

# 5 Days Bhutan Cultural Tour

## Trip overview

Embark on a soul-stirring journey to the "Land of the Thunder Dragon" with our **5-day Bhutan Cultural Tour**. This carefully curated itinerary offers an intimate introduction to the Kingdom's most sacred sites, dramatic fortress-monasteries (Dzongs), and breathtaking mountain landscapes. If you are seeking a place where ancient traditions are woven into the fabric of daily life and Gross National Happiness is the ultimate goal, this tour is your perfect gateway.

Your adventure begins in the bustling capital of **Thimphu**, where modern life blends seamlessly with centuries-old heritage. You will then cross the panoramic **Dochula Pass** to the warm, emerald valley of **Punakha**, home to the country's most beautiful river-side fortress. The crescendo of your trip is in **Paro**, where you will undertake the legendary hike to the **Tiger's Nest (Taktsang)**—a monastery perched precariously on a sheer cliff 900 meters above the valley floor. From the intricate murals of historic temples to the warm smiles of the Bhutanese people, this 5-day journey promises a profound sense of peace and a lifetime of memories.

- **Durations:** 5 Days
- **Destinations:** Thimphu - Punakha - Paro
- **Tour inquiry:** <https://asiachinatour.com/5-days-bhutan-cultural-tour/>

## Itinerary

### Day 1: Arrival in the Kingdom of the Clouds & Thimphu Exploration

Your journey into the "Land of the Thunder Dragon" begins with a breathtaking flight into Paro, followed by an immersion into the spiritual and administrative heart of the kingdom.

**A Scenic Welcome:** Upon arrival at Paro International Airport—famed for its stunning mountain approach—you will be warmly greeted by your **private local guide and driver**. You will then embark on a scenic 1.5-hour drive following the Wang Chhu River to **Thimphu**, the world's only capital city without traffic lights. After checking into your hotel and enjoying a short rest, your cultural odyssey begins.

**The Heart of Thimphu:** Your first stop is the **National Memorial Chorten**, a beautiful stupa built in memory of the Third King, where you'll see locals of all ages circumambulating the shrine in

deep prayer. Next, head to the **Motithang Takin Preserve** to encounter the Takin—Bhutan's unique national animal that looks like a cross between a cow and a goat. You will also visit the peaceful **Zilukha Nunnery**, offering a glimpse into the lives of Buddhist nuns and a panoramic view of the valley. The day concludes with a visit to the majestic **Thimphu Dzong** (Tashichho Dzong), a grand fortress-monastery that serves as the seat of the government and the summer residence of the Chief Abbot.

**Accommodation:** Hotel in Thimphu

**Meals:** Lunch, Dinner

### Expert Tips for Day 1:

*Thimphu sits at an altitude of approximately **2,334 meters (7,657 feet)**. To ensure a smooth start to your journey, we recommend moving at a slower pace today and staying well-hydrated to help your body adjust to the altitude. When visiting the **Memorial Chorten**, remember the local custom of walking around the stupa in a **clockwise direction**. For the visit to **Thimphu Dzong**, please note that it is an active government and religious building; your guide will ensure you are dressed respectfully (shoulders and knees covered, and collared shirts are preferred). As the evening air in Thimphu can be quite crisp even in summer, having a light jacket or pashmina handy is highly recommended for your first dinner in the kingdom.*

## Day 2: Over the Mountain Pass to the Palace of Happiness

Today, you will leave the capital and cross the high mountain ridges to enter the lush, subtropical valley of **Punakha**, the former capital of Bhutan.

**A Himalayan Panorama:** After breakfast, you will embark on a scenic 3-hour drive. The journey climbs to the magnificent **Dochula Pass (3,100m)**. On a clear day, you will be rewarded with a breathtaking 360-degree view of the snow-capped Himalayan peaks. Here, you will wander among the **Druk Wangyal Chortens**, a beautiful cluster of 108 memorial stupas built to honor the harmony of the kingdom. It is one of the most serene and photogenic spots in all of Bhutan.

**Spirituality & Architecture:** Descending into the warmer Punakha valley, you will take a short, pleasant walk through rice paddies and local villages to **Chimi Lhakhang**, also known as the "Temple of Fertility." This sacred site is dedicated to the "Divine Madman" and attracts visitors from around the world. The highlight of the day is a visit to the **Punakha Dzong**. Strategically located at the confluence of the Pho Chhu (Father) and Mo Chhu (Mother) rivers, it is widely considered the most beautiful fortress in the country. Marvel at its intricate woodwork, vibrant murals, and the sheer majesty of its whitewashed walls against the backdrop of jacaranda trees.

**Accommodation:** Hotel in Punakha

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

### Expert Tips for Day 2:

*The weather at **Dochula Pass** can be significantly cooler and windier than in the valleys, even if the sun is shining. We recommend dressing in layers so you can easily adjust as you move from the high pass down to the warmer climate of Punakha. When visiting **Punakha Dzong**, keep an eye out for the famous "hundred-pillar" assembly hall and the exquisite carvings—this is where all of Bhutan's kings are crowned, so it holds immense national importance. For the walk to **Chimi Lhakhang**, the path is generally easy but can be slightly muddy after rain; comfortable walking shoes are a must. Finally, don't forget to try some of the local red rice and seasonal vegetables for*

*lunch—the Punakha valley is known as the "rice bowl" of Bhutan, and the produce here is exceptionally fresh!*

### Day 3: Returning to Paro & The Living Heritage

Today, you will travel back through the winding mountain roads to the picturesque **Paro Valley**, a region steeped in history and home to some of the kingdom's most ancient treasures.

**Ancient Echoes & Cultural Icons:** After breakfast, you will embark on a scenic drive back toward Paro. Your first stop is the serene **Kyichu Lhakhang**, one of the 108 temples built in the 7th century by the Tibetan King Songtsen Gampo. It is one of the oldest and most sacred shrines in Bhutan, exuding an aura of profound peace. Next, you will explore the **Ta Dzong**, a former watchtower that now serves as the **National Museum**. Its unique circular architecture houses a fascinating collection of thangkas, textiles, and historical artifacts. From there, a short walk takes you to the **Paro Dzong** (Rinpung Dzong), the "Fortress on a Heap of Jewels." Its massive buttressed walls and fine woodwork represent the pinnacle of Bhutanese architectural mastery.

**Authentic Farmhouse Experience:** To truly understand the Bhutanese way of life, you will conclude your day with a visit to a **local farmhouse**. Far from the typical tourist experience, this is an opportunity to step inside a traditional three-story rammed-earth home. You will have the chance to sit with a local family, perhaps over a cup of traditional **Suja** (butter tea) or **Ara** (local spirit), and learn about their daily routines, agricultural traditions, and the deep-seated values that define this "Hidden Kingdom."

**Accommodation:** Hotel in Paro

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### Expert Tips for Day 3:

*When visiting **Paro Dzong**, be sure to notice the traditional cantilever bridge (**Nyamai Zam**) that connects the **Dzong** to the town; it is the best spot for a panoramic photograph of the fortress. Since your itinerary includes a farmhouse visit today, it is a wonderful opportunity to observe authentic Bhutanese life. If your hosts are particularly hospitable, remember the local etiquette: when offered tea or snacks, it is polite to say "Mesu Mesu" (refusing once or twice) before finally accepting on the third invitation. Additionally, **Paro** town has many high-quality boutiques—if you plan to buy hand-woven textiles or Thangkas, **Paro** often offers a better selection than **Thimphu**, so take some time to explore the main street during your free afternoon.*

### Day 4: The Ascent to the Tiger's Nest

Today marks the spiritual crescendo of your journey as you hike to the most iconic landmark in the Himalayan world—a place where nature's grandeur meets profound religious devotion.

**The Legendary Hike:** After an early breakfast, you will be transferred to the base of the mountain to begin your trek to **Taktsang Monastery**, famously known as the **Tiger's Nest**. Perched precariously on a sheer granite cliff 900 meters above the Paro Valley floor, the monastery is a sight to behold. The hike takes you through beautiful pine forests adorned with Spanish moss and fluttering prayer flags. After approximately 1.5 hours of climbing, you will reach a scenic viewpoint where you can capture the classic photograph of the monastery clinging to the rock. From there, you continue the journey for another 1.5 hours to reach the monastery gates, where you can explore the sacred shrines and feel the powerful energy of this ancient retreat.

**Historic Echoes:** After descending the mountain and enjoying a well-deserved lunch, you will visit the **ruins of Drukgyel Dzong**. Built in 1649 to commemorate a victory over Tibetan invaders, the ruins offer a poignant look into Bhutan's defensive history. On a clear day, the snow-capped peak of **Mount Chomolhari** (7,314m) provides a magnificent backdrop to the ancient stone walls, offering one last spectacular photo opportunity of the "High Himalayas."

**Accommodation:** Hotel in Paro

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### Expert Tips for Day 4:

*To make the most of your **Tiger's Nest** experience, we highly recommend starting your hike by **7:30 AM** to avoid the midday sun and the larger crowds. The trail is well-maintained but can be steep; you may want to hire a walking pole at the base for a few dollars—it makes a significant difference for your knees during the descent. If you find the climb challenging, you can hire a pony for the first half of the ascent (up to the cafeteria), but the descent must be done on foot for safety. Please remember that cameras, mobile phones, and bags are strictly prohibited inside the **monastery** temple complex; you will need to leave them in the lockers provided at the entrance. Lastly, bring a light jacket even if it's warm at the base, as the temperature drops noticeably once you reach the shaded cliffs near **Taktsang**.*

### Day 5: Farewell to the Kingdom of Happiness

Your profound journey through the "Last Shangri-La" concludes today. As you prepare to depart, you carry with you the serene spirit of the Himalayas and the warm smiles of the Bhutanese people.

**A Quiet Morning:** After your final Bhutanese breakfast at the hotel, enjoy a few last moments of tranquility in the **Paro Valley**. You might take a final stroll through the town's quiet streets, reflecting on the sacred temples and majestic fortresses you've explored over the past few days.

**Seamless Departure:** At the scheduled time, your **private guide and driver** will meet you at your hotel for your transfer to **Paro International Airport**. They will assist with your luggage and bid you a fond farewell as you check in for your flight. As your plane takes off, you will have one last opportunity to gaze down at the emerald valleys and snow-capped peaks that have been your home in the clouds.

**Accommodation:** / (End of Service)

**Meals:** Hotel Breakfast

#### Expert Tips for Day 5:

*For your departure from **Paro**, we recommend arriving at the airport at least **3 hours before your flight** to ensure a smooth check-in process. If you are flying toward **Kathmandu**, **Delhi**, or **Bangkok**, be sure to request a seat on the **right side of the aircraft**—on clear days, this offers a final, spectacular panoramic view of **Mount Everest**, **Mount Lhotse**, and the sprawling **Himalayan** range. If you have any remaining **Ngultrum** (Bhutanese currency), you can spend it on high-quality handicrafts or books at the airport duty-free shops, as the currency is difficult to exchange once you leave the country. Lastly, keep your **SDF (Sustainable Development Fee)** receipt handy just in case it is requested during immigration, and double-check your carry-on for any charging cables or electronics before leaving your hotel in **Paro**.*

# Booking Policy

## Cancellation Policy

### Cancellation by Customer

- Cancellation received before 60 days: FREE of charge
- Cancellation received from 30 days to 59 days prior arrival date: 20% of total rate
- Cancellation received from 15 days to 29 days prior arrival date: 40% of total rate
- Cancellation received from 7 days to 14 days prior arrival date: 70% of total rate
- Cancellation received less than 7 days prior arrival date or No show: 100% of total rate

## Children Policy

The rate for children applicable for one child sharing a twin or double cabin with two adults.

- For infant (<04 years old): Free of Charge
- 04 - 11 years old without bed: 50% adult rate
- 04 - 11 years old with extra bed: 75% adult rate
- Above 11 years old with extra bed: 100% adult rate

---

### Tel:

Beijing: +86 904-6699-222

Chengdu: +86 904-6699-234

Lhasa: +86 904-6699-253

Cambodia: +84 904-6699-555

### Address:

Address 1: Floor 4, Global Center, Chengdu, Sichuan, China

Address 2: Chaoyang Road No.21, Guilin, Guangxi, China

### Email:

info@asiachinatour.com

### Website:

www.asiachinatour.com