



Ultimate Bhutan with Nepal

WITH

PANORAMIC JOURNEYS

BHUTAN & NEPAL

BHUTAN, The land of the Thunder Dragon, is an extraordinary place. Vast and impressive fortresses, known as Dzongs, dominate Bhutan's landscape - from the wide subtropical valleys in the south to the Himalayan mountain ranges of the north. One of the world's biodiversity hotspots, Bhutan's national animal is the Takin - legend says it is half goat, half cow. This is a country where selling cigarettes or plastic bags is illegal, where giant protective penises are painted on the walls, where chillies and cheese with red rice is the national dish, and where Gross National Happiness is deemed more important than Gross National Product.

NEPAL, is of course synonymous with the greatest mountain range in the world, the Himalayas and its highest mountains, awe inspiring treks, and rich religious cultures, but this breath taking country offers even more. The warmth of the subtropical south is home to an abundance of exotic wildlife in stark contrast to frozen peaks of the north. A diverse people farm terraces clinging on to hillsides and the country is shaped by the ancient trade routes between India and Tibet. New wonders are around every corner and open arms will welcome you as the country rebuilds itself after the devastating earthquake in 2015.

BHUTAN & NEPAL WITH PANORAMIC JOURNEYS

As our name suggests, we like big panoramic vistas and encounters that give one a new perspective on life – These countries boast a few of these of Himalayan proportions. We have made a name designing journeys that allow our clients to get "under the surface" of a country - to meet the people and get off the tourist route. In designing this itinerary, we have allowed time to meet local people, to walk in rural valleys, and really get to know these beautiful countries, as well as taking in the most important historical, natural and religious sights and highlights that define Bhutan & Nepal.



ULTIMATE BHUTAN WITH NEPAL



This wonderful journey takes in Bhutan from east to west staying in the very finest hotels: Aman, Uma and Six Senses. Gain an insight into this beautiful country, from rural Gangtey to the iconic Tiger's Nest Monastery. Wander trails, spot rare wildlife, sit down with monks in prayer and so much more. You can relax at the end of each day in tranquil spas and soak in traditional Bhutanese Hot Stone Baths.

DAY	ITINERARY	ACCOMMODATION	TRAVEL DETAILS
1	<p>Arrive Kathmandu You will be met by a Panoramic Journeys representative who will be waiting to greet you with a board with your name on. The smells, noises and colours of this fascinating city will be on display. You might like to visit the famous Durbar Square before driving up to Dulikhel to the wonderful Dwarika's Resort, just half an hour's drive.</p>	Dwarika's Resort, Kathmandu	Airport to Hotel – 40 mins
2	<p>Relax at Dwarika's Resort A day to relax at the Dwarika's Resort or to explore the surrounding area. The 360 degree views over the Himalayas are breathtaking. Set over 20 acres, the resort is spread over a lush hillside and lies at an altitude of 1,700m among pine, rhododendron and cherry trees. You can relax, have a free consultation with the in-house Ayurvedic doctor, head to the spa for a massage, or for a walk to one of the local farms. Other activities on offer are pottery, painting, cookery, meditation and yoga.</p>	Dwarika's Resort, Kathmandu	
3	<p>Fly to Paro and on to Thimphu Our airport representative will let you know what time to be ready for your transfer to the airport. The flight to Paro is a visual treat - try to get to the gate early and sit on the left-hand side for the best views. The highest Himalayan peaks rise above the clouds including Cho Oyu (8201m), Makalu (8462m), Everest (8848m), Lhotse (8506m) and the imposing block of Kangchenjunga (8586m). On arrival in Paro, you will be met by your guide and driver and taken along the national 'highway' to the capital of Thimphu, stopping off at Thamchu Lhakhang on the way. The view over Thimphu from the big Buddha statue will help you get your bearings before heading into Thimphu town. Check into your hotel and later that afternoon there may be time to head up to Mothitang to see Bhutan's national animal, the rare and elusive Takin. If you wish to stretch your legs, there are great views of the town and Dzong on a lateral hike from the viewpoint, through the forests (1hr-1.5hr) to Wanguetse and Dechenphodrang monasteries.</p>	Amankora, Thimphu	Transfer to airport and 1.5hr flight. Paro to Thimphu, 1.5 hours

Explore Thimphu

After breakfast, a sightseeing tour of Thimphu. Visit the memorial chorten, which is so important to Thimphu's inhabitants and the Folk Heritage Museum which will give you an insight into how many rural Bhutanese live. A stop at the weekend market is a must.

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Depending on opening hours and your interests you can include some of the following in your private schedule: the National Memorial Chorten, Trashi Chhoe Dzong (fortress of the glorious religion), the National Institute of Traditional Medicine, the National Textile Museum, or the Handmade Paper Factory. This afternoon, you may like to take a walk to Cheri or Tango Goempas on the outskirts of town. Alternatively you can stay in town and have time to explore the town further, or go shopping.

Amankora,
Thimphu

Over Dochu Laa to Punakha

An early start this morning to ascend up to the colourful Dochu Laa pass. Hopefully you will have clear views of the high Himalaya. Visit the ornate Druk Wangyal Lhakhang (temple) atop the hill before you start your descent into Punakha. You may like to walk some of this on foot following the ancient woodland path - once the main road over the pass - to meet the vehicles further down.

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Six Senses,
Punakha

Thimphu to
Punakha;
80km; 3 hours

Explore Punakha Valley

Punakha Valley - Visit the Khamsum Yuelley Namgyal chorten. It's a 45 minute hike up to the chorten over a suspension bridge. Afterwards, either on foot, by vehicle, or even by raft head back down into the valley for a picnic lunch and to visit the spectacular Punakha Dzong - arguably the most beautiful Dzong in Bhutan - where you will take time to explore some of the magnificent temples. There may be an option to raft down to the Dzong.

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Six Senses,
Punakha

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To Phobjukha Valley

Today we head to the beautiful Phobjikha valley - it's a bit of a bumpy drive, and there may be roadworks, but there will be stops along the way. Continue on the road east over the Black Mountains, where you may spot monkeys if you are lucky! A branch in the road leads to the glacial Phobjikha valley. You may like to take a walk down into the valley from the Lawa La pass, where you may come across herders with their Yaks. It will be cold here, so you might need to get out your thermals tonight.

Gangtey Lodge,
Phobjikha

Punakha to
Phobjukha;
81km; 3
hours

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Phobjikha Valley

Today you will have time to relax and explore the valley on foot. Visit the monastery and village before a gentle walk along the edge of the valley, across a stream to the local school. Learn about the cranes at the black-necked crane centre and see if you can spot any other wildlife through their telescope. There are lots of hiking opportunities in the valley but you may just like to relax in your hotel, which has amazing views from the restaurant across the valley.

Gangtey Lodge,
Phobjikha

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To Bumthang

After a leisurely morning visiting Ogyen Chholing Palace Museum, head back south to Jakar. Spend the next two days walking between some of Bhutan's most important and most sacred temples in the Chokhor valley.

Six Senses,
Bumthang

Phobjukha to
Bumthang;
150km; 5
hours

10	Bumthang	Continue your exploration of Bumthang by vehicle and on foot. You are more than likely to be joined by cheeky school children and a 1-mile walk may end up taking an hour with all their questioning and the photo opportunities!	Six Senses, Bumthang	
11	Jakar Tshechu	The three-day Jakar Tshechu festival showcases several sacred mask dances. The festival also hosts different types of folk songs and dances.	Six Senses, Bumthang	
12	Fly to Paro	Today transfer to the airport for your flight back to Paro and settle into your beautiful hotel which overlooks Paro Valley. You may also like to visit the lovely Kyichu Lhakhang or perhaps try your hand at archery on a local range.	Uma, Paro	35min flight
13	Chele La pass and hike	Today you will really feel that you are in the mountains as you head up the Chele La pass, with its wealth of flora and fauna. Make sure you have a warm jumper up here - and plenty of sunscreen as it can get cold but the sun can be fierce. From here there is a 4-hour ridge hike to Kila Goempa. It's a tough but rewarding walk. If everyone would prefer a shorter walk, there is a trail down to the nunnery that takes about an hour, or you can drive down. From Kila Goempa, it is about 20 minutes back to the road where you will meet your vehicle.	Uma, Paro	Paro to Chele Laa pass; 40km; 1.5 hours

Taktsang (Tigers Nest) Monastery

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One of the most sacred of pilgrimages in the Himalayas, this hike is quite tough - but most abilities will be able to cope with it if it is taken at a steady pace. Although those accustomed to the altitude might take 2 hours to climb to the temple, we allow the full day for the excursion and stop regularly, including: for coffee on the way up, and for lunch on the return leg.

Uma, Paro

You will be able to go at your own pace (or hire a pony - ask your guide) and if you prefer to stop at the cafe or view point a little higher up, that is fine. Walking through oak, rhododendrons and trees draped in lichen, it is a rewarding and photogenic hike. If there is time (and you have the energy!) you may like to visit Drukgyal Dzong on the way back to the hotel.

Depart Paro to Kathmandu

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Transfer to the airport for your flight from Paro to Kathmandu and enjoy Dwarika's Hotel at leisure. If you don't get good views of the Himalayas on your flight into Bhutan, you might like to take a scenic flight today.

Dwarika's Hotel,
Kathmandu

Transfer to
airport and
flight, 1.5hrs

This evening you will have a 6-course farewell dinner at the traditional Nepalese Krishnapan restaurant in Dwarika's Hotel. It is a great experience, and will round off your trip in style before your flight home tomorrow.

Departure Kathmandu

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Transfer to the airport to catch your flight home, 3 hrs before departure.

If you want to take the optional Everest scenic flight today, this is also possible, time and weather permitting.

Transfer to
airport and
flight home

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HOW TO BOOK

1. GET IN TOUCH

This itinerary is just a suggestion, a starting point, something to build upon. Everyone of our itineraries is unique to you – we can add or lose days, tweak the activities, change the accommodation or hire a private jet until it's perfect for you. So, let's have a chat. Call one of our experts to discuss creating your private journey to Bhutan.

2. BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY

Once we've crafted the perfect journey for you we can sign you ready to go. We accept bank transfers, Visa, Mastercard or American Express, and UK cheques. Full payment methods are detailed in our booking conditions. We shall then send you a booking confirmation together with an invoice for the full payment of your holiday which is due 90 days before your departure date.

ANY QUESTIONS?

Call one of our experts on +44 (0)1608 676821 or email us at info@panoramicjourneys.com.

Some quick travel facts can be found in the Essentials section on the Bhutan page of our website

<https://www.panoramicjourneys.com/Destinations/Bhutan>. We will also send you a comprehensive Bhutan Practicalities document once you have booked.

