

Booking proposal EC012201xx

Bhutan “Kingdom in the Clouds” programme 9 days

1. Itinerary Outline:

The programme would be as follows:

Day 1: Arrive Paro



The flight to Paro is a befitting introduction to Bhutan - an untouched pristine wilderness. Upon arrival your guide will meet you and transfer to your Bhutanese home - a traditional styled hotel. Check-in and lunch at hotel. After lunch you will visit the Paro Dzong - who now house the offices of the district administration and the district monk body. You will then hike down to the traditional cantilever bridge. One of the scenes in the film Little Buddha includes this bridge. The hike is about 10 minutes. Your transport will pick you from the other side of the river. Before returning to your traditional styled hotel, you will explore the Paro town.

Meals: **Lunch & Dinner**
Accommodation: **Tashi Namgay Resort or Similar**

Day 2: Paro (Excursion to Haa Valley)

After breakfast you will drive to Haa via Chelela Pass (3900m). The drive is about 2 hours one way. If weather is clear you will have magnificent views of Mt. Jumolhari (7314 m) and Taktshang Goenpa (Tiger’s Nest Monastery). Haa valley was recently opened to visitors and remains one of Bhutan’s most pristine areas. The valley is dotted with fields of millet; barley, potatoes, wheat and farmhouses are adorned with intricately painted cornices and frames. On route you will view the Haa Dzong and stop for pictures. You will visit the 100 years old farmhouse owned by Tashi’s grand parents. This will give you an idea of the way of life of Bhutanese families in the remote areas. Picnic lunch will be served on route. After lunch you will explore Haa valley with visit to Chundu Lhakhang at Hatey village. The visit to the Lhakhang (Temple) will provide an insight into the history of the valley. You will then return to Paro for the night.

Meals: **Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner**
Accommodation: **Tashi Namgay Resort or Similar**



Day 3: Paro - Thimphu

After breakfast drive to Thimphu. Upon arrival check in and lunch at the hotel. After lunch visit the Memorial Choeten, a stupa built in 1974 to honor the memory of the 3rd King, His Late Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuck who is known in Bhutan’s history as the “Father of Modern Bhutan” since the modern developments began during his reign. Then you will visit the Changangkha Lhakhang, which is also a focus of daily worship for many Thimphu residents. Then you will drive to Sangaygang - the view point. It is also known as “Lover’s Point” where young couples come to enjoy the bird’s eye view of the Thimphu valley. Next you will visit the Dupthob Lhakhang built by Dupthob Thangthong Gyalpo, also known as “Iron Bridge Builder.” It is now a nunnery and it has more than 70 practicing nuns. You will have time to enjoy the beautiful paintings inside the temple. Evening you will visit the Government Handicrafts Emporium for souvenir.

Meals: **Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner**
Accommodation: **Hotel River View or Similar**

Day 4: Thimphu

Morning you will visit the Folk Heritage Museum and then visit the Institute for Zorig Chusum - a painting school where the traditional style of Thangka painting is passed on to the next. Next visit Changangkha Lhakhang, a temple of daily worship for Thimphu residents. Lunch in town. After lunch you will drive north of Thimphu to visit the Tango Monastery which is now a college for learning higher Buddhist Philosophy. It was founded by Lama Gyalwa Lhanampa in the 12th century. It takes about an hour and the trail takes you through the gradual ascends. The monastery now has about 200 practicing monks. You will have time to enjoy the beautiful paintings inside the temple. Evening at leisure.

Meals: **Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner**
Accommodation: **Hotel River View or Similar**

Day 5: Thimphu - Punakha

After leisurely breakfast you will drive to Punakha across the Dochula pass (3100m). If weather favors you, then you will get to enjoy the magnificent views of the eastern Himalayas. The pass is marked by a large massive Choeten, 108 smaller choetens (Druk Wangyal Choetens) and prayer flags. Stop at the pass to stretch your legs and take pictures. Then descend your journey to Punakha through forests of rhododendrons, magnolia and cypress trees. Check in and lunch at the hotel. After lunch you will hike to Chimi Lhakhang – a temple dedicated to Lama Drukpa Kuenlay who is also known as “Divine Madman.” He traveled throughout Bhutan and Tibet using songs, humor and outrageous behavior to dramatize his teachings, and believed that the stiffness of the clergy and social conventions were keeping people from learning the true Buddhist teachings. Even today this site is believed to hold fertility powers for women wanting to conceive. Evening at leisure.

Meals: **Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner**
Accommodation: **Hotel Zangdopelri or Similar**

Day 6: Punakha



After breakfast hike to Khamsum Yuelay Namgyal. It's a moderate hike through the rice paddies. The hike offers beautiful views of terraced rice paddies of upper Punakha valley. Next visit Punakha Dzong (Built: 1637) by Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal. It served as the capital of Bhutan until 1955 and it still serves as the winter residence of the central monk body. You will have time to admire the paintings of the life of Buddha and the master pieces of Bhutanese sculptures. Lunch will served at a popular local restaurant in town. After lunch try archery – Bhutan's national sport. Your guide will assist you with the game. Evening at leisure.

Meals: **Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner**
Accommodation: **Tashi Namgay Resort or Similar**

Day 7: Punakha - Paro

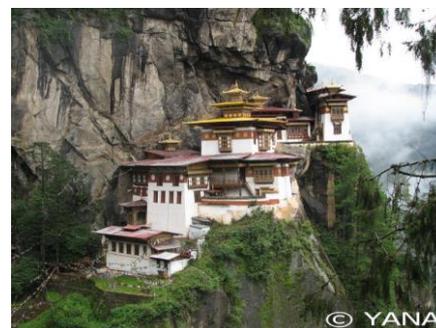
After leisurely breakfast visit a private temple built by Lama Serpo (who passed away in 2011 at 100 years) and time permitting you will have a brief audience with his 8 years old grandson lama. This will be a special treat since no other foreign visitors have excess to this temple other than our guests. The temple has three huge statues – Buddha (founder of Buddhism) in the center, White Tara (Buddha of Long Life/Prosperity) on our right-hand side and Guru Rinpoche (Saint who introduced Buddhism to Bhutan in 8th century) on your left-hand side. You will have time to admire the intricate wall paintings on different Buddhist traditions. Then resume your journey to Paro. Lunch in Thimphu. After lunch visit the centenary farmer's which is in a permanent set of stalls, vendors from throughout the region arrive on Friday afternoon and remain selling their goods until Sunday evening. Then resume your drive to Paro. Evening time on your own.

Meals: **Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner**
Accommodation: **Tashi Namgay Resort or Similar**

Day 8: Paro (Day Excursion to Tiger's Nest)

Day Excursion to Taktshang Monastery literally known as Tiger's Nest. This is one of Bhutan's most sacred places, and an important pilgrimage destination. You will walk along a trail that slowly rises above the valley, taking you through fields and past four large prayer wheels turned by a stream. Continuing across an open meadow, you hike up a section of trail to a ridge where prayer flags rustle in the wind next to a massive prayer wheel. Just beyond is the Taktshang Cafeteria at 9,200 feet, where you stop to enjoy a hot drink and the striking views of the Monastery across the valley. Depending on your energy level, you may relax in the pleasant atmosphere of the cafeteria until lunch or continue on for a mile of steep climbing to another dramatic viewpoint. You return to the cafeteria for a delicious buffet of typical Bhutanese food. You may want to try Emadatsi (A chilli cheese dish), vegetables with cheese sauce and other dishes. Evening transfer to Thimphu.

Meals: **Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner**
Accommodation: **Tashi Namgay Resort or Similar**



Day 9: Departure

After breakfast and drive to the Paro International Airport in Assam for your onward journey. Your representative will help with check-in formalities and bid you farewell.

Meals: **Breakfast**

2. Price per person:

9 day programme (ground arrangements only – no flights):

£1829 in the low season (Dec/Jan/Feb and Jun/Jul/Aug) and **£2139** per adult in the high season (Mar/Apr/May and Sep/Oct /Nov). This is based on 2 people travelling, but if there are more (e.g. a group of 4) there are reductions in the price. Prices are subject to confirmation at the time of booking.

Children usually receive a 15% discount.

3. Flights:

Drukair operates flights to/from Paro from Doha, Delhi, Kolkata, Kathmandu, KL, Bangkok, Singapore and some other locations.

Fares can be advised on request.

4. Accommodation:**Bhutan:**

Hotels as stated in the itinerary and meals are on a meal basis as stated. Price covers one double or twin room.

5. Inclusions/Exclusions**Ground Tour Price includes:**

- Tourist standard accommodation on single basis.
- All meals as per itinerary in regular tourist standard restaurants (no drinks).
- Transfers within Bhutan – smaller cars on individual tours.
- The services of a knowledgeable English speaking guide licensed by Tourism Council of Bhutan.
- Bottled mineral water.
- Entrance fees to museums, schools and permits wherever necessary.
- A Sustainable Tourism Royalty (Development Taxes) to the Government (US\$ 65 per night).
- Tourism Development Fund fees (US\$ 10 per visit).
- Visa application and fees (US\$ 40).
- Wet wipes on daily basis
- Hand sanitizer on daily basis

Price excludes:

- International flights can be quoted for separately
- Any excess baggage (Allowance: 20 Kgs Economy Class & 30 Kgs Business Class)
- Personal drinks at meal times (Alcoholic and Bottled Beverages)
- All Personal Expenses (Telephone, Email, Laundry etc.)
- Any other special arrangements not included in the tariff
- Personal Travel Insurance
- Tips & Gratuities

We hope that this programme meets your wishes, but please come back to us with any questions or comments.

Kind regards,
The Product Team,
Earth Cultures Limited.

WHERE DOES TO SUSTAINABLE TOURISM ROYALTY GO?

Guided by Bhutan's development philosophy of **GROSS NATIONAL HAPPINESS (GNH)** crafted by His Majesty the fourth King Jigme Singye Wangchuck and Bhutan's good governance ensures proper and monitored use of the Sustainable Tourism Royalty collected from visitors to Bhutan. This royalty goes towards free education, free healthcare poverty alleviation, along with the infrastructure development. In case of emergency even foreign visitors can avail the free healthcare during your travels in Bhutan. Thus, by travelling to Bhutan you directly contribute to Bhutan's education, healthcare and poverty alleviation. Therefore, you are a philanthropist and this is one of the reasons you must visit Bhutan as a responsible traveller.

SPONSOR A MONK PROJECT:

We give some part of every individual tour payment as a part of our project to sponsor monks from economically disadvantaged families awaiting formal enrolment in Monastic Schools. Under this project many monks will be enrolled and will receive proper monastic education.

This is being done in close collaboration with the **Youth Development Fund** founded by Her Majesty Azhi Tshering Pem Wangchuck to build funds for the youths of Bhutan. We are proud to say that we are the only Travel Company in Bhutan with such giving back projects. I personally believe in giving back to the community from which I received numerous supports whilst growing up & through adulthood. Sign up today and be a **SPONSOR** too.

BOOKS FOR BHUTAN PROJECT:

As a part of your Sustainable Responsible Travel Initiative, we have started "Books for Bhutan" project. Under this project we have donated our first batch over 4000 English library books to the Education Ministry for rural schools in Bhutan on March 09, 2010. We hope to continue collecting books from students, parents, schools and encourage travellers to bring a couple of library books with them to be contributed to this project.