

## **Paro Tsechu (festival) and Cultural Tour**

**Dates/Duration:** March 30 to April 9 2009(10 Nights/ 11 Days)

**Cost:** \$2560 per person (inclusive of hotel room, all 3 meals, English speaking guide, driver/vehicle, visa fee and taxes.) Does not include airfare

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### **Tour Itinerary:**

#### **March 30<sup>th</sup> - Day 1 – Paro to Thimphu**

Our BTT representative will receive you at the Paro Airport and escort your hotel. Leave for Thimphu -1.5 hours drive

Sightseeing in Thimphu:

- National Memorial Chorten built in honour of our late King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk.
- Visit Dechenphug Monastery – It is the houses the protective deity of the Thimphu Valley, a very important monastery for the residents of Thimphu

#### **March 31<sup>st</sup> - Day 2 – Thimphu**

- Thimphu Dzong, the seat of the royal government and the central monastic body, It is also the summer residence of Je Khenpo (chief abbot of Bhutan). The Dzong is open to visitors only in winter when the Je Khenpo and the monk Body moves to Punakha the ancient winter capital of Bhutan.
- Takin Zoo – Takin is the national animal of Bhutan
- Dechenphodrang Monastery – A monastic school for young to middle aged monks
- Zilukha nunnery.
- National School of Arts and Crafts, where traditional arts are still kept alive through instructions in the arts of painting thankas(sacred Buddhist religious scrolls),sculpting, boot making, embroidery, sword making etc.
- Traditional Medicine Institute, where indigenous medicine are prepared accordingly to ancient practices.
- Textiles Museum (gallery of the Bhutanese textiles through the ages)
- Explore Thimphu town.

### **April 1<sup>st</sup> - Day 3 – Thimphu/Punakha**

- Day hike to Tango Buddhist College.
- After lunch depart to Punakha via Dochula pass (3050 metres). This pass offers panoramic views of Himalayan ranges.

### **April 2<sup>nd</sup> - Day 4 - Punakha/Wangdi/Trongsa**

- Visit Punakha Dzong, winter seat of Je Khenpo (chief abbot) of Bhutan and ancient capital of Bhutan, remarkably located between the rivers of Pho Chu (Male) and Mo Chu (female).
- Leave for Wangduephodrang
- Visit Chime Lhakhang, a temple dedicated to the god of fertility.
- Visit Wangduephodrang Dzong, built in 1638
- Drive to Trongsa via Pelela pass (3400 metres) the road passes through the black mountain national park.
- Short break at the Chendebji Chorten(2400 metres)
- The journey passes through farmhouses and villages. You will find yaks in this area depending on the time of the year

### **April 3<sup>rd</sup> - Day 5 – Trongsa/Bumthang**

- Visit Trongsa Dzong is the most impressive and magnificent dzong in Bhutan .It was built in 1644.
- Drive to Bumthang(2580m) via Yotongla pass(3425m)
- On the way to Jakhar stop at chume village, there are two shops selling yathra, a textile Bumthang is famous for, Yathra is a distinctive strip of woven woollen fabric in numerous colours and patterns.

### **April 4<sup>th</sup> - Day 6 – Bumthang**

- Visit Jakar Dzong built in 1667 and it's the seat of the district administration.
- Day excursion to Tamshing lhakhang.
- Visit Kurjey and Jambay lhakhangs.
- Visit Swiss Farm .The farm produces cheese, honey and fruit wine.

### **April 5<sup>th</sup> - Day 7 – Bumthang/Paro**

- Leave for Paro. It is a long drive back and you will be passing through the same villages and towns on the way back.

## **April 6<sup>th</sup> - Day 8 – Paro**

- Witness Paro Tsechu at Rinpung Dzong built in 1646 and is the seat of the district administration of Paro as well as the monk body.
- Nemizampa Bridge, a 15<sup>th</sup> century bridge.
- Drukgyal Dzong, the seat of the victorious Drukpas, was built in 1650s to commemorate a victory over the Tibetan armies. It caught fire in 1951 and was never repaired.
- Kyichu Temple, one of the oldest Temple in Bhutan dated back to 7<sup>th</sup> century.
- Paro town, Paro's main shopping district.

## **April 7<sup>th</sup> - Day 9 – Paro**

Paro tsechu in the morning

Sightseeing of Paro valley:

- Drukgyal Dzong the Dzong of the victorious Drukpas was built in 1650 to commemorate a victory over the Tibetan invasions. It caught fire in 1951 and was never repaired.
- Kyichu Temple, one of the oldest temples in Bhutan dated back to the 7<sup>th</sup> century.
- Ta Dzong, an ancient watchtower, which now houses the National Museum.

## **April 8<sup>th</sup> - Day 10 – Paro**

- Drive or walk around Thimphu Early morning hike to Taktsang – the legendary Tiger's Nest monastery perched on the face of a sheer cliff.
- Afternoon Paro tsechu
- Last minute shopping

## **April 9<sup>th</sup> - Day 11 – Paro**

Depart Paro