. Both the first and second kings of Bhutan ruled the country from this ancient seat. All four kings were invested as Trongsa Penlop ('governor') prior to ascending the throne. The Dzong is a massive structure with many levels, sloping down the contours of the ridge on which it is built.
- Then proceed on to Bumthang across Yutong la pass (3,400m). En-route also visit Yathra (woolen fabric) weaving center and villages.
- Overnight at the hotel in Bumthang.





BUMTHANG EXCURSION

- After breakfast visit Kyichu Lhakhang, consisting of three temples. The one on the right was built in 1652 on the rock face where Guru meditated in the 8th century. Second temple is built on the site of a cave containing a rock with the imprint of Guru's body and is therefore considered the most holy. The third temple was built in 1990s by Ashi Kesang, the Queen Mother. These three temples are surrounded by a 108 chorten wall. Then proceed to Jambay Lhakhang. This monastery was built in the 7th century by Tibetan King, Songtsen Gampo. It is one of the 108 monasteries built by him to subdue evil spirits in the Himalayan region. Its present architectural appearance dates from the early 20th century. Evening visit to Lhodrak Kharchhu Monastery. Located above the main town, about 3 km from Chamkhar town, the monastery was founded by Namkhai Nyingpo Rinpoche in 1984 who was recognized at a very young age by H.H. the 14th Dalai Lama and H.H. 16th Karmapa as the reincarnation of a Tibetan lama whose spiritual lineage dates back to the nearest disciples of the great 9th century master. Since then the monastery has developed considerably with increase in number of monks to almost four hundred. The monastery has become part of an extensive effort to preserve and revitalize Tibetan culture.
- Overnight stay at Hotel in Bumthang.



BUMTHANG WANGDUEPHODRANG - PUNAKHA (215 kms/7 hrs)

- After breakfast drive to Paro en route visit Simtokha Dzong. This dzong, built in 1627 is the oldest in Bhutan. It now houses the Institute for Language and Culture Studies.
- Afternoon in Paro, visit Ta Dzong, once a watchtower, built to defend Rinpung Dzong during inter-valley wars of the 17th century, Ta Dzong was inaugurated as Bhutan's National Museum in 1968. Afterwards, walk down a hillside trail to visit Rinpung Dzong. Built in 1646 by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal, the first spiritual and temporal ruler of Bhutan, the Dzong houses the monastic body of Paro, the office of the Dzongda (district administrative head) and Thrimpon (judge) of Paro district. The approach to the Dzong is through a traditional covered bridge called Nemi Zam.
- Overnight at the hotel in Paro.



Day
9

EXCURSION TO HAA VALLEY

- Start the day early for drive to Haa via Chele-la pass. 4 Km away at Bondey village the road to Haa diverts towards the right hand side and ascends towards the chele-la pass starts. After driving through blue pine & rhododendron forest for 45 km, reach Chele-la pass (4200 meters). From this point one can have a superb views of Mt. Chomolhari & Jichu Drakey. This is a very good place to walk around for few minutes enjoying the view. Drive on to Haa, descending all the way for another 22 km (under an hours drive), finally reaching Haa. Adjoining the districts of Paro, Chhukha and Samtse, Haa valley is one of the most picturesque places in the Kingdom, spread over an area of 1706 sq. km. During pre-Buddhist era, Haa valley was known for its animist tradition. It is culturally rich valley and some of famous sites in this region are : 7th century Lhakhang Karmo (White temple) and Lhakhang Nagpo (Black temple) at the foothills of a venerated three brotherly mountains known as Meri Puensum. The valley is also unparalleled in Bhutan in terms of the diversity of the folk culture, legends and shamanistic rituals. The shamanistic traditions is vividly practiced in almost all the communities. The valley is also a paradise for nature lovers and travelling there is a very rewarding experience.
- Back to Paro.
- Overnight at Hotel in Paro.

Day
10

DEPARTURE

- After breakfast transfer to the airport for flight to onward destination or opt to drive to Phuentsholing (160 kms/5 hrs) to reach India and head for onward destinations.

