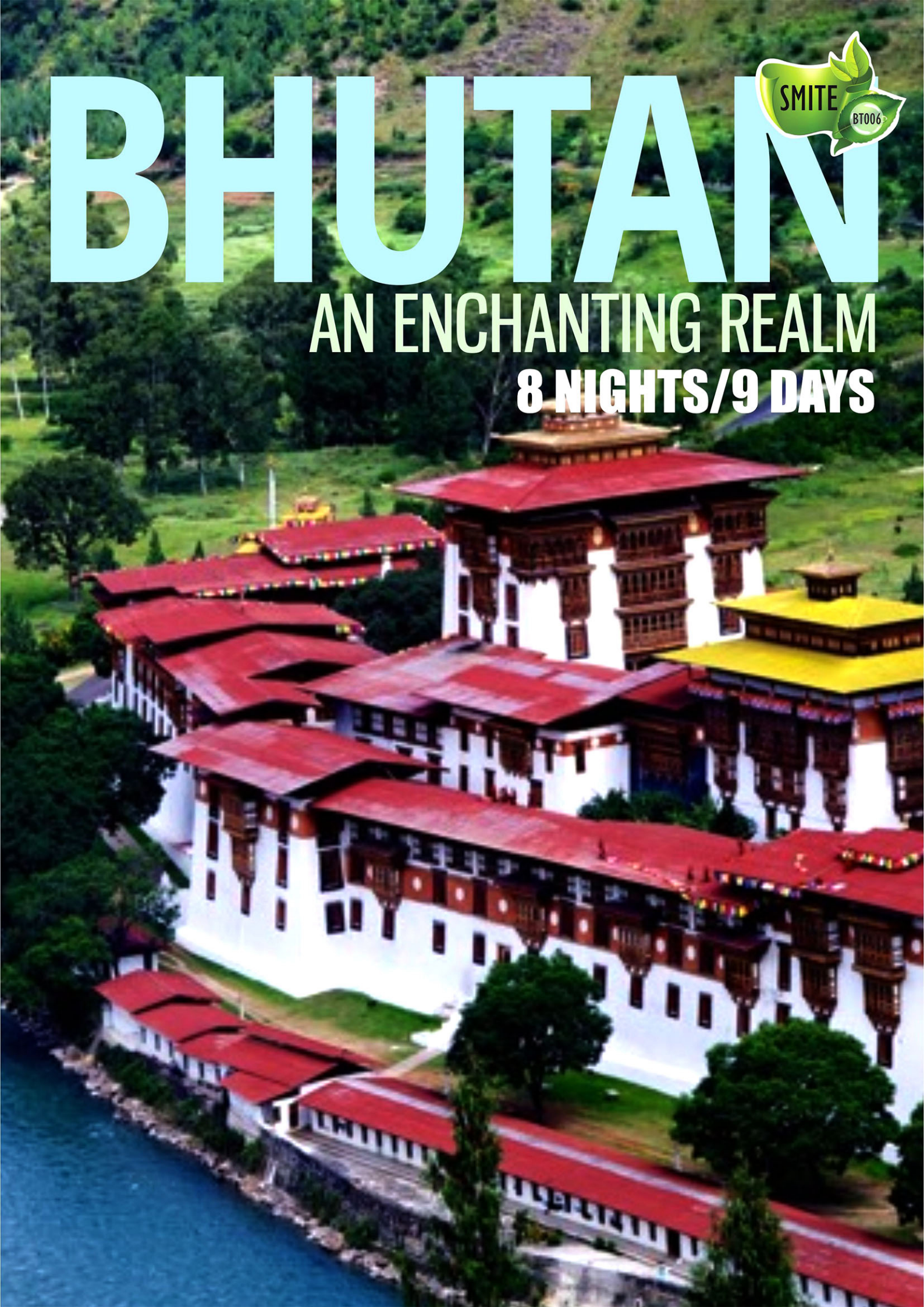


BHUTAN



AN ENCHANTING REALM

8 NIGHTS/9 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 Taktang 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. Taktang 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.





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.



THIMPU SIGHTSEEING & EXCURSION

- 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.





THIMPU SIGHTSEEING & EXCURSION CONTINUES...

- 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)

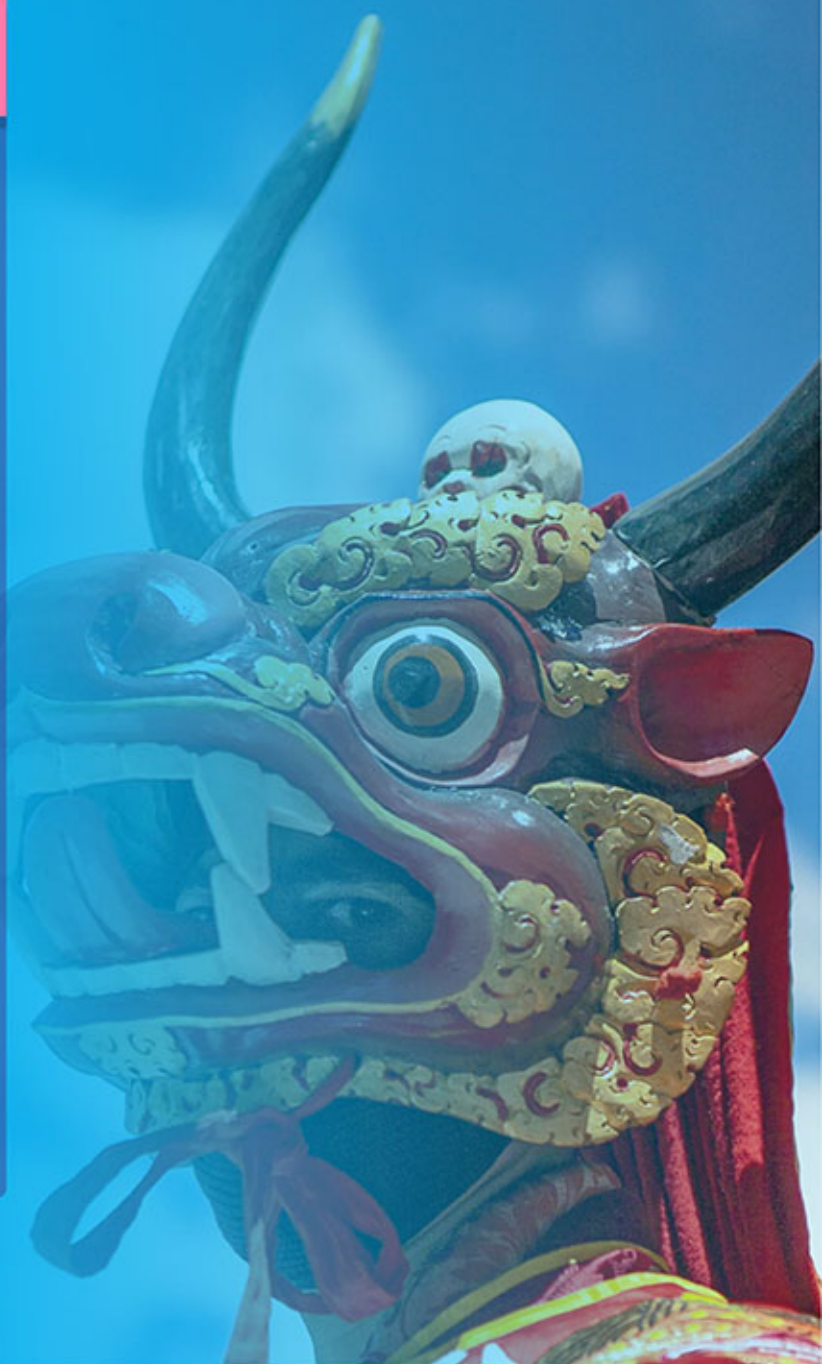
- After early breakfast, drive up to Dochu-la pass (3,088m/ 10,130 ft) stopping briefly here to take in the view and admire the chorten, mani wall, and prayer flags which decorate the highest point on the road. If skies are clear, the following peaks can be seen from this pass (left to right): Masagang (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.
- Evening time free to explore around.
- Overnight at the hotel at Punakha.





PUNAKHA GANGTEY VALLEY (78 kms/4 hrs)

- After breakfast drive and Visit Gangtey village where you see the Gangtey Monastery and visit the monastery. Phobjikha valley is part of the beautiful Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park (formerly known as Black Mountains National Park), one of Bhutan's most important nature sanctuaries. Each winter it is home to a flock of 300 rare and endangered black-necked cranes. The surrounding hills and mountains are home to nomadic shepherds and yak-herders. This is one of the most remote and untouched regions in Bhutan and is only just opening its doors to the outside world.
- The Black necked cranes start migration to this area from November each year. You will have refreshment and lunch at a resort/restaurant in this valley. Afternoon you can visit the Black Necked Crane Center and explore this beautiful scenic valley.
- Overnight at the Hotel at Gangtey.



GANGTEY TO PARO (180 kms/5 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. The museum is among the few educational institutions that interpret the history and culture of Bhutan through its exhibits, conducting symposiums,



GANGTEY TO PARO

(180 KMS/5 HRS)

- publication of research findings and conservation of artifacts. It boasts a rich variety of artifacts from all over the country representing different eras, as early as 4000 B.C.E. to the present day. A visit through the galleries shows the country's transition from the Stone Age to a modern Mahayanist Buddhist and multicultural kingdom with its cultural heritage intact. This Museum performs an essential role as a preserver and promoter of Bhutanese cultural values. Preserving culture and cultural values is one of the Nine Domains of Gross National Happiness, the Bhutanese philosophy for national development.
- Overnight at the Hotel in Paro.



PARO – CHELELA PASS (DAY EXCURSION)

- After Breakfast Drive to Chele la (pass), at an elevation 3,988 meters is considered to be one of the highest motorable passes in Bhutan. About an hour's drive along a thickly-forested road, is this Pass-a botanical paradise. The pass provides stunning views of the sacred mountain Jomolhari and Jichu Drake. It is also marked by hundreds of prayer flags fluttering in the wind. Here, visitors can see cascades of wild roses; purple and yellow primulas; and swathes of deep blue iris covering the forest floor. The top of the pass bloom with rhododendrons in a variety of colours-pale pink, deep pink, burnt orange, mauve, white and scarlet.
- Overnight at the Hotel in Paro.



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.

