



SHOBRA TRAVEL AGENCY

Bhutan – Nepal Highlights

May 20 – 29, 2027

Bhutan is a tiny Himalayan Kingdom between two giants, China and India, in the lap of the Himalayas. It is considered by many as “The Last Shangri-La.” It is a sovereign nation that has maintained its cultural, artistic and religious tradition for centuries. Bhutan is one of the few countries in Asia never been colonized by its neighbors or Western powers.

Imagine a travel destination where cyber cafés and mail carriers to remote places coexist; vacation to a place where you feel at home, safe and secure; a place where driving Toyota vehicles and riding ponies run simultaneously. Dream of a place where you can experience everything exotic. Only a few places are left on earth so undisturbed by human greed and Bhutan is certainly one of them: untouched, untainted and saturated with ancient culture and people. This jewel of the Himalayas will not remain hidden forever.

Bhutan is a perfect destination especially post covid for judicious travelers. Visit now to revive & rejuvenate your mind, body and soul amidst a clean natural environment with pure oxygen, aroma of the Himalayan herbs, crystal clear fast flowing rivers gushing downstream, perfect blue sky and stunning views of the gigantic mountains. Bhutan is simply a heaven on earth so perfectly balanced between material and spiritual world. Only a very fortunate few can make it to this land of exoticism.

Bhutan remains one of the world’s most culturally preserved and unspoiled destinations.



Paro Rinpung Dzong

Day 1: International Flight

Overnight flight to Bhutan.

Day 2: Arrival in Bhutan

Arrival at Paro International Airport (PBH). Your flight to Bhutan will fly over the great Himalayas, offering the most beautiful scenery of snow-capped Himalayan Mountains and lush valleys. Upon arrival, you will be warmly welcomed by airport officials and escorted to immigration for customs formalities. Our tour guide and driver will meet you at the gate outside and transfer you to Thimphu. You will drive through a mixture of rice fields, apple orchards, farmhouses, crystal clear rivers, deep river gorges, and surrounding mountain views. After passing the confluence of Thimphu and Paro rivers, the road ascends and the valley turns into a narrow gorge before widening out at Namseling village. Soon you will reach the welcome gate to Thimphu, the capital city where most people live and work. Check-in and lunch or dinner at the hotel (depending on your flight arrival time). Overnight at the hotel.

Day 3: Thimphu

After breakfast, take a pleasant walk along the main street and visit local shops and a craft bazaar for souvenir shopping. They sell only authentic Bhutanese craft products initiated and encouraged by the government to keep our traditional values alive and to generate income for the rural communities. In the afternoon, meet your guide in the hotel lobby who will take you for a hot lunch at one of the best restaurants in the city. Overnight at the hotel.



Buddha Dordenma (Buddha Point)



Memorial Chorten (Stupa)

Day 4: Thimphu

Following breakfast, you will be met by your tour guide in the hotel lobby who will take you sightseeing in Thimphu, the capital city of Bhutan. **Buddha Point:** This is a very popular and the most beautiful place in Thimphu because of the construction of the tallest statue of Buddha Dordenma which is 51.5m tall with a spectacular view of the Thimphu Valley below. Visit **Memorial Stupa**, an iconic structure in the heart of the city built in the 1970's in memory of the 3rd king, Jigme Dorji Wangchuk. **Takin Preserve:** It is a small sanctuary, initially called mini zoo but later converted into a preserve so animals could live in a more natural environment. The main attraction is the national animal of Bhutan, the Takin, which is a rare and unusual creature that looks like a blend of a cow and a goat. There are also the barking deer, Sambar, various bird species, Serow, and Himalayan black bears and gorals.

Drive further up to the viewpoint of **Sangaygang**, where you will see all of Thimphu Valley.

Buddhist Nunnery: Here the nuns of all ages are practicing Buddha dharma chanting mantras, reciting sacred books and daily prayers. **National Institute for Zorig Chusum** (*thirteen traditional arts & crafts*). The Royal Government of Bhutan has sponsored and established this national institute in the year 1971 mainly to preserve and promote Bhutanese culture and to contribute to the country's economy through quality products and services. In the course of history Bhutan has developed a unique artistic tradition, which has played a vital role in modeling its distinct cultural heritage and this tradition is reflected in thirteen traditional arts & crafts. In the evening, visit **Tashichhodzong:** The biggest fort of Bhutan built in 1648. It houses the secretariat building, King's throne room and other government offices. It is also the summer residence of Chief Abbot. Drive back to your hotel for dinner. Overnight at the hotel.



Dochula Pass



Chime Lhakhang

Day 5: Punakha

Following breakfast, meet with your guide in the hotel lobby and drive to **Bhutan Postal Museum** where you will see a wide selection of famous stamps and where you can take pictures and make stamps of your own image for a minimal amount. A glimpse of centenary farmers' market is worth a visit where you can mix with local people, and where a variety of fruits, vegetables, cereals, spices, etc. are sold.

Start your journey to **Punakha**, the former capital of Bhutan until 1955 and still serves as winter residence of Je-Khenpo (Chief Lama) and houses both administrative offices and the monk body of Punakha district. It was here that the first king of Bhutan was crowned in 1907 and the tradition continues to this day.

The road to Punakha is enjoyable and interesting with its scenic natural beauty through villages, temperate forests, views of distant mountains and snow-capped Himalayas. Stop at **Dochula Pass** (3150m) marked by 108 stupas and thousands of colorful prayer flags hung around by people to bring good fortune to them and their families. Another new temple on top of a hill was recently built in honor of 4th Druk Gyelpo King Jigme Singye Wangchuk by Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuk, the eldest queen Mother. With good weather, you will be able to enjoy panoramic views of the Himalayan range from the pass. Depending on time, you can have a hot lunch at the tourism cafeteria before descending through windy roads to the sub-tropical valley of Punakha & Wangdue. A 10-minute walk through rice terraces and farmhouses will take you to the famous temple dedicated to Lam Drukpa Kuenley called Chime Lhakhang.

After visiting the temple, drive back to your hotel. Overnight at the hotel.



Punakha Dzong Huge



Thangka Display on giant wall of fortress

Day 6: Punakha Dzong

Following breakfast, you will be met by your guide in the hotel lobby who will take you to **Punakha Dzong**, the most beautiful Dzong in Bhutan situated in the confluence of Phochhu and Mochhu (male & female) rivers. It looks like a giant ship, bright and colorful with excellent woodwork and detail of paintings and is the best example of Bhutanese art and architecture. Another 25-minute gentle walk behind Dzong leads you to Bhutan's longest suspension bridge with beautiful views of the valley and the village on the other side.

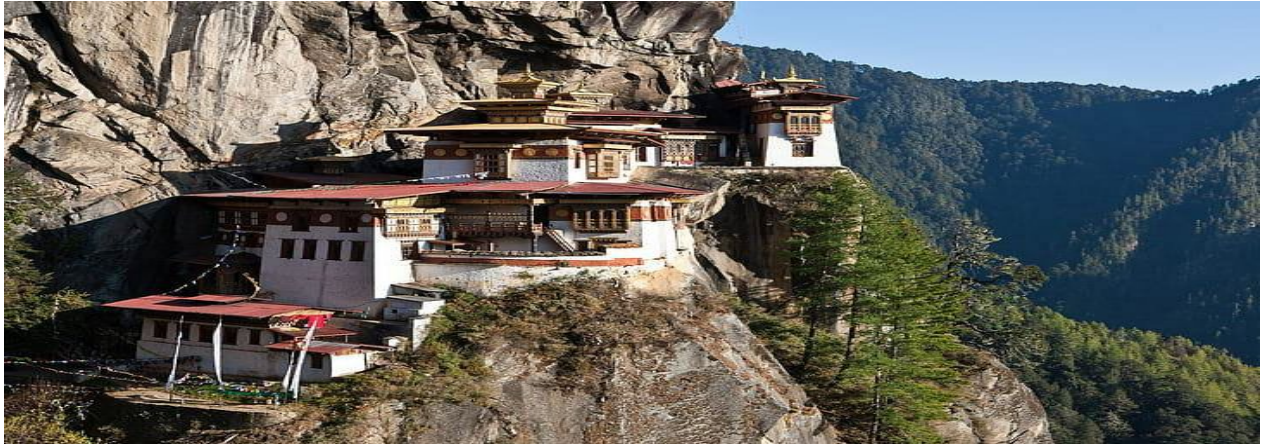
Depending on time, visit a nunnery called **Sangchhen Dorji Lhuendrup** situated on top of a hill. This quiet place offers spectacular views of the valley below. The nunnery consists of a two-story temple with a 14ft tall statue of the Goddess of Compassion, Guru Padmasambhava and Gautama Buddha. The surrounding complex also houses a learning and meditation place for nuns and apart from religious practice, it also provides life skills training such as tailoring, embroidering, statue making and thanka paintings for nuns. After a hot lunch at Khuru town, drive back to Paro following the same road crossing over Dochula Pass. Overnight at the hotel.

Day 7: Tiger's Nest Monastery

Following an early breakfast, meet your guide in the hotel lobby and transfer to the starting point of your hike to **Tiger's Nest Monastery**, which hangs on a cliff 800m above the valley floor. In the 8th century, Guru Rinpoche flew here on the back of a tigress in one of his eight forms called Guru Dorje Drolo and meditated for 3 months in a cave, subdued the local deity and converted Paro Valley into Buddhism. Later in the 17th century, the 4th temporal ruler of Bhutan Tenzin Rabgye built this present temple and named it Taktsang, which means tiger's lair, and in the same spot where Guru meditated. This is the most sacred temple and the pilgrimage center for Buddhists all over the world. It was completely burnt down in 1998 and re-built with financial assistance from the Bhutan government, individual donors, and supporters from other nations and NGOs.

The hike takes 2hrs 30min ascend at a slow pace and a little more than an hour to descend to the valley below (with 1hr in between for a hot lunch at the tourism café situated at the halfway point). Continue to walk down to the bottom of the valley where your transfer back to your hotel

will be waiting. Have a leisure afternoon to either rest in your hotel room or you may take a stroll to the town area for last-minute souvenir shopping. Dinner and overnight at the hotel.



Paro Taktsang

Day 8: Kathmandu

Following breakfast, meet your guide and transfer to the airport for your flight to Nepal. Your guide will assist you with your baggage, bid you farewell, and wish you a safe journey to Kathmandu.

Nepal is brimming with nature, culture, and adventure. This small country is nestled between China and India, and it is the ideal destination for many reasons such as the Himalayas' natural beauty, wildlife, cultural temples, stupas, and monasteries. In the next few days, you will get a glimpse into Nepal's natural beauty as well as the cultural magnificence into the Himalayan kingdom. Kathmandu's UNESCO World Heritage Sites and Newari towns reflect Nepal's culture, tradition, and history. The arts, architectures, and the masterpieces of craftsmanship will give you the impression of being in a medieval era.

The sunrise and sunset over the pearl white peaks, the panoramic views, the valley full of concrete buildings, small to large temples and monuments in every corner, terraced high hills, etc. are the prime highlights of this scenic tour of Nepal. This incredible journey will show you that Nepal has a lot to offer and you will also get to learn about its different cultures and traditions.



Souvenir shopping at Thamel

Upon arrival in **Kathmandu**, you will be greeted by our local representative at the Tribhuvan International Airport (KTM), and then transfer to your hotel to check-in. Afterwards, we will have a brief discussion session regarding the trip. In the evening, you can take a stroll around the streets of Thamel, the biggest tourist hub in Kathmandu with its lively lifestyle filled with shops, restaurants, hotels, bookshops, pubs, etc. Overnight at the hotel.



Bhaktapur Ancient Temples

Day 9: Kathmandu

After breakfast, meet your guide in the hotel lobby and proceed to go sightseeing in Kathmandu. Your first visit is **Patan Durbar Square**. Patan Durbar Square, located in the Patan/Lalitpur District, which is also known as the “City of Beauty” or the “City of Artisans.” Patan Durbar Square is home to a former royal palace and the Patan Museum. It is famous for its stone masterpiece architecture, traditional Newari artworks, and red brick tiles of the whole square complex.



Views of the Himalayas from Nagarkot

Drive to **Bhaktapur** and explore Bhaktapur Durbar Square and its surroundings. Bhaktapur Durbar Square is an open museum of medieval art and architecture with many specimens of sculpture, woodcarving, and huge pagoda temples dedicated to many gods and goddesses. The square is one of the valley's most stunning architectural showpieces, highlighting Nepal's old art. 55 Window Palace, Ancient Lions Gate, The Big Bell, Golden Gate, Pashupatinath Temple, Barking Bell, Yaksheswor Mahadev Temple, Chyasin Mandap, Siddhi Laxmi Temple, and Phase Dega Temple are the notable figures and structures inside this site.

After exploring these wonders of Kathmandu, drive to **Nagarkot**, which is one of the nearest places around the Kathmandu valley to see natural beauty of mountains and hills. It is well-known for its sunrise and sunset views and also where people go to unwind. It offers an amazing view of the entire Kathmandu valley and the Himalayan ranges such as the Annapurna, Manaslu, Ganesh Himalaya, Langtang, Jugal, Rolwaling, and Mahalangur (Everest range). If time allows, you will get to enjoy a wonderful sunset view. Overnight at the hotel.

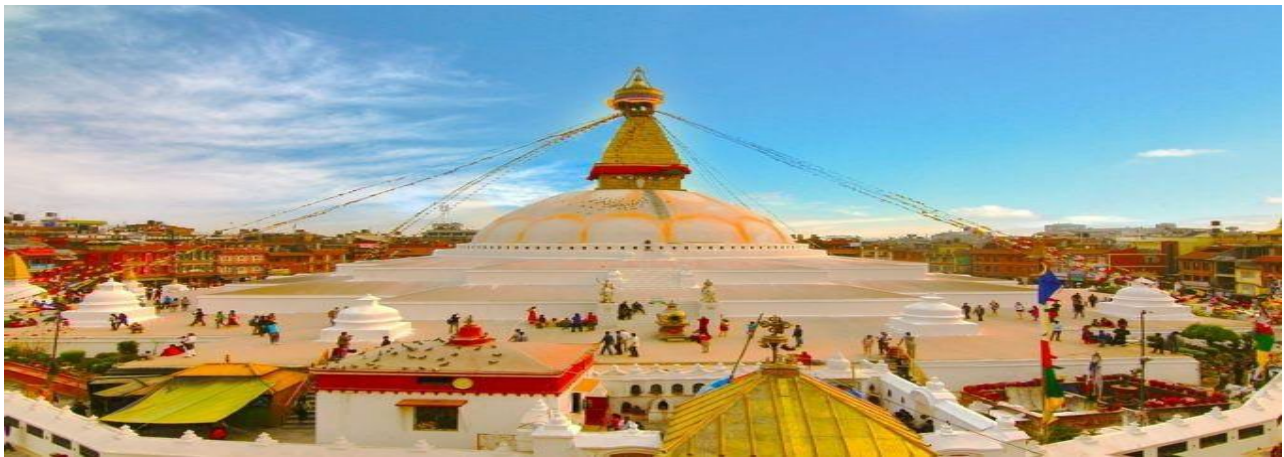


Syambhunath Temple (Monkey Temple)

Day 10: Kathmandu

After breakfast, we leave Nagarkot and drive towards the capital of Nepal, **Kathmandu**. During the journey, you will have scenic views of hills and mountains, including Mt. Manaslu, Annapurna, Lamjung Himal, Ganesh Himal, paddy fields, rivers, small towns, etc. Upon arrival in Kathmandu, we will start the sightseeing at Swayambhunath Stupa, Bouddhanath Stupa, and Pashupatinath Temple.

Swayambhunath Temple is one of the oldest stupas in Kathmandu, located at the hilltop overlooking the Kathmandu Valley surrounded by lush green hills. This temple is where Buddhism and Hinduism will congregate and sit together. It is also called “Monkey Temple” because of the large numbers of monkeys that gather here.



Bouddhanath Stupa

Bouddhanath Stupa is the biggest stupa in Nepal, following Tibetan Buddhism, and the whole area gives you a feeling of peacefulness. As you enter the gate of the stupa, thousands of pilgrims and travelers are seen making the Kora (circumambulation) to the giant white dome with giant Buddha eyes. The scent of Himalayan incense, vendors selling Tibetan goods, Thangka shops, and butter lamps, are just a few things you will see here.



Pasupatinath Temple

Pashupatinath Temple is one of the most revered Hindu sites in the world, and amongst the 4 most important Hindu sites in the world. The temple is located at the bank of the Holy Bagmati River and is dedicated to the Hindu deity, Lord Shiva. Only Hindus are allowed on the main premises, but others can explore the surrounding temples. Visitors can also witness the open cremation ceremony at the bank of the river.

After exploring these sites, you will transfer back to the hotel.

If time permits, you can walk around the Thamel Market for some last-minute souvenir shopping. Overnight at the hotel.

Day 11: Final Departure

Following breakfast, you will be transferred to the airport as per your flight schedule. Your accompanied guide and driver will assist you with your luggage, bid you farewell, and wish you a safe journey home.

Included:

- ✓ International & Domestic Flights (based on Economy seats)
- ✓ 4-Star Hotel Accommodation (based on double-occupancy)
- ✓ Airport Transfers
- ✓ Admissions to Tour Sites
- ✓ Meals (AP Basis: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner)
- ✓ Certified English-Speaking Tour Guide
- ✓ Land Transportation to/from Tour Sites (bottled water included)
- ✓ Bhutan Travel Visa Fee (\$40 usd per person)
- ✓ Daily SDF (Sustainable Development Fee) of \$100usd – this fee goes directly to Bhutan's government coffer

Excluded:

- Travel and Medical Insurance (required)
- Gratuities/Tips
- Nepal Travel Visa Fee upon arrival (\$30 usd per person)
- Personal Expenses
- Any expenses incurred for delayed arrival/departure flights due to harsh weather conditions

COST: \$4,500 USD Per Passenger

Note: Schedule of tours may be adjusted to accommodate unforeseen changes.