

# Bhutan Peak of Happiness

Unmask Himalayan wonders during the kaleidoscopic festival season in the land of the thunder dragon.

## highlights

**Lively National Festivals.** Experience the sights and sounds of two tsechus, or festivals. At each, you'll see traditional religious and tantric dance performances and celebrate, pray, and receive blessings for the year ahead.

**Himalayan Wildlife and Conservation.** The Bhutanese constitution mandates that 60 percent of the land remains forested. We'll hike through national and botanical parks and spot birds, goats, and monkeys.

**Spiritual Practice.** Raise peace flags in the mountain mist, meet with Buddhist spiritual leaders, and take in the evening chants at mountaintop temples.

**Cultural Exploration.** Nestled between two of the largest and most rapidly growing countries in the world, India and China, learn how Bhutan is preserving its unique culture while growing a "values-based" economy.

## at a glance

**Meet in Delhi.** Dive into the flavors of India, sampling biryani, chat, and daal. Explore gingery markets, the Lotus temple, and an optional trip to the Taj Mahal.

**From Paro to Thimphu.** Feast your eyes on spectacular views as we cross the Himalayas by plane. Once we alight, head east along the single road of the nation—the drive itself is an adventure. We'll watch sunrise at Buddha Point, meet with experts from the Ministry of Happiness, and observe traditional festival dances.

**Through the Dochula Pass.** Ogle breathtaking views of the world's highest unclimbed peak, visit the hidden meditation caves near 108 chortens that were built by the Queen Mother, and learn about the 46 types of rhododendrons in the Royal Botanical Park.

**The Punakha Valley.** Explore the Mo Chhu river in the forest of the Jigme Dorji National Park, learn the history of the Buddha in "the Palace of Great Bliss," and visit a thriving nunnery, where we hear the evening chants of the nuns.

**Colors of Gangtey.** Celebrate with locals at the Gangteng Monastery, host to the festival. After the sword dances, we'll take the Gangtey Nature Trail and discover a designated conservation area to learn about the endangered black-necked crane.

**Wangdue Phodrang and the Tiger's Nest.** Stop for blessings at the matchless fertility shrine of the "Divine Madman," and trek to the astonishing 1692 temple complex and former home to the second incarnation of Buddha, resplendently built into the face of a cliff.

## details

- 9 days, 8 nights at locally-owned hotels.
- Includes most meals and round trip airfare to Bhutan from New Delhi.
- Dedicated bilingual guides and private transportation throughout the trip.
- Comprehensive briefing packet for each participant, including country information, logistical and contact information, reading list, and packing list.

"Simply the best trip of my life. And the timing with the festivals was perfect!"



"Excellent organization. Pure delight."

