



THE HIMALAYAN WONDERLAND

4 days / 3 nights

Day 1

Paro-Thimphu 55kms – approx 1½ hours

On arrival at Paro airport, you will be met by our representative and driven to Thimphu, the modern capital town of Bhutan. Overnight at the hotel in Thimphu.

Day 2

Thimphu-Paro

After breakfast, sightseeing in Thimphu valley including visit to the following:

- 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.

After lunch, visit 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, it was reconstructed in 1960s in traditional Bhutanese manner, without nails or architectural plans. Also visit the 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 the 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.

Then, visit the government-run Handicrafts Emporium and local crafts shops, to browse through example of Bhutan's fine traditional arts. Here you can buy hand-woven textiles, thangka paintings, masks, ceramics, slate, woodcarvings, jewellery and interesting items made from local materials. Evening drive to Paro. Overnight at the hotel in Paro. B

Day 3

Paro

After breakfast, visit Ta Dzong, originally built as Watchtower, which now houses National Museum. The extensive collection includes antique thangka paintings, textiles, weapons & armour, household objects and a rich assortment of natural and historic artifacts.

Then walk down the trail to visit Rinpung Dzong, (fortress of the heap of jewels), which has a long and fascinating history. Along the wooden galleries lining the inner courtyard are fine wall paintings illustrating Buddhist lore such as four friends, the old man of long life, the wheel of life, scenes from the life of Milarepa, Mount. Sumeru and other cosmic Mandala.

After lunch, drive to Drukgyel Dzong, a ruined fortress where Bhutanese warriors fought Tibetan invaders centuries ago. The snowy dome of sacred Chomolhari, 'mountain of goddess' can be seen in all her glory from the approach road to the Dzong. Along the way, visit the 7th century Kyichu Lhakhang, one of the 108 temples built in the Himalayas by Tibetan King, Songtsen Gampo. The building of this temple marks the introduction of Buddhism in Bhutan. Overnight at the hotel in Paro. B

Day 4

Paro

After breakfast you will be transferred to the airport for your onward flight. B