



## **GANGTEY VALLEY TOUR**

*Duration : 7 nights / 8 days*

### **Introduction**

**Bhutan** a purely Buddhist Himalayan Kingdom is unsurpassed in its scenic majesty and vibrant culture. The kingdom shares with Nepal the worlds greatest concentration of Mountains and living heritage of Buddhism. The fifty minutes flight from Kathmandu to Paro can truly be described as a flight into fantasy. During the flight a first hand close up view of Mt. Everest, Mt. Kanchenjunga and many other famous Peaks become a reality. Bi-weekly flights between these two Kingdoms have made travel easier to the long isolated Dragon Kingdom of Bhutan.

Tours to Bhutan are planned to commence on Mondays and Thursdays from Kathmandu. The tour cost is inclusive of all airport transfers, conducted sightseeing tours, full board at hotels and during treks on the twin-bed-sharing-basis. There are direct flights from Delhi bi-weekly and Bangkok weekly and tours can be planned accordingly. Bhutan is one of the few countries in the world still untouched. a paradise for tourist interested in Buddhist culture and philosophy, flora and fauna, trekking and mountaineering. Due to the Royal Government's policy of controlled selective tourism, Bhutan has been receiving less than 5000 tourists annually.

### **TOUR ITINERARY # 2:**

Day 01 : Transfer to airport and Fly Katmandu / Paro by Druk air BAe 146-100 series, the only national carrier. The flight offers beautiful mountain views and landscape. On arrival and after visa formalities, met by representatives and transferred to the Kichu Resort.

The rest of the afternoon / evening time is at leisure.

Dinner and Overnight Kichu Resort.

Day 02 : After breakfast, a short drive to the river crossing point and hike to the view point of Taktsang monastery. Horses can be arranged with an extra US \$ 5/- The hike which is all the way uphill takes about 2 /3 hours through villages and pine forests. The monastery which clings to a huge granite cliff 800 meters from the paro valley was devastated by fire in 1998 but the Royal Government has taken immediate steps to restore the monastery to its original structure. Later return to the river crossing point and board the vehicles for the drive to visit the ruined fortress of Drugyel dzong which still attracts visitors due to the strategic location of the fort. The fort defended the Paro valley from the Tibetan invasion from the north in the early 17th century. On clear day, Mount Chomolhari (7320 meters) can be seen towering over the dzong. Proceed back south with a drive through the beautiful valley to the watch tower or locally known as Ta-Dzong. It was converted into the National museum in the 1960's by the third King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck. The seven floors museum highlights various aspects of Bhutanese culture and history dating back to the 7th century.

Dinner and Overnight Kichu Resort.



Day 03 : After breakfast, drive 2 hours to Thimphu which is pleasant one mainly due to the luxurious Japanese transportation and well maintained road through out Bhutan.

Thimphu , perhaps the most unusual capital city in the world, is a bustling town on the banks of its own river and set gloriously in the hills of its own valley. A regal town. Thimphu is home to the revered Bhutanese Royal family and to several foreign missions and development projects. The capital city has a population of 45,000, five miles from the Thimphu stands the Simtokha Dzong on a lofty ridge and is the first Dzong built by the Shabdrung in 1629. The Tashichhodzong, the main secretariat building which houses the throne room of His Majesty the king of Bhutan and it is the country administrative headquarters and houses of the legislative body. The National Assembly lies deep in the valley in all its grandeur. Upon arrival check into Hotel Druk or River view.

PM : Sightseeing tour of Thimphu. Visit the Memorial chorten built in the memory of the late King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, Painting School and the Tashichho Dzong 15th century Changangkha monastery, Motithang mini zoo to see the rare "Takin" national animal of Bhutan and drive further down with good views of the Thimphu valley. Also visit the new Drupthob nunnery temple and some free time can be spent in the market.

Dinner and Overnight at Hotel Druk or River view.

Day 04 : AM : A visit to the Royal goldsmith workshop and Handicraft centers will be organized.

PM : Drive 3 hours to Wangduephodrang crossing the Dochula pass at 3100 meters. On a clear day, the eastern Himalayan ranges including the highest mountain in Bhutan Mt.Gangar Punsum 7520 meters can be seen. The drive from the pass is downhill all the way, dropping to the lower and warmer valleys of Lobesa. Upon arrival at Wangdi, check into the Wangdi Kichu Resort.

Later visit the Wangduephodrang Dzong from outside and the market area.

Dinner and Overnight at Wangdi Kichu Resort.

Day 05 : Day excursion to the Gangtey Gompa valley at an altitude of 2800 meters. The only Nyingmapa monastery in western Bhutan is located here. This beautiful valley is also home to the rare Black Necked Cranes migrating from the Tibetan plateau to escape the harsh winter. Currently there are 200 to 300 cranes residing in this valley and the Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN) is taking every measure to ensure the safety of the Cranes. While the cranes reside in the winter valley for 4 to 5 months, the village folks are not allowed to make loud noises or fish in the river that runs through the valley. Explore the fascinating glacier valley and return to the Resort.

Dinner and Overnight at the Resort.

Day 06 : After breakfast, set out on a 45 minute drive to Punakha which served as the old capital of Bhutan. Here one visits the Punakha Dzong. This remarkable fortress is built between two rivers and has survived many glacial floods and fire. Every year during the month of February a procession known as the Punakha Serda takes place to commemorate the victory over the Tibetans.



Later drive 3 hours to Thimphu.

Dinner and Overnight Hotel Druk or River View Hotel.

Day 07 : A leisurely day can be spent in Thimphu until time for the drive to Paro. Upon arrival, check into the Kichu Resort.

Dinner and Overnight Kichu Resort

Day 08 : After and early breakfast, transfer to the airport to board the flight to Katmandu. Upon arrival, meet and transfer to the Hotel.

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SUMMITS