

PRE - TOUR EXTENSION TO BHUTAN

4 Nights / 5 Days

May 27 – June 4, 2011



Bhutan also known as the Dragon Kingdom is a rich mosaic of different cultures, traditions, life styles, ethnic groups, languages and belief systems. It is astounding that a country with a population of just over half a million speaks as many as nineteen different dialects and a few major languages. Diverse as it may seem, yet the Bhutanese socio-culture fabric is well interlaced and harmonized mainly due to the common thread of simple Buddhist values that the people share. Our cultural tours are the easiest way to get a taste of Bhutan. Each town has a Dzong (fortress) dating back from the 1600s, and many old temples and monasteries. In our trip, we will visit Thimphu valley (the capital of Bhutan), Paro and Punakha.

Itinerary:

May 27, 2011 Fri:

Depart USA

May 28, 2011 Sat:

Flight

May 29, 2011 Sun: Arrive in Kathmandu. Visit Swayambhunath Stupa. Hotel Shangri-La. (-/L/D)

Swayambhunath: It is one of the world's greatest Buddhist Stupas. It lies 3 km west of the city and situated about 77m above the level of the Valley. It is said to be 2000 years old. The Stupa, which forms the main structure, is composed of a solid hemisphere of brick and earth supporting a lofty conical spire capped by a pinnacle of copper gilt. Painted on the four-sided base of the spire are the all-seeing eyes of Lord Buddha. This hill is a mosaic of small Chaityas and Pagodas temples.

May 30, 2011 Mon: Kathmandu Valley Sightseeing, PM: Briefing. Hotel Shangri-La. (B/L/D) Visit Pashupatinath, Boudhanath & Pharping.

Pashupatinath: Situated 5 Kilometers east of Kathmandu city, Pashupatinath temple is one of the holiest Hindu temple dedicated to Lord Shiva. Situated amidst a lush green natural setting on the bank of the sacred Bagmati River, the temple built in pagoda style has gilded roof and richly carved silver doors. Visitors will be permitted to view the temple from the east bank of Rivers Bagmati, entrance in the temple being strictly forbidden to all non-Hindus. Pashupatinath is the center of annual pilgrimage on the day of Shivaratri which falls in the month of February / March. Behind the temples are the cremation grounds.

Boudhanath: One of the holiest in Buddhist power places in Nepal, and one of the biggest stupas in the entire world. It stands with four pairs of eyes in the four cardinal direction keeping watch for righteous behavior and human prosperity. King Man Dev built this Buddhist stupa at the advice of Goddess Mani Jjogini. It is built on an octagonal base inset with prayer wheels. Houses of Lamas ring the shrine or Buddhist priests.

Pharping: Pharping village offers many arts object. It is believed that Padmasambava, the founder of Lamaistic School of Buddhism in Tibet. There is Guru Rinpoche's cave where one can see Guru Rinpoche's residence and reminder such as hand print, foot print etc.

31 May 2011, Tue, Day 1: Fly to Paro and drive Thimphu. Overnight at Peaceful Resort or similar [B/L/D]

You will be met by our representative at the airport. From Paro you will drive to Thimphu. The drive to Thimphu (capital of Bhutan) through the winding road along the Paro and Thimphu River takes about 1hr.

The drive would take you through the picturesque villages of Paro and Wang settlement with traditional houses and well-terraced fields that go in harmony with nature. On the way visit the Simtokha Dzong, (5 kms before reaching Thimphu) built in 1629 by Shabdrung Nawang Namgyal presently used as the Institute of Language and Cultural Studies. Simtokha Dzong is also the oldest Dzong in Bhutan (Dzong means fortress) On

reaching Thimphu, check in the hotel and visit the Memorial Chorten, built in memory of the Late King in 1974. Proceed for lunch to the hotel.

After lunch, visit the National Library where ancient manuscripts are preserved. A little further is the Institute of Zorig Chosum (arts and craft). Drive to the Nunnery and visit the temple and also get a good view of the Thimphu Dzong. Drive to the radio tower to get a sunset view of Thimphu and also to see the Takins (national animal). Evening free to stroll in the city and shopping.

01 June 2011, Wed, Day 2: Thimphu – Punakha (77 Kms, 3 hours). Overnight at Damchen Resort or similar [B/L/D]

After breakfast drive to Mothithang and visit the Takin (National Animal) sanctuary. Drive further up to the viewpoint and enjoy the view of Thimphu valley. Visit the Zilukha Nunnery and drive to Punakha via Dochula Pass (3150 mts). On a clear day, you can see the breathtaking views of the whole range of Eastern Himalayan Mountain ranges. On reaching Punakha check in the hotel.



02 June 2011, Thu, Day 3: Punakha – Paro (138 Kms, 5 hours). Overnight at Olathang Hotel or similar [B/L/D]

After breakfast drive to old Punakha town and visit the recently renovated Punakha Dzong with beautiful woodworks and paintings. Drive to Wangdi and visit the Wangdi Dzong and Wangdi village town. After lunch in Wangdi drive to Dochula pass for the evening tea and to Paro for the night.

03 June 2011, Fri Day 4: In Paro, Taktsang Hike. Overnight at Olathang Hotel or similar [B/L/D]

Start the day early with the hike to the famous Taktsang Monastery which is 300m above the valley floor. The hike takes about 4-5hrs back and forth to the road head. Have lunch at the Taktsang cafeteria or the Yak Herders camp restaurant. From Paro you will drive to Thimphu. The drive to Thimphu (capital of Bhutan) through the winding road along the Paro and Thimphu river takes about 1hr. After reaching Thimphu visit the Glorious Stupa, memorial of the 3rd King of Bhutan. Check into your hotel and later be free to explore the city on your own or just relax in your hotel.

04 June 2011, Sat: Day 5: Fly to Kathmandu, Sightseeing [B/-/-]

Transfer to the airport for your flight home.

Land Only Price, International Airfare not Included to and from Kathmandu.

All Price are Based on 8 People.

US \$ 1510.00

The above cost Includes:

- ✓ Arrival/Departure transfers
- ✓ Meet and assistance at the airport
- ✓ 04 nights hotel accommodation in Paro, Thimphu and Punakha in a sharing twin on full board basis as per the itinerary
- ✓ All the sightseeing tour and transfers as per the itinerary with English speaking guide
- ✓ Private transfers by Car/Van/Land cruiser/SUV/Coach
- ✓ Bhutan Visa fee
- ✓ Tourism development fee & Entrance fee in Bhutan
- ✓ International Airfare – Kathmandu-Paro-Kathmandu

The above cost does not include:

- ✓ Items of personal nature such as bar bills, alcoholic beverages, laundry, telephone calls, extra mileage, personal gratuities as tips to guide, porters, drivers etc
- ✓ Personal insurance policy - suggested a comprehensive travel insurance covering tour and flight cancellations, loss of valuables, thefts, illness, accidents and hospitalization
- ✓ Excess baggage
- ✓ Expenses incurred by re-routing, inclement weather, floods, famine, political disruptions, strikes, riots and other disturbances
- ✓ Any items and services not mentioned on cost inclusions