



Spectacular Punakha Dzong © Shutterstock

## THE LAST SHANGRI-LA

14 days/13 nights  
Hotels/Guesthouses

Departs daily ex Bangkok

Price per person twin*	Cat A	Cat B
Sep 2011-May 2012	\$13164	\$5220

\*Minimum two people. Single travellers prices on request.

Note: Airfares to/from Paro subject to change with Druk Air.

**A** Uma Paro, Taj Tashi Thimphu, Amankora Punakha, Bumthang & Gangtey resorts.

**B** Standard range of accommodations.

**Price per person includes:** Airfare Bangkok-Paro return including taxes, Bhutan visa fee, accommodation, all meals, excursions, transfers by air-conditioned private vehicle, services of a local English speaking guide, 1 bottle of water per person per day for all surface travel.

**Price excludes:** Airfares Australia - Bangkok return and accommodation in Bangkok.

**T**his breathtaking tour explores the picturesque valleys of Paro, Thimphu and Punakha, Phobjikha where the Black-necked Cranes roost for the winter and the spiritual central valley of Bumthang. The leisurely pace of this journey will allow you to really savour Bhutan's ancient culture and stunning scenery.

### Day 1 Paro

Early morning flight to Paro. After lunch, visit Ta Dzong Museum offering a great orientation into Bhutan's history and culture, and the impressive 17th century Rimping Dzong. LD

### Days 2-4 Thimphu

Drive to Thimphu (2 hrs), Bhutan's capital. Explore the highlights of Thimphu, including the National Memorial Chorten, Folk Heritage Museum, the National Library containing ancient Buddhist scripts, the Bhutanese School for Arts and Painting, Tashichhodzong, 12th century Changangkha temple and the Zilukha nunnery. On day 4 enjoy a hike (45 min) to Tango Monastery, a monastic school built in the 12th century. BLD

### Day 5 Gangtey/Phobjikha Valley

Depart for the alpine wetland valley of Phobjikha (6-7 hrs), winter home of the Black-necked Cranes. Highlights enroute include Dochula Pass (3050m), and the vibrant town of Wangdue. BLD



© David Kneale

School children, Thimphu

### Day 6 Trongsa

View the Black-necked Cranes (Nov - Mar) before visiting 17th century Gangtey Goempa Monastery. Continue on to Chendibji Chorten before reaching Trongsa, the ancestral home of the ruling dynasty. Explore Trongsa Dzong and Ta Dzong housing historical artefacts of the royal family. BLD

### Days 7-9 Bumthang

Drive to Bhutan's spiritual heartland, the Bumthang Valley (2.5 hrs) through lush valleys, forests and stunning mountain passes. Explore the highlights of this sacred valley including Kurje Lhakhang containing a rock imprint of Guru Rimpoche's body, Jambay Lhakhang, one of the two oldest temples in the kingdom and Tamshing Lhakhang containing ancient Buddhist wall paintings. On day 9 hike to Ugyenchholing Palace, a beautiful private mansion housing a small eco-museum. BLD

### Days 10/11 Punakha

Early departure for fertile valley of Punakha (8 hrs), the former capital of Bhutan. On day 11 tour the 17th century Punakha Dzong. The three story main temple of the Dzong is breathtaking with four intricately embossed entrance pillars crafted from cypress and decorated in gold and silver. Afterwards visit Chimi Lhakhang - temple of the 'Divine Madman' built in honour of the unorthodox saint Drukpa Kuenley. BLD

### Day 12 Paro

Enjoy a one hour walk through farmland and ricefields up to Khamsum Yuelley Namgyal Chorten. Built in 1999, it features a stunning display of Nyingmapa iconography and sweeping views of the Punakha valley. Afterwards, enjoy a picnic beside a river before driving to Paro. BLD

### Day 13 Paro

Walk 1.5 hrs up to the viewing point below the famous Taktsang Monastery (Tiger's Nest) perched on a rocky ledge 900m above the valley floor. Visit Drukgyel Dzong, built to commemorate Bhutan's victory against invading Tibetans in 1644. In fine weather the towering peak of the sacred Mount Jomolhari (7314m) can be viewed. Also visit 7th Century Kyichu Temple, one of the oldest in Bhutan. BLD

### Day 14 Tour ends Bangkok

Early morning transfer to airport for flight to Bangkok. Tour ends. B



© David Kneale

Solitary Monk

# ROYAL HERITAGE TOUR

12 days/11 nights  
Hotels/Guesthouses

Departs daily ex Bangkok

Price per person twin*	Cat A	Cat B
Sep 2011-May 2012	\$10281	\$4659

\*Minimum two people. Single travellers prices on request.

Note: Airfares to/from Paro subject to change with Druk Air.

**A** Uma Paro, Taj Tashi Thimphu, Amankora Punakha, Bumthang & Gangtey resorts.

**B** Standard range of accommodations.

**Price per person includes:** Airfare Bangkok/Paro return including taxes, Bhutan visa fee, accommodation, all meals, excursions, transfers by air-conditioned private vehicle, services of a local English speaking guide, 1 bottle of water per person per day for all surface travel.

**Price excludes:** Airfares Australia - Bangkok return and accommodation in Bangkok.

**E**njoy a unique insight into the history of Bhutan's royal family. Visit significant sites across Bhutan, from Paro to the Bumthang Valley, including giant fortresses, royal palaces, museums as well as other architectural monuments such as temples and monasteries.

## Day 1 Thimphu

Early flight to Paro. Visit the Ta Dzong Museum and the 17th century Rimping Dzong before driving onto Bhutan's capital, Thimphu (2 hrs). LD



Pilgrim at the National Memorial Chorten

## Days 2/3 Thimphu

Explore Thimphu's highlights including the National Library featuring ancient Buddhist scripts, Memorial Chorten, Tashichhodzong and the Zilukha nunnery. On day 3 enjoy a hike (45 min) to Tango Monastery with stunning valley views. BLD

## DESIGN YOUR OWN TOUR

Tours featured in this brochure are just a sample of what is available in Bhutan. We can easily design an itinerary tailored to suit your individual travel requirements. Natural Focus Safaris also customise special interest tours including bird watching, mountain biking, village walking, wellbeing programs, photography and buddhist pilgrimages.

For further information please email [info@awsnfs.com](mailto:info@awsnfs.com), phone us on 1300 363 302, or ask your travel agent.



Monks leaving the main hall of Punakha Dzong

## Day 4 Punakha

After breakfast, drive to Punakha (3 hrs) across the spectacular Dochula Pass (3,050m). Visit the imposing 17th century Punakha Dzong and Chimi Lhakhang, the temple of the 'Divine Madman'. BLD

## Days 5/6 Trongsa

Early departure for Trongsa (5 hrs) via the 18th century Chendibji Chorten. In Trongsa, visit one of the most impressive monuments in Bhutan, the Trongsa Dzong built in 1543. This is the ancestral home of Bhutan's ruling dynasty and where the institution of monarchy began. Next day visit Ta Dzong housing historical artefacts of the royal family and explore the historical royal sites of the region including Kuenga Rabten Palace, Yurungchholing Palace, and Thrupeang Palace. BLD

## Days 7/8 Bumthang

Depart for Bumthang (2.5 hrs), the spiritual heartland of Bhutan. Spend the next 2 days exploring this beautiful valley with its ancient monasteries, sacred Buddhist sites and royal palaces including Domkhar Tashichholing and Ugyenchholing Palace, a beautiful private mansion housing a small eco-museum. Other highlights include Kurje Lhakhang, containing a rock imprint of Guru Rinpoche's body, the 7th century Jambay Lhakhang and Tamshing Monastery. BLD

## Day 9 Punakha

Drive to Punakha (8 hrs). Evening at leisure. BLD

## Day 10 Paro

Enjoy a short hike to Khamsum Yuelley Namgyal Chorten, built by Her Majesty the Queen Ashi Tshering Yangdon for the protection of Bhutan. Afterwards drive to Paro. BLD

## Day 11 Paro

Walk (1.5 hrs) up to the Taktsang Monastery (Tiger's Nest), perched on a rocky ledge over a 900m drop, visit the ruins of the Drukgyel Dzong, and the 7th century Kyichu Temple. BLD

## Day 12 Tour ends Bangkok

Early morning transfer to airport for flight to Bangkok. Tour ends. B



Ta Dzong Museum, Paro



Trongsa Dzong, the ancestral home of Bhutan's ruling dynasty