

7 Days Thimphu Tshechu Festival Tour in Small Group (Sep 20, 2026)

- 6 Nights 7 Days • Tour Code: BTG-B3
- Route: Paro-Thimphu-Punakha-Paro
- Group Size: 1-14 pax
- Tour Guide: English-speaking
- Meals: 6 Breakfasts, 5 Lunches, 6 Dinners
- Accommodations: 6 Nights, 3-Star Hotels
- Tour style: Western Bhutan Tour

Highlights:

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1. Paro Tour (2 Days): Airport Pick-up & Hotel Check-in, Paro Airport Birds Eye View Point, Bhutan Traditional Attire, Experience, Tiger's Nest Monastery Hiking, Kyichu Lhakhang, Tashichho Dzong (Thimphu Tshechu Festival), Buddha Point, National Memorial Chorten
2. Thimphu Tour (2 Day): Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten, Punakha Suspension Bridge, Sangchhen Dorji Lhuendrup Nunnery
3. Punakha Tour (2 Days): Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten, Punakha Suspension Bridge, Sangchhen Dorji Lhuendrup Nunnery, Tamchog Lhakhang Iron Bridge, Paro Dzong, Bhutan National Museum
4. Paro Tour (1 Days): Hotel Check-out and Airport See-off

Itinerary

Day 1 Paro, Bhutan Arrival | Airport Pick-up & Hotel

Check-in, Paro Airport Birds Eye View Point, Bhutan

Traditional Attire Experience

Welcome to Bhutan! As you arrive in Paro, enjoy the fresh mountain air of this heavily forested kingdom. Your local expert will meet you at the airport to help you settle in quickly. You are now in the "Last Shangri-La," a stunning Himalayan destination where ancient beauty and nature have been protected for centuries.

Paro (2,270m) serves as a magnificent introduction to Bhutan, home to the legendary Tiger's Nest and breathtaking valley views. Whether you are visiting for the colorful Paro Tshechu festival in March or exploring ancient traditions, this region is a must-see highlight.

Take in the expansive scenery at the **Airport View Point**, where you can see the Dzong and the river while learning about the airport's unique history. Afterward, head to your hotel to rest and adjust to the altitude. This peaceful start ensures you are fully energized for the exciting journey ahead.

Kickstart your journey with these **special free experiences** from **AOT**:

- National Dress: Try on a traditional Gho or Kira to feel like a local.
- Traditional Drink: Taste authentic red rice wine, a popular and sweet local specialty.

If you land before midday, you can join an **optional tour** of the **National Museum** and **Rinpung Dzong**. Your guide will assist with tickets and security to make the visit stress-free. Remember that Paro Dzong operates 9 AM – 5 PM Monday to Friday and 10 AM – 4 PM on weekends.

Free Time Ideas:

- Local Markets: Explore Paro's town center in national dress to see local ingredients like red chilies and artisanal cheese.
- Archery: Test your skills at the national sport on a traditional 140m archery range.

For tailored advice on what to do, feel free to reach out to your guide ahead of time.

Arrival Ideas:

Paro International Airport provides direct flights from hubs like Delhi, Kolkata, Bagdogra, Gaya, Guwahati, Dhaka, Bangkok, Kathmandu, and Changi. Land entry is also available through Phuentsholing or Gelephu. For seamless travel, look for seasonal charters from Hong Kong and Kuala Lumpur.

Kind Reminds:

- Flight Booking: We can help you book your flights directly to Paro.
- E-Visas: Most visitors need an advance E-visa, which costs \$40.
- Regional Requirements: Indian citizens must have a valid permit (Passport or Voter ID). Travelers from Bangladesh and the Maldives need a visa, which can be arranged in advance or received when you arrive in Bhutan.

Meals: Dinner

Accommodation: Paro

Day 2 Paro Tour | Tiger's Nest Monastery Hiking, Kyichu Lhakhang

This morning, you will get ready to start the exciting Hiking Tour to Tiger's Nest, the landmark of Bhutan and the most famous holy monastery in the country. It is about a 12km drive (over 0.5 hour) from Paro City to the start point of the Tiger's Nest hike route.

Usually, it may takes about 2.5 hours to reach Tiger's Nest Monastery (Paro Taktsang) on foot. The entire Tiger's Nest Hike takes around 5 to 6 hours, with about 4.8 km of uphill trekking and about 4.8 km of downhill walking. Riding a horse (Optional; Self-payment required), it takes about 1.5 hours to reach the halfway point on the mountainside. From there, you need to say goodbye to your horse and hike for another 1.5 hours to reach the Tiger's Nest Monastery. At the halfway point, visit Taktsang Cafeteria for lunch and your first view of Tiger's Nest. As you hike higher, the monastery becomes clearer. You will see many prayer flags and wheels along the forest trail. Enjoy great views of Paro Valley below. If you visit in April, you can see red rhododendrons blooming like colorful clouds on the mountainside.

Then, stand before Tiger's Nest (3,120m), a world-renowned monastery clinging to a cliff 900m above the Paro Valley. Founded where Guru Rinpoche meditated in the 8th century, this sacred landmark was formally built in 1692 and faithfully restored in 2005. As Bhutan's holiest site, it remains a vital pilgrimage destination. You are welcome to explore the interior and experience the spiritual energy of this architectural marvel.

Conclude your day at Kyichu Lhakhang, one of Bhutan's oldest and most sacred temples. Built in the 7th century by King Songtsen Gampo, it houses the revered Shakyamuni Buddha statue, a national treasure. This royal ceremonial site also enshrines the relic stupa of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche and an iron chain forged by the legendary Thangthong Gyalpo, offering a profound spiritual connection to ancient Tibetan Buddhist history.

At last, head back to Paro for overnight.

Optional Bhutan Paro Experiences:

Bhutan Traditional Hot Stone Bath (1 hour).

Lighting butter lamps for blessings at Kyichu Lhakhang (108 lamps).

Kind Reminders:

Best Time: Visit between March–May or October–December. Start early to get good photos before the cliffs create shadows.

Horses: Horse riding is only for the uphill trip to a certain point. You must walk back down the whole way.

Belongings: No phones or bags are allowed inside the monastery. Store them at the gate and keep cash ready if you want to light butter lamps.

Dogs: Be careful of stray dogs; please do not disturb them.

Meals: Breakfast Lunch Dinner

Accommodation: Paro

Day 3 Paro to Thimphu Tour | Tashichho Dzong (Thimphu Tshechu Festival), Buddha Point, National Memorial Chorten

Today, we will head to Thimphu (50km, 1.5 hours), the capital city of Bhutan.

On the way, we will make a stop at **Tamchog Lhakhang Iron Bridge** for a visit. Once in Thimphu (altitude 2,340m), you will have a full day of sightseeing. You can attend festival in Thimphu, Dzong Buddha Point, National Memorial Chorten.

Upon arrival in Thimphu, continue to Tashichho Dzong (Thimphu Fortress) to take part in the Thimphu Tshechu festival activities.

Visit **Tashichho Dzong** (Thimphu Dzong), the seat of government since 1952. This massive fortress by the Wang Chu River holds the King's office and internal ministries. It is also the summer home of the Je Khenpo, Bhutan's spiritual leader. You can walk through its beautiful gardens and see where masked dances happen during the Tshechu festival. It is the most important religious and political building in Thimphu.

The **Thimphu Tshechu Festival** is a major event celebrating Guru Rinpoche, who brought Buddhism to Bhutan. People attend to receive blessings and wear their best traditional clothes. The highlight is the masked dances performed by monks and locals. These vibrant performances show deities and demons in a beautiful display. It is a great way to see local traditions and the spiritual side of Bhutan.

Next, visit **Buddha Dordenma Statue** (Buddha Point), the largest sitting Buddha statue in the world. It is 51.5 meters tall, made of bronze, and covered in gold. Inside, there are 125,000 small Buddha statues. During festivals, you can see religious rituals like the Vajra Dance. From this spot, you will also have a great view of the Thimphu Valley and the colorful roofs of the city buildings.

If time permits, make a brief stop at the **National Memorial Chorten**, where you can observe local residents engaged in daily prayers and circumambulation. This will provide you with numerous opportunities to engage with the locals and learn about their daily lives, as well as their philosophy on happiness.

Meals: Breakfast Lunch Dinner

Accommodation: Thimphu

Day 4 Thimphu to Punakha Tour | Motithang Takin Preserve,

Dochula Pass (3,120m), Chimi Lhakhang, Punakha Dzong

After breakfast, you will visit the **Motithang Takin Preserve** to see Bhutan's national animal. There, you can observe the unique creature that is said to have been created by the legendary Drukpa Kunley (Divine Madman). According to legend, Drukpa Kunley fashioned the takin with the head of a goat and the body of a cow.

Then, you will travel from **Thimphu to Punakha** via Dochula Pass (74km, about 2.5 hours).

Stop at **Dochula Pass**, one of Bhutan's most beautiful spots. On clear days, you can see Mt. Gangkar Puensum (7,570m) and other Himalayan peaks. You can enjoy the view with coffee at the local cafeteria. The summit has 108 memorial chortens and many prayer flags. These were built to honor soldiers and pray for world peace, creating a very peaceful and spiritual feeling.

On your way to **Punakha**, hike to **Chimi Lhakhang**, also called the Fertility Temple. It was built to honor Drukpa Kunley, the "Divine Madman" who used

humor and unconventional ways to teach. You will see phallus symbols on many houses to drive away evil. Many couples visit this sacred place to seek blessings for children. It is a very interesting and unique part of Bhutanese culture.

Then, drive to Punakha, the old capital located where two rivers meet. Here stands **Punakha Dzong**, the most beautiful fortress and winter home for 1,000 monks. All Bhutanese kings are crowned here. If you visit in April, you will see beautiful purple jacaranda trees in bloom. During the Punakha Tshechu festival, you can watch masked dances and see locals in national dress celebrating their rich history.

Cross the **Bazam Bridge** to explore Punakha Dzong, built from stone and wood without any nails. It has a six-story tower called an utse and three courtyards. You can see the Victory Chorten, the royal hall, and the sacred remains of Pema Lingpa and Zhabdrung. The "hundred-pillar" assembly hall is also located here, featuring beautiful murals that show the life of the Buddha.

Note: The tourist opening hours of Punakha Dzong are from 9 AM to 5 PM on weekdays and from 10 AM to 4 PM on weekends. It is required to have a tour guide accompany you for a visit to the Dzongs. Before entering for a visit, security checks are conducted.

Overnight in Punakha and get ready for your next day's trip.

Meals: Breakfast Lunch Dinner

Accommodation: Punakha

Day 5 Punakha Tour | Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten, Punakha Suspension Bridge, Sangchhen Dorji Lhuendrup Nunnery

Today, you will have a full day to discover Punakha. This morning, you will walk past terraced rice paddies and begin your hike to the Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten, which takes about one hour. Along the way, you might see local farmers working in the fields with oxen and plows.

The Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten was built in 1990 by the Queen

Mother to bring peace and ward off evil. It took nine years to finish this special Bhutanese pagoda. Each floor has statues of protective deities. You can climb the stairs to the roof for amazing views of Punakha. The rice paddies below change from green to gold as the seasons change.

After lunch, you will visit the Punakha Suspension Bridge, which is one of Bhutan's longest suspension bridges, spanning 160 meters. This experience will reward you with breathtaking views of the picturesque Punakha Valley and the glacier-fed Po Chu River flowing beneath.

Next, visit Sangchhen Dorji Lhuendrup Nunnery, located on a 1,550-meter hill. It offers great views of the Punakha and Wangdue valleys. About 120 nuns live and study here, learning skills like embroidery and painting. The temple features a 14-foot bronze statue of Avalokiteshvara with 1,000 hands, the largest in Bhutan. It is a wonderful place to see the spiritual daily life of the nuns.

If time permit, you can visit local market in Punakha.

Overnight in Punakha.

Meals: Breakfast Lunch Dinner

Accommodation: Punakha

Day 6 Punakha to Paro Tour | Tamchog Lhakhang Iron Bridge, Paro Dzong, Bhutan National Museum

Today, you will depart Punakha and **head back to Paro** (110km, about 3.5h) via Dochula Pass again and overnight in Paro after visiting Paro Dzong, Bhutan National Museum.

Be sure to stop at the **Tamchog Lhakhang Iron Bridge** by the Paro River. You can walk across this unique bridge made of iron chains and prayer flags. Both the bridge and the temple were built by Thangthong Gyalpo, the famous "Iron Bridge Maker." While you only view the temple from the outside, the bridge is a great place to see ancient architecture that is still standing today.

After the bridge, visit **Paro Dzong**, also called Rinpung Dzong. Built in 1646 by Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal, the founder of Bhutan, this large fortress is a key historical site. You reach it by crossing a traditional wooden bridge over the Paro Chu River. From here, you can enjoy amazing views of the Paro Valley and learn about the hero who shaped the nation.

If you hike a little further, you will reach the **Bhutan National Museum** (Ta Dzong), which holds the distinction of being Bhutan's tallest building. Originally constructed in 1649 as a watchtower overlooking the Paro Dzong, it was later transformed into the National Museum of Bhutan in 1968. At the museum, you can immerse yourself in a rich collection of ancient artifacts such as pottery, armor, thangkas, masks, stamps, photographs, statues, costumes, relics, stone axes, and religious paintings.

Overnight in Paro.

Meals: Breakfast Lunch Dinner

Accommodation: Paro

Day 7 Paro Departure | Hotel Check-out and Airport See-off

Happiness is a place, wish you had gotten your happiness philosophy from the beautiful Himalayan country with us. It is time to end your **7-day Bhutan Group Tour**. Your guide will escort you to **Paro International Airport** for your flight to your next destination.

Extension Ideas: If you prefer to travel longer in Bhutan, you can extend your trip to other highlighted parts of Bhutan, including Haa, Gangtey, and Bumthang.

Thank you for choosing **Asia Odyssey Travel (AOT)** for your Bhutan tour, we are always here working for you and hope to see you again for your next trip to China/Asia. Safe journey!

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: None

Price Includes

1.Bhutan Visa

The Bhutan visa fee is USD 40 per person, and there is also a Government Sustainable Development Fee (SDF) of USD 100 per person per night.

Note: A 50% discount shall be granted on the prevailing SDF of USD 200 for US Dollar paying tourists visiting Bhutan. The effective SDF with the discount shall be USD 100 per person per night for US Dollar paying tourists, effective from 1 September 2023 till 31 August 2027.

2.Accommodation

Throughout the trip, stay in three hotels as listed in the itinerary.

Single rooms are not provided.

3.Meals

All meals are included in Bhutan.

Please refer to the itinerary for the details of the meals provided.

4.Guide Service

English-speaking guides provided throughout the trip.

5.Attraction Tickets

Entrance tickets for all listed attractions are included, guaranteeing full visits.

In case of unexpected circumstances, alternative arrangements will be discussed with the tourists.

6.Transportation Arrangement

Air-conditioned vehicles.

7.Transfer Service

Complimentary airport pick-up and drop-off at Paro Airport.

8.Complimentary Cultural Experience

Traditional costume experience.

9.Service Coverage

Our service from tour planning, handling, operational and finishing your trip.

Price Excludes

✗ Airfare

International round-trip tickets. (Flight ticket booking service and instant quotes are available upon request.)

✗ Single Room Supplement

The default accommodation is based on two people sharing a room. If you require a single room, an additional single room supplement must be paid.

✗ Personal Expenses

Other personal expenses such as laundry, telephone, internet, fax, etc., within the hotel.

✗ Tipping

Tips for drivers and guides (Tipping practices may vary depending on the region and nature of service; it is recommended to consult the guide's opinion in advance).

✗ Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is not included.

✗ Optional Experiences

Horseback riding at Tiger's Nest Monastery costs USD 35–45, and there are other optional experiences available in Bhutan.

✗ Unexpected Circumstances

In case of uncontrollable and non-agency-related factors (such as natural disasters, war, strikes), flight delays or cancellations, delayed visa processing at embassies, insufficient number of participants, the travel agency reserves the right to cancel or modify the itinerary.

Additional charges may apply for expenses beyond the agency's control (e.g., visa fees, accommodation, meals, transportation, adjustments in airfares).