

Booking proposal EC01220xxx

Bhutan "Kingdom in the Clouds" programme 11 days

1. Itinerary Outline:

The programme would be as follows:

Day 1: Arrive in Paro



The flight to Paro is one of the most spectacular of all the mountain flights. The first three gifts you will receive from Bhutan will be cool, clean fresh air you feel as you step out of the plane. The second will be warm welcome you will receive from our Team. The third - the enchanting Paro valley. Received by our representative and transfer to the local restaurant in town for lunch. After lunch you will visit the National Museum of Bhutan where you will have time to admire the museum's collections of rare Bhutanese artifacts and art, traditional weaving and other eclectic pieces. After museum you will visit the Paro Dzong who now houses the offices of the district administration and the district monk body. Check in and evening at leisure.

Meals: **Lunch & Dinner**

Overnight at Tashi Namgay Resort or Similar.

Day 2 : Paro to Punakha

After breakfast you will drive to Punakha across the Dochula Pass (3100m). The pass is marked by a large massive choeten, 108 smaller choetens (Druk Wangyel Choetens) and prayer flags. The pass offers the most spectacular view over the high peaks of the eastern Himalayas. Tea stop at the pass. Resume your journey to Punakha. Check in and lunch at the hotel. After lunch you will make an excursion to Chimi Lhakhang - a Buddhist temple dedicated to Lama Drukpa Kuenlay who is also known as "Divine Madman" in the west. It is an easy hike through the village of Yuwakha and rice fields. Evening at leisure.

Meals: **Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner**

Overnight at Meri Puensum Resort or Similar.



Day 3 : Punakha to Bumthang

Early breakfast and start your journey to Jakar. After Wangduephodrang, you drive east, following the Dang Chu River drainage up towards its source. The road climbs steadily and the environment changes from semi-tropical to pine forests and then to an alpine environment, home to several species of rhododendron and dwarf bamboo. Grey langur monkeys are often seen on this portion of the drive. Near Pele la (3300 m), a detour onto a side road leads to Phobjikha Valley. Considered one of the most beautiful valleys in Bhutan, it is encircled by majestic pine-covered mountains. In the center of the valley, rising dramatically from a small ridge, stands one of the oldest Nyingma monasteries in Bhutan: Gangtey Goenpa. Gangtey Trulku Rinpoche, the head lama of the goenpa, is the ninth incarnation of the Tertön Pema Lingpa, the famous 14th century "Treasure Revealer" from Bumthang who is one of Bhutan's most famous Buddhist saints and an ancestor of the ruling Wangchuck dynasty. The Phobjikha Valley is famous as the winter home to the endangered black-necked crane, they arrive late October from Tibet and Ladakh and stay through mid-March. More than 350 cranes of these rare birds winter every year in the Phobjikha and Bomdeling valleys of central and eastern Bhutan, respectively. Visit the monastery and the Crane information center. Picnic lunch will be served on route. After lunch resume your journey to Jakar via Trongsa. After Trongsa the road starts ascending to the Yutongla (3400m). As you descend from the pass, your first stop will be at Chumey village. Here you will have time to admire the village weavers weaving woolen fabric popularly known as "Yathra." Yathra is a specialty of Bumthang valley. Evening at leisure.

Meals: **Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner**

Overnight at the Kaila Guest House or Similar

Day 4 : Bumthang

Morning you will begin your day with visit to Jambay Lhakhang. It's one of the 108 temples built in a day across the Himalayas by King Songtsen Goenpo who was believed to be the reincarnation Buddha of compassion. Out of 108, two are in Bhutan - Kyichu Lhakhang. The Jo Khang of the Potala Palace is one of the 108 temples built to pin down an ogress who was causing hindrance to the spread of Buddhism in the Himalayas. Next you will visit the Kurjey Lhakhang, which consists of three temples. The first one is built on the site of a cave containing



a rock with the body imprint of Guru Rinpoche and is considered the most holy. The first king of Bhutan, His Late Majesty Ugyen Wangchuck, built the second one. The third temple is the newest of all the three and is built by the present Royal Queen Mother, Her Majesty Azhi Kesang Choeden Wangchuck. These temples are surrounded by 108 small choetens (Buddhist Stupas) forming a retaining wall, symbolic of each joint of the human body. Back to hotel for lunch. After lunch you will explore the other side of Chamkhar Chu(River) on foot. It is an easy hike through wheat fields. You will visit the Tamshing Goenpa built by Tertön Pema Lingpa in 1501. You will wrap up your day with visit to the Swiss farm where you may like to enjoy the soft Gouda cheese.

Meals: **Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner**

Overnight at the **Kaila Guest House or Similar**

Day 5 : Bumthang (Day excursion to Ura Village)

After breakfast drive to Ura Village. Ura village is about 48 km east of Jakar. You will visit the Ura village temple. Picnic lunch at the village. Shuttle back to Jakar for the night. Evening at leisure.

Meals: **Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner**

Overnight at the **Kaila Guest House or Similar**

Day 6 : Bumthang to Punakha

After breakfast you will say good bye to Jakar to go to Wangdiphodrang. On route you will visit the Ta Dzong (Watch Tower) in Trongsa, which once guarded the Trongsa Dzong from internal rebellions. The Ta Dzong stands impressive and provides an insight into historical significance of Trongsa in the country's history. Resume your journey to Wangdiphodrang. Lunch box will be served at Chendebji Choeten. Evening at leisure.

Meals: **Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner**

Overnight at **Meri Puensum Resort or Similar**.

Day 7 : Punakha to Thimphu

After leisurely breakfast you will drive to Thimphu. Upon arrival you visit the Bhutan Post, where you will have time to admire and buy some stamps - Bhutan is well known among the philatelists and stamps constitute one of its delightful exports. Next visit visit the weekend market, 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. Check in lunch at hotel. After lunch hike Wangditse Lhakhang, it's a moderate hike through the forests of fine and oak. This hike offers great views of the Thimphu valley including the Royal Cottage Palace where the present King resides, Tashichoedzong and Parliament building. Evening at leisure. Dinner and overnight at hotel.

Meals: **Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner**

Accommodation: **Hotel River View or Similar**

Day 8 : Thimphu

After breakfast you will drive north of Thimphu valley to visit Tango Monastery – very powerful place to be. It is now a college for learning higher Buddhist philosophy. It was more than 200 monks. It's a moderate hike through the forest of oak and rhododendron. It's one hour hike one way. Lunch in restaurant in town. 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 9 : Thimphu to Paro

Morning you will visit Folk Heritage Museum where you will have an insight on rural Bhutanese life. Next you will visit the Institute for Zorig Chusum - a painting school where the traditional style of Thangka painting is passed on to the next. Lunch in town. After lunch drive to Paro. Evening at leisure.

Meals: **Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner**

Overnight at the **Tashi Namgay Resort or Similar**.

Day 10 : Paro - Excursion to Tiger's Nest Monastery

Today is an excursion to Taktsang 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 chili cheese dish), vegetables with cheese sauce and other dishes.

Meals: **Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner**

Overnight at the **Tashi Namgay Resort or Similar**.

Day 11: Depart

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

Meals: **Breakfast**

This itinerary is subject to revision due to weather, road or trail conditions, government restrictions, unforeseen incidents and other reasons beyond our control.

2. Price per person:

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

£2189 per adult in the low season (Dec/Jan/Feb and Jun/Jul/Aug) and £2579 per adult in the high season (Mar/Apr/May and Sep/Oct/Nov). This is based on 2 people travelling. Prices subject to availability at time of booking.

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 YOUR 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.