



QUEST FOR THE HIMALAYAN KINGDOM OF BHUTAN



Trip date: November 5 – 20, 2024



**Featuring Cultural and Annual Black-necked Crane Festival in the Himalayan
Kingdom of BHUTAN**

5th – 20th November 2024

Tour Fact Sheet

Duration: 14 nights in Bhutan; 1 night in Bangkok

Guide: Mongolia Quest tour manager to accompany a Bhutanese national guide throughout the trip

Group Size: Maximum 14 people

Accommodation: 15 nights in good standard tourist class hotels

Altitudes: 150m/492ft – 3,822m/12,539ft.

Tour Pace and Walking: Moderate

Expected Climate: From warm tropical to temperate and colder at higher altitudes.

Attractions: The Crane Festival, the iconic Tiger's Nest Monastery, architectural gems of Punakha and Trongsa Dzongs and the heritage museums of Paro, Thimphu and Trongsa. The amazing wildlife, flora and fauna in an ancient, pristine landscape set against a backdrop of the snow-capped Himalayan Peaks, a chance to spend time with the people, to travel through Bhutan where few visitors have ventured with photographic excellence throughout the journey.

Synopsis

Bhutan's culture and heritage is full of mystic, shrouded in the mist of time. This itinerary offers a unique opportunity to glimpse the past and see how it remains entwined in every day life. We will walk in the beautiful landscape, hike to monasteries clinging to the cliff-face, explore the pristine forests looking for rare and endangered birds and mammal, visit dzong's and be amazed how such buildings still stand without mortar or nails, understand a little of the history of Bhutan in the Ta Dzongs and museums and witness the heritage of this magical kingdom where 'Gross National Happiness' is ever present!



Route Map

Brief Itinerary

Day 1. Upon arrival in Bangkok transfer to a centrally located hotel in Bangkok. In the evening, meet the rest of the group for a trip briefing. Dinner is independent.

Overnight at hotel. (Hotel Bangkok)

Day 2: Flight into Paro from Bangkok. Visit Ta Dzong (national museum) and birding along Paro Chhu (river).

Day 3: Paro to Chele La for high altitude birding and continue to Thimphu (120kms, 4 hrs).

Day 4: Thimphu to Punakha over Dochu La at 3,116m and stop at Lampelri for birding (78kms, 3 hrs).

Day 5: Morning birding at Tashithang (JDN Park), after lunch, visit the magnificent Punakha Dzong.

Day 6: Punakha to Phobjikha the valley of the Black Necked Cranes (75kms, 3.5 hrs).

Day 7: Attend the Annual Black-necked crane festival at Gangtey Monastery.

Day 8: Phobjikha to Tongsibji (58kms, 2 hrs), birding at Tongsibji.

Day 9: Tongsibji to Chumey (70kms, 3.5 hrs drive), visit Trongsa Dzong and Tharpaling monastery for high altitude birding.



Day 10: Chumey to Yongkola (130kms, 4 hrs drive), birding along Thrumshing La and Sengor valley.

Day 11 & 12: Exploring the rich broadleaf forests of Yongkola and Namling. One of the top ten birding hot-spots in all of Asia.

Day 13: Yongkola to Bumthang (150kms, 5 hrs drive). Birding along Thrumshing La National Park.

Day 14: Flight from Bumthang to Paro (25mins) and cultural visits in Paro.

Day 15: Hike up to Tigers Nest monastery (5 hrs return hike).

Day 16: Flight from Paro to Bangkok for onward connection.

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Bangkok

Upon arrival, transfer on your own to Radisson Suites Bangkok Sukhumvit or similar, located near the downtown Bangkok.

In the evening, gather at the hotel's lobby to greet the rest of your group and meet your Mongolia Quest tour manager for trip briefing. Meals independent. (Imperial Queen's Park Hotel)

Day 2: Flight into Paro from Bangkok / Ta Dzong (national museum) and birding along Paro Chhu (river)

On your flight into Bhutan you will have breathtaking views of the High Himalayan peaks adding to the excitement of a holiday in this remote kingdom. At Paro airport, after clearing customs and immigration you will be met by our guide. Emerging into a new landscape, breathing the pristine air, excitement mounts as you board the vehicles and your adventure really begins.

Your guide will take you to your hotel and after coffee we will drive to the Ta Dzong (watchtower). The strategically positioned Ta Dzong has incredible views down the Paro valley. Built in as a circular structure helping it withstand attack; now houses the National Museum with many interesting antiquities: guns,



shields, armory, spectacular ancient thangkas (painted and/or appliquéd religious scrolls) as well as more personal items and incredibly elaborate stamps. After visiting the museum we will drive along Paro river bank for some birding before returning to our hotel.

Expected species; **Ibisbill, Pied Wagtail, Blue Whistling Thrush, Grey-backed Shrike, Rosy Pipit, Plumbeous and White-capped water redstarts, Common Hoopoe and Brown Dipper.**

(Hotel Olathang or similar, Paro at 2,300m; D)

Day 3: Paro to Chele La for high altitude birding and continue to Thimphu (120kms, 4 hrs).

An early morning departure for our journey up through ancient pine and fir forests to Chele La Pass (3,822m), where there are fantastic views of the high Himalayan peaks of Jhomolhari (7,219m), Jichu Drake (6,989m) and down into the Paro and Ha valleys. Chele La gives us the opportunity to ascend above the tree line into alpine meadows and dwarf rhododendron scrub; here we have the possibility of finding the beautiful **Himalayan Monal, Blood Pheasant, Kalij Pheasant; Spotted Laughingthrush, Collard Grosbeak, Blue-fronted Redstart, Fire-tailed Sunbird, Himalayan Bluetail, Rufous-breasted and Alpine accentors** and the beautifully coloured **Himalayan White-browed Rosefinch.**

After a hot breakfast we will bird in this beautiful area before gradually making our way back to Paro and continue an hour drive to Thimphu. The route follows the Willow fringed Pa Chhu river and passes through forests of blue pine. Some of the best birding can be found at the sewage treatment plant where we should encounter migrant species such as: **Tufted Duck, Ferruginous Pochard, Eurasian Wigeon, Ruddy Shelduck, Northern Pintail, Garganey and Northern Shoveler.**

(Riverview Hotel or similar, Thimphu at 2,300m; B, L, D)



Day 4: Thimphu to Punakha over Dochu La at 3,116m, birding en-route at Lampelri botanical park (78kms, 3 hrs).

Today we must leave very early in order to see the Himalayas as dawn breaks over Dochu La Pass (3,116m). This is an awe-inspiring sight; the road is festooned with prayer flags and 108 chortens, celebrating the safe return of the fourth king from a threatened invasion. At the pass we will have breakfast and you can spend time looking at the Bhutanese Himalayas from this advantage point. In Bhutan's high elevation and the mixed evergreen and broad-leafed forests, there is an incredible wide range of birds, mammals, and flowering plants. Here it is possible to see species such as: **Mrs. Gould's and Green-tailed sunbirds, Lemon-rumped Warbler, Green Shrike Babbler, Olive-backed Pipit, Plain-backed Thrush, Striated Bulbul, Sapphire Flycatcher, Chestnut-crowned Warbler, Red-billed Leiothrix, Solitary Snipe and the Hill Partridge.**

From the park we will descend down through the sub-tropical forests around Punakha where there are cactus, poinsettia and banana plants, then down to the green terraced fields of Punakha. In Punakha we will do some birding at our hotel compound, looking for **Slender-billed Oriole, Collared Scops Owl, Long-tailed Minivet, Scaly-breasted Munia and Oriental White-eye.**

(Meri Puensum Resort or similar, Punakha at 1,300m; B, L, D)

Day 5: Morning birding at Tashithang (JDN Park), after lunch, visit the magnificent Punakha Dzong.

We will rise early to get to Rimchhu valley to enter the Jigme Dorji National Park for the morning birding. The temperate forest is pristine at an elevation of 1,300m where we should encounter **Rufous Woodpecker, Spangled Drongo, Slaty-backed Forktail, Mountain Bulbul, Slaty-bellied Tesia, Spotted Elachura, Speckled Piculet, Nepal Fulvetta** and perhaps the rare **Pallas Fish Eagle.**

In the afternoon we will trace our way back to Punakha and visit its magnificent Dzong which functions as winter residence for Central monastic body. The Punakha Dzong was built in 1637 and situated spectacularly on a promontory at the confluence of the Mo (mother) and Pho (father) Chhu (river). Punakha



Dzong is known as the “Palace of Great Happiness” and considered to be one of the most beautiful Dzongs in Bhutan with its towering whitewashed walls, their gold and red bands demarking civil from religious areas; the black wooden window frames and huge, finely carved doors. Inside the dzong we will spend time in the Kuenrey Lhakhang, a beautiful temple housing the 'hundred-pillar' assembly hall with exceptional murals depicting the life of Buddha, enormous 18th century golden statues of the Buddha, Guru Rinpoche and the Zhabdrung. But perhaps the most surprising and beautiful of all is the high ceiling, exquisitely painted with hundreds of dragons.

In the late afternoon we will take a short drive along the Pho Chhu valley in search of the rare and critically endangered **White-bellied Heron**, which is also perhaps the rarest bird in Bhutan.

(Meri Puensum Resort or similar, Punakha at 1,300m; B, L, D)

Day 6: Punakha to Phobjikha the valley of the Black Necked Cranes (75kms, 3.5 hrs).

Today we take the winding mountain road up through oak and rhododendron forests, festooned with lichens towards Pele La, which divides eastern and western Bhutan. In these diverse habitats there will be good birding opportunities where we should find: **Wallcreeper (winter visitor), Great and Golden-throated barbets; Yellow-rumped Honeyguide; Orange-bellied Leafbird; Speckled Piculet; Crimson-breasted; Bay and Grey-headed woodpeckers; Yellow-billed Blue Magpie; Spotted Nutcracker and Himalayan Griffon.**

From Lawa La our journey takes us to the picturesque Phobjikha Valley and the highlight of the day - the **Black-necked Cranes** who migrate from the Tibetan plateau to over-winter here from late October to March. Phobjikha is situated on the western slopes of the Black Mountains, bordering the Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park. It is one of Bhutan's few glacial valleys and a very important wildlife preserve. After lunch, we will spend the remainder of the day watching the **Black-necked Cranes** from advantage points and walk in the



valley as these magnificent birds with their impressive seven and a half feet wing-span as they fly overhead. These birds are considered to be an auspicious sign and the people of the valley await their arrival each winter for the blessings they will bring. The valley is also home to the **Winter Wren; Oriental Skylark; Spotted, Black-faced and Chestnut-crowned laughingthrushes; Olive-backed Pipit; Durian Redstart; Red-billed Chough; Hen Harrier; Common Buzzard; Golden Eagle** and with a bit of luck, a **Lammergeier**.

Situated on the edge of the forest and wetland along the main road of Phobjikha valley, the Black-necked Crane Information Centre has an observation room equipped with high power spotting scope for catching the best view of the cranes. The centre also offers display information that outline the natural and cultural history of the area. There is a small gift shop, which sells handicrafts produced by the local people.

(Gakiling Guesthouse or similar, Phobjikha at 2,800m; B, L, D)

Day 7: Attend the Annual Black-necked crane festival at Gangtey Monastery.

This morning we visit Gangtey monastery for the magnificent Black-necked Crane Festival; introduced in 1998 by the RSPN. Phobjikha is the most significant wetland in Bhutan and as such it is the most significant over-wintering ground for the Black-neck Cranes. However, this valley is also home to around 500 subsistence farmers, who although known for their traditional respect for all sentient beings, also wish for economic development. In order to combine these two elements, the RSPN together with members of the village, the body of monks and local businessmen, developed the Black-necked Crane Festival as an integral part of the Eco-tourism/Community based sustainable tourism program. Bhutanese Festivals or Tshechus are held in villages and towns throughout the year. These are happy social events, a riot of colour with quite spectacular dancing. People dress in their finest clothes and gather in the courtyards of temples or Dzongs, in order to participate in the ceremonies and watch religious dances performed in honour of Guru Rinpoche and his incredible deeds. Here in Phobjikha, this is a very important occasion as the



people who live in the valley wish to show their gratitude to the Cranes and further their knowledge on environmental conservation for both themselves and the Cranes. The Festival Dances we will see are both traditional and can be traced back to the Pema Lingpa in the fifteenth century, as well as new dances based on the theme of Black-neck Cranes specially created for this auspicious occasion. They are performed by young monks and lay men who, dressed in brightly coloured gowns (often hand loomed silks), and wearing different masks represent Buddhist deities, demons and animals, complete elaborate dances (Cham), representing the destruction of evil spirits, acknowledged in the Bhutanese faith as well as those depicting Black-neck Cranes.

There are Folk Dances performed by villagers (often women) who, in lines or circles move in intricate series of forward and backward steps, accompanied by graceful hand and arm actions. But perhaps the highlight of all, are the environmental conservation themed stories and songs, sung by the school children. The Black-necked Crane Festival not only marks the arrival of these magnificent birds but also aims to generate awareness and understanding of the importance of conserving these rare and endangered birds. However, the success of the festival and its continuity depends entirely upon the support and contributions of the visitors and well wishers of conservation programs. By participating and enjoying the event, you will be helping to promote traditional respect for all sentient beings, while enabling economic development; by maintaining continued conservation stewardship.

After spending the morning at the festival, we will have a hot picnic lunch after which we will walk the glaciated valley of Phobjikha which will take us about 2 hrs.

(Gakiling Guesthouse or similar, Phobjikha at 2,800m; B, L, D)

Day 8: Phobjikha to Tangsibji (58kms, 2 hrs), birding at Tangsibji.

Returning through the pass at Lawa La at 3,390m, we stop once again to enjoy the panoramic views before returning to our vehicles and continuing our drive down through beautiful dwarf bamboo forest to the valley of Rukubji and Nekhachu village, surrounded by fields of mustard, wheat, barley and potatoes before continuing our drive to Chendibji. Here we will spend some time to take



photos of the stupa. The Nepalese styled Chorten, picturesquely situated alongside the river was built in 19th century by Lama Shida and is patterned after Swayambhunath in Kathmandu (Nepal). According to the legend, it was built to cover the remains of an evil spirit who was killed there.

From Chendibji the drive continues to pass through beautiful scenery to the village of Tangsibji and our guesthouse. We will spend the evening birding near our guesthouse from where we also stunning view across the Black Mountain National Park. Species we may see at Tangsibji include **Spotted Forktail; Black-tailed Crake; Fire-breasted Flowerpecker; Rusty-cheeked and Streak-breasted Scimitar babblers; Golden Bush Robin; Green Shrike Babbler; Eurasian Hobby and Himalayan Buzzard.**

(Tangbi Guesthouse or similar, Trongsa at 1,900m; B, L, D)

Day 9: Tangsibji to Chumey (70kms, 3.5 hrs drive), visit Trongsa Dzong and Tharpaling monastery for high altitude birding.

Leaving Tangsibji we head further east to Trongsa where we stop to visit Trongsa Dzong, built in 1648 and the seat of power over central and eastern Bhutan and both the first and second Kings of Bhutan ruled here; even today the King has to be invested as Trongsa Penlop (governor) prior to ascending the throne. The dzong is one of the largest in Bhutan and is considered to be an excellent example of Bhutanese architecture.

From Trongsa the road winds steeply up the mountain ridges to Yotong La (3,425m). This is known as 'Yak country' and often small herds of these large animals can be seen grazing on the young bamboo shoots just below the pass. Descending from Yotong La, we travel through blue pine forests to the valley of Gatshaa, from where we will take a short de-tour to Tharpaling monastery to see the rare Himalayan Monal and Blood Pheasant at close range. Other species we may see along today's drive include: **Pink-browed Finch; Gold-naped Finch; Rufous-bellied Woodpecker; Beautiful Rosefinch; Winter Wren; Snow Pigeon; Red-billed Chough; Black-billed Magpie** and near our hotel at Chumey there is a nesting pair of **Himalayan Wood Owl** which can be heard occasionally.



(Chumey Nature Resort or similar, Chumey at 2,800m; B, L, D)

Day 10: Chumey to Yongkola (130kms, 4 hrs drive), birding along Thrumshing La and Sengor valley.

This drive is considered to be one of the most spectacular in the Himalayas. All around are stunning landscapes of the High Himalayas, auspiciously placed prayer flags, typical Bhutanese villages and spectacular temples – truly a magical land! We will stop and walk through the tranquil valley of Ura, the highest of the four valleys of Bumthang. Lying in the shadow of Thrumshing La, Ura is quite a prosperous village. In the surrounding fields we may encounter: flocks of **Russet Sparrow; Snow Pigeon; Plain Mountain Finch** and **Red-billed Chough**.

Leaving Ura we climb through forests of larch, silver fir, spruce and towering hemlocks, until reach Thrumshing La (3,780m), along this magnificent stretch of road we look for Blood Pheasant feeding by the road side and where once more, we have breathtaking views of the Eastern Himalayas. From here we can also see the village of Sengor at 3,000m. Species we may encounter between Sengor and Yongkola are: **Gray-crested, Coal, Green-backed, Yellow-browed, Black-throated** and **Black-browed tits; Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher; Ashy-throated, Lemon-rumped** and **Blyth's leaf warblers; White-browed** and **Rufous-winged fulvettas; Stripe-throated Yuhina; Satyr Tragopan, (rare); Eurasian Sparrowhawk; Upland Buzzard; Mountain Hawk-Eagle; Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush; Plain-backed** and **Eye-browed Thrushes; White-collard Blackbird; White-throated Redstart; Hodgson's Treecreeper; Gray-sided Bush Warbler; Black-faced** and **Chestnut-crowned laughingthrushes; Red Crossbill; Red-headed Bullfinch; Spot-winged Grosbeak** and **Spot-winged Grosbeak**.

From Thrumshing La, we will descend through truly pristine forest where Spanish moss literally drips from the pine trees (evidence of the pristine environment), to Yongkola.

(Trogon Villa or Chengala Farm House, Yongkola at 1,800m; B, L, D)



Day 11 & 12: Exploring the rich broadleaf forests of Yongkola and Namling.

One of the top ten birding hot-spots in all of Asia.

Two full days are spent birding the upper and lower Yongkola region. In this breathtaking landscape we will bird in a protected area of pristine forests using a paved yet rarely used road, providing the ultimate beneficiary birding opportunities. It is here in this birding hotspot that we can look for some of Bhutan's most prized bird species and are difficult to find elsewhere: **Satyr Tragopan; Fire-tailed Myzornis and Slender-billed Scimitar Babbler.**

Other regularly seen species include: **Rufous-throated Partridge; Rufous-bellied and Crested Serpent Eagles; Rufous-necked Hornbill** (the forests of Bhutan are the stronghold for this impressive species); **Speckled Wood Pigeon; Blue-bearded Bee-eater and Ward's Trogon** (the male of the species is truly handsome) and two of the Himalayas' rarest birds, the cobalt **Blue-fronted Robin**, and the elusive and strange **Wedge-billed Wren Babbler; Bay Woodpecker; Lesser Yellownappe; Golden-throated and Blue-throated barbets; Collared Owlet; Himalayan Treepie; Gray-chinned and Short-billed minivets; Yellow-bellied Fantail; Blue-headed Rock Thrush; White-browed Shortwing; Verditer Flycatcher; Large Niltava; Hodgson's Redstart; Slaty-backed Forktail; Sultan, Black-throated, Rufous-fronted, Yellow-browed and Yellow-cheeked tits; Mountain and Ashy bulbuls; Hill and Striated prinias; Chestnut-headed, Slaty-bellied and Gray-bellied tesias; Gray-sided Bush Warbler; Gray-hooded, White-spectacled, Broad-billed and Black-faced warblers; White-crested, Striated, Rufous-necked, Gray-sided, and Blue-winged laughingthrushes; Red-faced Liocichla; Coral-billed Scimitar Babbler; Rufous-throated Wren Babbler** (a little known and endangered species); **Rufous-capped, Grey-throated and Golden babblers; Red-billed Leiothrix; Rufous-bellied, Black-headed (rare), White-browed and Black-eared shrike babblers; Rusty-fronted Barwing; Chestnut-tailed, Red-tailed and Blue-winged minlas; White-naped, Whiskered and Black-chinned yuhinas; and the exquisite Golden-breasted and Yellow-throated fulvettas** (virtually unknown elsewhere); **Greater Rufous-headed Parrotbill** (rarely seen); **Crimson-browed Finch and Scarlet Finch.**

(Trogon Villa or Chengala Farm House, Yongkola at 1,800m; B, L, D)



Day 13. Yongkola to Bumthang (150kms, 5 hrs drive). Birding along Thrumshing La National Park.

We will bird along the upper Yongkola region before breakfast after which we will drive up to the high pass of Thrumshing La at 3,799m, where we have breathtaking views of the eastern Himalayas. As we drive up to the pass we will stop at key locations for birding, looking for: **Himalayan Buzzard; Mountain Hawk-Eagle; Great and Fulvous parrotbills; Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush; White-collared Blackbird; Himalayan Bluetail; White-browed Bush Robin; Blue-fronted Redstart; Rusty-flanked Treecreeper; Hume's Bush Warbler; Red Crossbill; Red-headed Bullfinch; White-winged Grosbeak; Eye-browed, Dusky, and Dark-throated thrushes.**

From the pass we descend through forests of towering hemlocks, spruce, Silver fir and larch which are particularly good for species like **Himalayan Monal; Blood Pheasant; and Satyr Tragopan.** We travel through the picturesque village of Ura before climbing up to Selthang la at 3700m. From here we will gradually descend to Bumthang valley for the night.
(Kailas Guesthouse, Bumthang at 2,600m; B, L, D)

Day 14: Flight from Bumthang to Paro (25mins) and cultural visits in Paro.

This morning we will take the short flight from Bumthang to Paro. The 25 minute flight provides us with stunning views of the High Himalayan mountains.

In Paro we will visit the Rinpung Dzong, The Fortress of the Heap of Jewels which was featured in some scenes of the film 'Little Buddha' (1993). Built between 1644 and 1646 by the Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel, this 5 storey building has white-washed walls, magnificently carved and painted wooden doors and windows, which add to the sense of power and wealth required to build this fortress. Walking through the two guard houses we enter the courtyard where we can see the intricately carved central tower, considered to be one of the finest and most beautiful in Bhutan with separate buildings housing the monastic and administrative sections while the external walls have



a most unusual mural of the 'Mystical Spiral.' From here we will follow the stone path down to the Paro Chhu and cross the Nyamai Zam - the wooden cantilevered bridge festooned with prayer flags, to our waiting vehicle and drive to one of the most important and oldest religious sites: Kyichu Lhakhang, built in 659 by King Songtsen Gompo of Tibet as one of the 108 such monasteries he had constructed to spread Buddhism across the land. The temple has many relics which date from the 7th century, the oldest of which is the statue of Lord Buddha Sakyamuni. Over the years the temple has been added to and now in addition to the statue of Buddha, contains the impressive statues of: Chenrezig with 11 heads and 1,000 hands, Tara and the Guru Rinpoche. From here we will return to our hotel.

(Hotel Olathang or similar, Paro at 2,300m; B, L, D)

Day 15: Hike up to Tigers Nest monastery (5 hrs return hike).

We begin the day with a walk up to the famous Tiger's Nest, Taksang Monastery. Please note that it is possible to hire a pony for the journey up but not for the return. The monastery is perched some 600m up on a cliff overlooking the valley and was said to be where the legendary Indian saint, Guru Padma Sambhava, flew from Tibet on the back of a tiger to defeat five demons who were opposing the spread of Buddhism in Bhutan. The Guru then mediated here for 3 years, 3 months, 3 days and 3 hours; monks that live here today also are expected to remain and meditate here for 3 years. To reach this cultural icon, it is a steep uphill walk through the dappled shade of the wooded slopes, for roughly 1½-2hrs, to reach a tea house (an ascent of 340m). Apart from offering welcome refreshment this tea house is one of the principle viewpoints of the monastery, and those who prefer not to climb any further can relax here whilst others continue on. However, the further half hour's ascent above the tea house is well worth it, as it brings you to another viewpoint directly across from the monastery. The final section of the walk takes you from this second viewpoint steeply down 100m into the gorge that separates you from the monastery and then climbs back up again to reach the monastery gate - the monastery was designed to be isolated! However, the hike to this important Buddhist monastery is certainly worth every effort. The monastery has four



main temples and several other buildings to house the body of monks who live there.

Returning to the teahouse we will stop for lunch and one last opportunity for photographs of this iconic image before continuing down to the approach road where our vehicle will be waiting to take us back to Paro where we will visit a farmhouse to learn how to tie and wear a 'Gho' or 'Kira' followed by a cultural program and farewell dinner. For those wishing to try out the traditional hot-stone bath, your host will be very happy to arrange it. After the farewell party, we will return to our hotel. (Hotel Olathang or similar, Paro at 2,300m; B, L, D)

Day 16: Flight from Paro to Bangkok for onward connection.

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for departure.

B= Breakfast; L=Lunch; D=Dinner

Mongolia Quest reserves the right to alter the above itinerary if deemed necessary by travel complications, weather, health issues or other unforeseen events

PRICES:

1. Land prices:

6-9 guests:	US\$5,680 per person, based on standard twin occupancy;
10-13 guests:	US\$5,460 per person, based on standard twin occupancy;
14-16 guests:	US\$5,160 per person, based on standard twin occupancy;

2. FLIGHTS:

International Flight: Bangkok - Paro - Bangkok = US\$ 1,200

Domestic Flight: Bumthang - Paro (Drukair) = US\$ 290

Note: Flights costs are subject to change

3. OPTIONAL single supplement: \$850 per person.



Included in Bhutan Land Cost:

- One night at a standard tourist class hotel in Bangkok on November 5h;
- Land transportation in Bhutan using a mini bus;
- Visa and all taxes;
- Excellent Bhutanese Tour Guide;
- Mongolia Quest tour manager to accompany throughout the trip in Bangkok and Bhutan;
- All activities as mentioned in the itinerary;
- All accommodation based on sharing twin room;
- All meals;
- Tea/coffee and snacks;
- Bottled water throughout the trip;
- Ground transportation;
- All necessary camping equipment's if camping is involved in your tour;
- All entrance fees for museums and parks.

Not Included in Bhutan Land Cost:

- International flight from your home destination to/from Bangkok;
- Arrival transfer in Bangkok for November 5th;
- Bangkok - Paro - Bangkok (Drukair/Bhutan Airlines) round-trip, economy class;
- Bumthang - Paro (Drukair) domestic flight round-trip, economy class;
- Travel insurance (essential);
- Laundry, phone calls and alcoholic drinks;
- Personal expenses;
- Charges incurred as a result of circumstances beyond the control of *Langur Eco Travels*;
- Optional Gratuity/Tips.

Health and vaccination requirement

Most travelers to Bhutan will need vaccinations for *hepatitis A*, *typhoid fever*, and *polio*, as well as medications for *travelers' diarrhea*. Travelers to the southern part



of the country will need malaria prophylaxis, in conjunction with insect repellents and other measures to prevent mosquito bites. Additional immunizations may be necessary depending upon the circumstances of the trip and the medical history of the traveler, as discussed below. All travelers should visit either a travel health clinic or their personal physician 4-8 weeks before departure.

Malaria: Prophylaxis with Lariam (mefloquine), Malarone (atovaquone/proguanil), or doxycycline is recommended for rural areas below 1700 m (5,577 ft) in the five southern belt districts bordering India: Cherang, Samtse, Samdrup Jongkhar, Sarpang, and Shemgang.

Vaccinations:

Hepatitis A	Recommended for all travelers
Typhoid	Recommended for all travelers
Polio	One-time booster recommended for any adult traveler who completed the childhood series but never had polio vaccine as an adult
Yellow fever	Required for all travelers arriving from a yellow-fever-infected area in Africa or the Americas and for travelers who have been in transit more than 12 hours in an airport located in a country with risk of yellow fever transmission. Not recommended otherwise.
Japanese encephalitis	For travelers who may spend a month or more in rural areas and for short-term travelers who may spend substantial time outdoors in rural areas, especially after dusk
Hepatitis B	Recommended for all travelers
Rabies	For travelers spending a lot of time outdoors, or at high risk for animal bites, or involved in any activities that might bring them into direct contact with bats
Measles,	Two doses recommended for all travelers born after 1956, if not



mumps, rubella (MMR)	previously given
Tetanus-diphtheria	Revaccination recommended every 10 years

Trip grade: Moderate to strenuous hikes

You should prepare for certain factors of travel in Bhutan. A few of the most important are: elevation, windy mountain roads and uneven trek paths. Average elevation on this trip is 2,400m. Pass crossings may be up to 4,000m.

Insurance

We strongly advise that your travel insurance policies include medical assistance and (helicopter) evacuation - we believe that it is 'better to be safe than sorry!' Should you decline to do so, we must state that we will in no way, accept responsibility for expenses incurred, should you require medical attention/evacuation whilst on holiday with us.

Accommodation

It is our policy to use the best available accommodation in each location. All hotels and lodges we use are government approved and registered with the Tourism Council of Bhutan. If you signed up for an camping tour, we have our own camping crew who will set up camps, prepare hot meals and provide hot showers.

Temperature

Average Temperature in Celsius Degree November		
Place	High	Low
Bumthang/Chumey	10.0	-1.4
Trongsa	13.9	0.4
Phobjikha	9.1	-1.8



Punakha	19.6	5.3
Thimphu/Paro	14.4	0.6

Clothing

This trip departs in November which is generally a dry and cool time of the year but you may encounter light rain or damp condition. Evenings may be cool and you will certainly have many early morning starts so will need some warm layers. The key to being comfortable is to adopt a system of several layers rather than one item of bulky warm clothing. Sun hats are an essential item, with a wide brim and something to protect your neck. Temperatures can drop very quickly in the evening and early morning and at altitude and you may again need to put on a number of layers.

Clothing Checklist

Walking boot	For hiking
Training shoe	For comfort in camp
Waterproof jacket	Best made with breathable, waterproof fabric
Waterproof over-trousers	Best made with breathable, waterproof fabric
Lightweight dovet jacket or down gilet	For colder evening/morning or incase of cold snap
Trekking trousers	Suggest two pairs, plus trousers to change into the evening
T-shirts/ undershirts	
Long sleeved shirts	Prevent sunburn on your arms and keep airborne biting insects at bay
Thermal underwear	You may like to take to change into this in the evening or have it to sleep in.
Micro fleece	
Warm Jacket	
Thicker socks	
Thin socks	



	Woolly hat or gloves	For cold weather
	Sun hat	With adequate protection for your neck
	Smart/casual clothes	For air travel, in cities and for evenings in hotels

Equipment and Accessories

	Small day sack	
	Sunglasses and retainers	If you wear glasses, bring a spare pair
	Head torch or flashlight	With a spare batteries
	Anti bacterial hand gel	Very useful for washing hands when no water available

Electricity

Standard voltage in Bhutan is 220-240 volts. You will often find two pin razor type sockets in bathrooms. In rooms sockets are generally round-three pin variety (Indian standard which is larger than European) - but can also be European or British type sockets. Take a universal travel adaptor and if that still does not fit ask at hotel reception.

Baggage and Hand luggage

Bhutan Airlines/Druk Airlines Baggage allowances are one cabin baggage (Max weight 10kg) and one checked-in-baggage (max 20kg).

Small heavy articles can be carried in your day-sack or grip, which can go on as hand baggage. Note that most airlines only allow one item of hand baggage.

Any excess baggage charge will have to be borne by yourself.

Electrical equipment and lighters should be packed in your hold luggage.

THANK YOU!