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BHUTAN

Kingdom of thunder dragon



+91 81682 55631

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5N6D *itinerary*



OPTION 1 BAGDOGRA ➤ BAGDOGRA

DAY 1- ARRIVAL AT BAGDOGRA AIRPORT

- Transfer to Phuentsholing (entry point to Bhutan)- 4hrs
- Enjoy the scenic drive with tea gardens and national parks.
- Immigration formalities
- Night stay in Phuntsholling

DAY 2- THIMPHU (6 HRS)

- Post breakfast transfer to Thimphu.
- On the way- Taktichu Pass (2000m above with waterfall) Chuzom (Confluence of Paro +Thimphu rivers)
- Handicraft Market of Thimphu
- Budha Dordenma
- Night stay in Thimphu

DAY 3- THIMPHU

- Post breakfast, local sightseeing
- Thimphu view points
- 1. Sangay view points
- 2. Tashicodzong view points
- Post office Museum/Folk Heritage Museum/Simply Bhutan - (optional)
- Head to Paro (2 hrs)
- Night stay in Paro

DAY 4- PARO

- Post breakfast, choose one:-
- Option 1: Guided hike to Tiger's Nest Monastery (5 hours round) 30 mins drive
- Option 2: Excursion to Chele La Pass (highest motorable road in Bhutan 13,000 ft) 4 hrs drive
- Option 3: Local Paro sightseeing (Dzong, Museum, Bridge and riverside)
- Night stay in Paro

Optional: Hot stone Bhutanese bath known for healing with Farm house visit

DAY 5- PHUENTSHOLING (5 HRS)

- Scenic drive on the way
- Phuentsholing local market & bridge
- Night stay in Phuntsholing

DAY 6- DEPARTURE

- Transfer to Bagdogra Airport



OPTION 2 BAGDOGRA ➤ PARO

DAY 1- ARRIVAL AT BAGDOGRA AIRPORT

- Transfer to Phuentsholing (entry point to Bhutan)- 4hrs
- Enjoy the scenic drive with tea gardens and national parks.
- Immigration formalities
- Night stay in Phuntsholling

DAY 2- THIMPHU (6 HRS)

- Post breakfast transfer to Thimphu.
- On the way- Taktichu Pass (2000m above with waterfall) Chuzom (Confluence of Paro +Thimphu rivers)
- Handicraft Market of Thimphu
- Budha Dordenma
- Night stay in Thimphu

DAY 3- THIMPHU

- Post breakfast, local sightseeing (optional)-
- Memorial Chorten/ Buddha Dordenma
- National Library (world's biggest book; weighs 68 kg+ 2 mt height)
- Ancient paper making
- Post office Museum/ Folk Heritage Museum/ Simply Bhutan
- Handicraft Market of Thimphu
- Riverside park/café
- Enjoy night life (Karaoke/clubs) of Thimphu (additional)
- Night stay in Thimphu



DAY 4- PARO (2 HRS)

- After breakfast head to Paro
- Scenic drive along the river & beautiful villages
- After reaching Paro
- Thamchok Lhakhan
- Ta Dzong (ancient watchtower- converted- museum)
- Paro Dzong
- Rinpung Dzong (17th-century Fortress)
- Explore local cafés
- Night stay in Paro



DAY 5- PARO

- Post breakfast, choose one:
- Option 1: Guided hike to Tiger's Nest Monastery (5 hours round) 30 mins drive
- Option 2: Excursion to Chele La Pass (highest motorable road in Bhutan – 13,000 ft) 4 hrs drive
- Return to Paro by evening
- Night stay in Paro

Optional: Hot stone Bhutanese bath known for healing with Farm house visit

DAY 6- DEPARTURE

- Transfer to Paro Airport



OPTION 3 PARO ➤ PARO

DAY 1- ARRIVAL AT PARO AIRPORT

- Transfer to Thimphu (1 hr)
- Scenic drive along Paro + Thimphu rivers
- En route lunch break (additional)
- Thimphu view points
- 1. Sangay view points
- 2. Tashicodzong view points
- Night stay in Thimphu

DAY 2- THIMPHU

- Post breakfast, local sightseeing (optional)-
- Memorial Chorten/ Buddha Dordenma
- National Library (world's biggest book; weighs 68 kg+ 2 mt height)
- Ancient paper making
- Post office Museum/ Folk Heritage Museum/ Simply Bhutan
- Handicraft Market of Thimphu
- Riverside park/café
- Enjoy night life (Karaoke/clubs) of Thimphu (additional)
- Night stay in Thimphu



DAY 3- PUNAKHA (3 HRS)

- Dochula Pass
- Punakha Dzong
- Chimi Lhakhang Temple
- Night at Punakha hotel

DAY 4- PARO (4 HRS)

- Local sightseeing
- Chuzom (confluence of Paro+Thimphu river)
- Thamchok Lhakhang
- Paro Dzong
- Ta Dzong
- Evening at leisure explore local food
- Night stay in Paro

DAY 5- PARO

- Post breakfast, choose one:
- Option 1: Guided hike to Tiger's Nest Monastery (5 hours round) 30 mins drive
- Option 2: Excursion to Chele La Pass (highest motorable road in Bhutan – 13,000 ft) 4 hrs drive
- Return to Paro by evening
- Night stay in Paro

Optional: Hot stone Bhutanese bath known for healing with Farm house visit

DAY 6- DEPARTURE

- Transfer to Paro Airport

NOTE

We don't recommend Bagdogra-Bagdogra Airport in 5N6D, as it offers only 3 effective nights in Bhutan — Thimphu (1N/2N) + Paro (2N/1N) with the first and last nights spent in Phuentsholing for border formalities and airport transfers.

OPTION 1 BAGDOGRA ➤ BAGDOGRA

DAY 1- ARRIVAL AT BAGDOGRA AIRPORT

- Transfer to Phuentsholing (entry point to Bhutan)- 4hrs
- Enjoy the scenic drive with tea gardens and national parks.
- Immigration formalities
- Night stay in Phuntsholing

DAY 2- THIMPHU (6 HRS)

- Post breakfast transfer to Thimphu.
- On the way- Taktichu Pass (2000m above with waterfall) Chuzom (Confluence of Paro +Thimphu rivers)
- Handicraft Market of Thimphu
- Budha Dordenma
- Night stay in Thimphu

DAY 3- THIMPHU

- Post breakfast, local sightseeing
- Thimphu view points
1. Sangay view points
2.Tashicodzong view points
- Post office Museum/Folk Heritage Museum/Simply Bhutan - (optional)
- Head to Paro (2 hrs)
- Night stay in Paro

DAY 4- PARO (2 HRS)

- Scenic drive along the river & beautiful villages
- Thamchok Lhakhan
- Ta Dzong
- Paro Dzong
- Rinpung Dzong (17th-century Fortress)
- Explore local cafés + Riverside
- Night stay in Paro Hotel

DAY 5- PARO

- Post breakfast, choose one:
- Option 1: Guided hike to Tiger's Nest Monastery (5 hours round) 30 mins drive
- Option 2: Excursion to Chele La Pass (highest motorable road in Bhutan – 13,000 ft) 4 hrs drive
- Return to Paro by evening
- Night stay in Paro

Optional: Hot stone Bhutanese bath known for healing with Farm house visit

DAY 6- PHUENTSHOLING (5 HRS)

- Scenic drive on the way
- Phuentsholing local market & bridge
- Night stay in Phuntsholing

DAY 7- DEPARTURE

- Transfer to Paro Airport

OPTION 2 BAGDOGRA ➤ PARO

DAY 1- ARRIVAL AT BAGDOGRA AIRPORT

- Transfer to Phuentsholing (entry point to Bhutan)- 4hrs
- Enjoy the scenic drive with tea gardens and national parks.
- Immigration formalities
- Night stay in Phuntsholing

DAY 2- THIMPHU (6 HRS)

- Post breakfast transfer to Thimphu.
- On the way- Taktichu Pass (2000m above with waterfall) Chuzom (Confluence of Paro +Thimphu rivers)
- Handicraft Market of Thimphu
- Budha Dordenma
- Night stay in Thimphu

DAY 3- THIMPHU

- Post breakfast, local sightseeing (optional)-
- Memorial Chorten/ Buddha Dordenma
- National Library (world's biggest book; weighs 68 kg+ 2 mt height)
- Ancient paper making
- Post office Museum/ Folk Heritage Museum/ Simply Bhutan
- Handicraft Market of Thimphu
- Riverside park/café
- Enjoy night life (Karaoke/clubs) of Thimphu (additional)
- Night stay in Thimphu

DAY 4- PUNAKHA (3 HRS)

- Dochula Pass
- Lamperi Botanical Park (different species of rhododendron flowers)
- Druk Wangyal Lhakhang temple (Optional)
- Punakha Dzong + suspension bridge
- Chimi Lhakhang Temple
- Night at Punakha hotel

DAY 5- PARO (4 HRS)

- Scenic drive on the way
- Thamchok Lhakhan
- Ta Dzong
- Paro Dzong + Riverside
- Rinpung Dzong (17th-century Fortress)
- Evening at leisure explore local food
- Night stay in Paro

DAY 6- PARO

- Post breakfast, choose one:
- Option 1: Guided hike to Tiger's Nest Monastery (5 hours round) 30 mins drive
- Option 2: Excursion to Chele La Pass (highest motorable road in Bhutan – 13,000 ft) 4 hrs drive
- Return to Paro by evening
- Night stay in Paro

Optional: Hot stone Bhutanese bath known for healing with Farm house visit

DAY 7- DEPARTURE

- Transfer to Paro Airport

OPTION 3 PARO ➤ PARO

DAY 1- ARRIVAL AT PARO AIRPORT

- Transfer to Thimphu (1 hr)
- Scenic drive along Paro + Thimphu rivers
- En route lunch break (additional)
- Thimphu view points
1. Sangay view points
2.Tashicodzong view points
- Night stay in Thimphu

DAY 2- THIMPHU

- Post breakfast, local sightseeing (optional)-
- Memorial Chorten/ Buddha Dordenma
- National Library (world's biggest book; weighs 68 kg+ 2 mt height)
- Ancient paper making
- Post office Museum/ Folk Heritage Museum/ Simply Bhutan
- Handicraft Market of Thimphu
- Riverside park/café
- Enjoy night life (Karaoke/clubs) of Thimphu (additional)
- Night stay in Thimphu

DAY 3- PUNAKHA (3 HRS)

- Dochula Pass
- Lamperi Botanical Park (different species of rhododendron flowers)
- Druk Wangyal Lhakhang temple (Optional)
- Punakha Dzong + Suspension bridge
- Chimi Lhakhang Temple
- Night at Punakha hotel

DAY 4- GANGTEY/ PHOBIKA VALLEY

(NOV- FEB)
SIBERIAN
CRANES

- Day trip to Gangtey
- Gangtey Monastery + Sightseeing
- **OR** excursion to Talo (Mar-Oct)
- Sightseeing
- Night stay in Punakaha

DAY 5- PARO (4/5HRS)

- Local sightseeing
- Chuzom (confluence of Paro+Thimphu river)
- Thamchok Lhakhang
- Paro Dzong + Riverside
- Ta Dzong
- Rinpung Dzong (17th-century Fortress)
- Evening at leisure explore local food
- Night stay in Paro

DAY 6- PARO

- Post breakfast, choose one:
- Option 1: Guided hike to Tiger's Nest Monastery (5 hours round) 30 mins drive
- Option 2: Excursion to Chele La Pass (highest motorable road in Bhutan – 13,000 ft) 4 hrs drive
- Return to Paro by evening
- Night stay in Paro

Optional: Hot stone Bhutanese bath known for healing with Farm house visit

DAY 7- DEPARTURE

- Transfer to Paro Airport

OPTION 1 BAGDOGRA ➤ BAGDOGRA

DAY 1- ARRIVAL AT BAGDOGRA AIRPORT

- Transfer to Phuentsholing (entry point to Bhutan)- 4hrs
- Enjoy the scenic drive with tea gardens and national parks.
- Immigration formalities
- Night stay in Phuntsholling

DAY 2- THIMPHU (6 HRS)

- Post breakfast transfer to Thimphu.
- On the way- Taktichu Pass (2000m above with waterfall)
- Chuzom (Confluence of Paro +Thimphu rivers)
- Handicraft Market of Thimphu
- Budha Dordenma
- Night stay in Thimphu

DAY 3- THIMPHU

- Post breakfast, local sightseeing
- Thimphu view points
- 1. Sangay view points
- 2.Tashicodzong view points
- Post office Museum/Folk Heritage Museum/Simply Bhutan - (optional)
- Head to Paro (2 hrs)
- Night stay in Paro

DAY 4- PUNAKHA (3 HRS)

- Dochula Pass
- Lamperi Botanical Park (different species of rhododendron flowers)
- Druk Wangyal Lhakhang temple (Optional)
- Punakha Dzong + Suspension bridge
- Chimi Lhakhang Temple
- Night at Punakha hotel

DAY 5- PARO (4 HRS)

- Scenic drive on the way
- Thamchok Lhakhan
- Ta Dzong
- Paro Dzong + Riverside
- Rinpung Dzong (17th-century Fortress)
- Explore local cafés + Riverside
- Night stay in Paro

DAY 6- PARO

- Post breakfast, choose one:
 - Option 1: Guided hike to Tiger's Nest Monastery (5 hours round) 30 mins drive
 - Option 2: Excursion to Chele La Pass (highest motorable road in Bhutan – 13,000 ft) 4 hrs drive
- Return to Paro by evening
- Night stay in Paro

Optional: Hot stone Bhutanese bath known for healing with Farm house visit

DAY 7- PHUENTSHOLING (5 HRS)

- Scenic drive on the way
- Phuentsholing local market & bridge
- Night stay in Phuntsholling

DAY 8- DEPARTURE

- Transfer to Paro Airport

OPTION 2 BAGDOGRA ➤ PARO

DAY 1- ARRIVAL AT BAGDOGRA AIRPORT

- Transfer to Phuentsholing (entry point to Bhutan)- 4hrs
- Enjoy the scenic drive with tea gardens and national parks.
- Immigration formalities
- Night stay in Phuntsholling

DAY 2- THIMPHU (6 HRS)

- Post breakfast transfer to Thimphu.
- On the way- Taktichu Pass (2000m above with waterfall)
- Chuzom (Confluence of Paro +Thimphu rivers)
- Handicraft Market of Thimphu
- Budha Dordenma
- Night stay in Thimphu

DAY 3- THIMPHU

- Post breakfast, local sightseeing (optional)-
- Memorial Chorten/ Buddha Dordenma
- National Library (world's biggest book; weighs 68 kg+ 2 mt height)
- Ancient paper making
- Post office Museum/ Folk Heritage Museum/ Simply Bhutan
- Handicraft Market of Thimphu
- Riverside park/café
- Enjoy night life (Karaoke/clubs) of Thimphu (additional)
- Night stay in Thimphu

DAY 4- PUNAKHA (3 HRS)

- Dochula Pass
- Lamperi Botanical Park (different species of rhododendron flowers)
- Druk Wangyal Lhakhang temple (Optional)
- Punakha Dzong + Suspension bridge
- Chimi Lhakhang Temple
- Night at Punakha hotel

DAY 5- GANGTEY/ PHOBIKA VALLEY

(NOV- FEB)
SIBERIAN
CRANES

- Day trip to Gangtey
- Gangtey Monastery + Sightseeing
- **OR** excursion to Talo (Mar-Oct)
- Sightseeing
- Night stay in Punakaha

DAY 5- PARO (4 HRS)

- Scenic drive on the way
- Thamchok Lhakhan
- Ta Dzong
- Paro Dzong + Riverside
- Rinpung Dzong (17th-century Fortress)
- Evening at leisure explore local food
- Night stay in Paro

DAY 6- PARO

- Post breakfast, choose one:
 - Option 1: Guided hike to Tiger's Nest Monastery (5 hours round) 30 mins drive
 - Option 2: Excursion to Chele La Pass (highest motorable road in Bhutan – 13,000 ft) 4 hrs drive
- Return to Paro by evening
- Night stay in Paro

Optional: Hot stone Bhutanese bath known for healing with Farm house visit

DAY 7- DEPARTURE

- Transfer to Paro Airport

OPTION 3 PARO ➤ PARO

DAY 1- ARRIVAL AT PARO AIRPORT

- Transfer to Thimphu (1 hr)
- Scenic drive along Paro + Thimphu rivers
- En route lunch break (additional)
- Thimphu view points
- 1. Sangay view points
- 2.Tashicodzong view points
- Night stay in Thimphu

DAY 3- THIMPHU

- Post breakfast, local sightseeing (optional)-
- Memorial Chorten/ Buddha Dordenma
- National Library (world's biggest book; weighs 68 kg+ 2 mt height)
- Ancient paper making
- Post office Museum/ Folk Heritage Museum/ Simply Bhutan
- Handicraft Market of Thimphu
- Riverside park/café
- Enjoy night life (Karaoke/clubs) of Thimphu (additional)
- Night stay in Thimphu

DAY 3- PUNAKHA (3 HRS)

- Dochula Pass
- Lamperi Botanical Park (different species of rhododendron flowers)
- Druk Wangyal Lhakhang temple (Optional)
- Punakha Dzong + Suspension bridge
- Chimi Lhakhang Temple
- Night at Punakha hotel

DAY 4- GANGTEY/ PHOBIKA VALLEY

(NOV- FEB)
SIBERIAN
CRANES

- Day trip to Gangtey
- Gangtey Monastery + Sightseeing
- **OR** excursion to Talo (Mar-Oct)
- Sightseeing
- Night stay in Punakaha

DAY 5- HAA VALLEY (PARO) (4/5HRS)

- Most scenic valley
- Lhakhang Karpo (White temple) and Lhakhang Nagpo (Black temple)

Optional: Hot stone Bhutanese bath known for healing with Farm house visit

- Night stay in Haa Valley

DAY 6- PARO

- Post breakfast, choose one:
 - Option 1: Guided hike to Tiger's Nest Monastery (5 hours round) 30 mins drive
 - Option 2: Excursion to Chele La Pass (highest motorable road in Bhutan – 13,000 ft) 4 hrs drive
- Return to Paro by evening
- Night stay in Paro

DAY 7- PARO

- Post Breakfast- Local sightseeing
- Thamchok Lhakhan
- Ta Dzong
- Paro Dzong + Riverside
- Rinpung Dzong (17th-century Fortress)
- Evening at leisure explore local food
- Night stay in Paro

DAY 8- DEPARTURE

- Transfer to Paro Airport



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INCLUSIONS

- ✓ All accommodations at HighonTrips verified properties.
- ✓ All Breakfast and Dinner at the listed hotel
- ✓ Airport pickup/drop (private)
- ✓ Transportation and sightseeing on private as per the itinerary only (Vehicle, NOT at disposal)
- ✓ Certified English-speaking compulsory guide throughout the tour (Bhutan Part)
- ✓ Bhutan Sustainable Development Fee (Mandatory)
- ✓ 01 mineral water bottle daily
- ✓ Bhutan permit application and procurement in advance
- ✓ 24x7 expert travel assistance during the trip
- ✓ All toll, taxes etc

EXCLUSIONS

- ✗ Flights (But hey we can assist you in finding the best routes and timings)
- ✗ Any other activities not part of itinerary
- ✗ Shopping (But hey we can recommend the best trust worthy shops for your shopping)
- ✗ Lunch (since you guys are travelling during the day and we can't bring kitchen on wheels, how about exploring some local cafes and food.)
- ✗ Weather conditions (Due to human limitations, we can't promise you rainfall or sunny day).
- ✗ Anything other than mentioned in Inclusion
- ✗ ADD-ons & optional sightseeings

HOW TO ARRIVE IN BHUTAN

➔ Airports, Routes & What's Best for You

Bhutan is one of the world's most exclusive destinations, and arriving here is part of the experience. There are two primary ways to enter Bhutan by air, each offering a very different travel style.



Option 1: Bagdogra Airport (India) → Phuentsholing (Bhutan)

Why choose Bagdogra:

- Multiple daily flight options from major Indian cities
- More affordable airfares compared to Paro
- Ideal for families and budget conscious travellers

Things to consider:

- Requires a scenic 4–5 hour road journey to Phuentsholing both ways

Phuentsholing Experience: Phuentsholing is Bhutan's lively border town and your first cultural introduction to the country. We recommend one night here on arrival and one night before departure for smooth permit processing and a relaxed journey.



Option 2: Paro International Airport (Bhutan)

Why choose Paro:

- Direct arrival into Bhutan with no border crossing
- More time in Bhutan's main valleys – Paro, Thimphu & Punakha
- Ideal for short and luxury-focused trips

Things to consider:

- Limited flights and higher airfare
- Weather-dependent operations (sometimes)

Why Paro is Special: Paro Airport is one of the most dramatic airports in the world. Only a handful of pilots are trained to land here due to its mountainous terrain and steep approach, making it a once-in-a-lifetime flying experience.



HighOnTrips Expert Recommendation

Both routes offer unique experiences. Bagdogra is ideal for travellers seeking better pricing and scenic journeys, while Paro is perfect for those wanting maximum time inside Bhutan with a premium arrival experience. Our experts curate your itinerary based on your arrival choice for seamless travel and deep Bhutan immersion.

THIMPHU – The Heart of Bhutan

(Capital City | Culture | Monasteries | Modern Bhutan Blend)



Distance & Connectivity

| From | Distance | Travel Time | Mode |
|--------------|----------|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| Paro Airport | 50 km | 1/1.5 hrs | Drive via Paro-Thimphu Highway |
| Punakha | 85 km | 3 hrs | Scenic mountain road via Dochula Pass |
| Phuntsholing | 160 km | 6 hrs | Drive via winding hill roads |



Overview

Bhutan’s lively capital, Thimphu, beautifully blends traditional charm with modern vibes. Nestled in a lush valley, it houses royal landmarks, monasteries, museums, and bustling markets showcasing the essence of Bhutanese culture. It’s the perfect mix of heritage, spirituality, and local lifestyle — with cozy cafés, handicraft shops, and scenic views at every turn.



With HighonTrips, your time in Thimphu is guided by H.O.T local experts who blend royal history with modern Bhutanese life — ensuring each walk, market stop, and monastery visit unfolds like a story.



Places to Visit

- Memorial Chorten – Prominent stupa built in memory of the 3rd King; a spiritual hub for locals.
- National Library – Houses Bhutan’s largest collection of ancient manuscripts and the world’s biggest book.
- Buddha Dordenma – Iconic 51-meter golden statue overlooking the Thimphu Valley.
- Institute of Zorig Chusum – Known as the School of 13 Traditional Arts. Watch artisans at work.
- Folk Heritage Museum – Showcases rural Bhutanese lifestyle in an authentic 19th-century farmhouse.
- Tashichho Dzong – Majestic fortress housing government offices and the King’s throne room.
- Handicraft Market – Ideal for local souvenirs, textiles, and thangka paintings.
- Simply Bhutan – Interactive village-style museum with live craft demonstrations—perfect for travellers who want hands-on experience.
- Chuzom – The meeting point of rivers with colourful prayer flags, a small bridge, and excellent golden-hour photo opportunities.
- Thimphu Riverfront & City Vantage Points – Riverside strolls and short viewpoints around the valley give sweeping panoramas of city life against the mountains.
- Local cafés & boutique shops – Cozy spots to try butter tea, momos, and meet local creative entrepreneurs.

PARO – The Gateway to Bhutan

(ScenicValley | Heritage | Monasteries | Culture & Nature Blend)



Distance & Connectivity

| From | Distance | Travel Time | Mode |
|--------------|----------|-------------|--------------------------------|
| Thimphu | 50 km | 1.5/2 hrs | Drive via Paro–Thimphu Highway |
| Punakha | 125 km | 4 hrs | Drive via Dochula & Thimphu |
| Phuntsholing | 160 km | 5–6 hrs | Drive via winding hill roads |



Overview

Paro is one of Bhutan’s most scenic and spiritually rich valleys — home to ancient monasteries, terraced farmlands, and the country’s only international airport. Flanked by misty hills and the gentle Paro River, the valley captures Bhutan’s essence — from meditative hikes to vibrant local experiences, it’s where Bhutan’s heart truly opens to travelers.



Places to Visit

- Taksang Monastery (Tiger’s Nest) – Bhutan’s most iconic landmark, dramatically perched on a cliff at 3,120 meters. A sacred pilgrimage site that requires a short 25-minute drive (12 km) from main Paro town to the base, followed by a moderate 4–5 km hike (2.5–3 hours uphill). The views and energy here are nothing short of breathtaking.

➔ *With a HighOnTrips local guide, you’ll hear sacred legends and secret viewpoints along the trail that most travellers miss.*

- Rinpung Dzong – A majestic 17th-century fortress overlooking the Paro Valley, blending history, spirituality, and stunning architecture.
- National Museum (Ta Dzong) – A circular watchtower-turned-museum preserving centuries of Bhutanese art, textiles, and relics.
- Kyichu Lhakhang – One of Bhutan’s oldest temples, dating back to the 7th century, believed to subdue Himalayan demons.
- Drukgyel Dzong – Ancient fortress ruins that commemorate Bhutan’s victory over Tibetan invasions.
- Paro Town Market – Ideal for local textiles, thangka paintings, and artisan crafts.
- Chelela Pass – The highest motorable pass in Bhutan at 3,988 meters, offering sweeping Himalayan views and thousands of fluttering prayer flags. Located 35 km from Paro (approx. 1.5 hrs drive).

➔ *Our HighOnTrips driver-guides know the best times for photographs and local tea stops along the high mountain pass.*

- Dzongdrakha Monastery – Often called the “Mini Tiger’s Nest,” a tranquil monastery perched on cliffs, offering panoramic views and fewer crowds.
- Paro Riverfront & Cafés – Perfect for a relaxed evening — enjoy butter tea or coffee with views of the river and valley.
- Bhutanese Hot Stone Bath & Local Farmhouse Visit – A rejuvenating traditional bath experience using river stones, followed by a visit to a local farmhouse for authentic Bhutanese hospitality and cuisine.

PUNAKHA – The Tranquil Valley of Bliss

(Ancient Capital | River Confluence | Adventure | Serenity)



Distance & Connectivity

| From | Distance | Travel Time | Mode |
|--------------|----------|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| Thimphu | 85 km | 3 hrs | Scenic drive via Dochula Pass |
| Paro | 125 km | 4/5 hrs | Drive via Dochula & Thimphu |
| Phuntsholing | 230 km | 7–8 hrs | Drive via Wangdue & Thimphu Highway |



Overview

Once the capital of Bhutan, Punakha remains the country's spiritual heart — a lush valley where rivers meet, monasteries rise above misty rice fields. With its fertile terraces, warm climate, and timeless charm, Punakha blends spirituality with serenity. From the confluence of the Pho Chhu and Mo Chhu rivers, sacred temples and river rafting to traditional villages and nature trails, Punakha captures the pure essence of Bhutanese living.



Places to Visit

- [Dochula Pass](#) – En route from Thimphu to Punakha, Dochula Pass offers breathtaking views of the eastern Himalayas.
- [The Druk Wangyal Lhakhang temple](#) – stands amidst 108 chortens & commemorates Bhutan's kings.
- [Punakha Dzong](#) – Bhutan's historically significant dzong, located at the confluence of two rivers.
- [Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten](#) – A striking temple built for world peace and harmony, perched high above the Mo Chhu River. (Ideal for 2N stay.)

➡ ***The climb becomes more meaningful with a HighOnTrips expert guide, who shares stories of symbolism and royal blessings behind this sacred stupa.***

- [Suspension Bridge](#) – One of Bhutan's longest suspension bridges, offering thrilling crossings and scenic views over the Pho Chhu River.
- [Chimi Lhakhang \(Fertility Temple\)](#) – Dedicated to Lama Drukpa Kunley, the "Divine Madman," this temple is surrounded by lush paddy fields and colorful houses.
- [Talo & Nobgang Villages](#) – Peaceful hilltop hamlets offering authentic village life and stunning views. These are also the ancestral homes of the Royal Queen Mothers. (Recommended for 2N stay.)

➡ ***HighOnTrips village connections open real homes and smiles — letting you experience Bhutan beyond the guidebook.***

- [Sangchhen Dorji Lhuendrup Nunnery](#) – A tranquil hilltop nunnery located about 8 km (25 minutes) from Punakha town, offering panoramic views of the Punakha and Wangdue valleys.
- [River Rafting](#) – Enjoy gentle rafting along the Pho Chhu and Mo Chhu rivers, blending adventure with scenic beauty.
- [Local Villages & Farmhouses](#) – Experience Bhutanese hospitality through local cuisine, hot stone baths, and authentic rural life.

OFFBEAT EXPERIENCES OF BHUTAN

(Hidden Valleys | Scenic Drives | Authentic Himalayan Charm)



Distance & Connectivity

| From | Distance | Travel Time | Mode |
|------------------------|----------|-------------|---|
| Haa Valley from Paro | 65 km | 2.5 hrs | Drive via Chelela Pass – Bhutan's highest motorable route |
| Phobjikha from Punakha | 80 km | 3 hrs | Scenic mountain drive via Wangdue Drive |



HAA VALLEY

Tucked away beyond the dramatic Chelela Pass, Haa-Valley is among Bhutan's least-visited and most pristine regions — a perfect retreat for travelers seeking solitude and authenticity. The valley is blessed with alpine meadows, quaint temples, and clusters of traditional Bhutanese homes set against sweeping mountain backdrops. Spend at least one night here to truly absorb its peaceful rhythm — enjoy village walks, visit the Lhakhang Karpo (White Temple) and Lhakhang Nagpo (Black Temple), and witness the unfiltered simplicity of Bhutanese life. The drive from Paro to Haa is one of the most scenic in Western Bhutan — winding roads lined with prayer flags, crisp mountain air, and views that seem to stretch into infinity.

INTERESTING FACTS

During pre-Buddhist era, Haa valley was known for its animist tradition. Inhabitants then were enthused in offering animal blood to their local deities. Such animist belief however was transformed into peaceful Buddhist tradition in 8th century by Guru Padmasambhava. The tantric master, Guru Padma sambhava, subdued the local deities like Ap Chundu and made the guardians of the Buddhist tradition. However, the traces of this belief system are still noticed in the form of festivals and rituals.

➔ *HighOnTrips' local storytellers bring alive the legends of White and Black Temples, making your time in Haa both cultural and soulful.*



GANGTEY-PHOBJIKHA VALLEY

Nestled at an altitude of around 3,000 meters, Phobjikha Valley — often called the Valley of the Black-Necked Cranes — is one of Bhutan's most enchanting offbeat destinations. Surrounded by pine forests and dotted with traditional farmhouses, this glacial valley feels untouched by time. Every winter (from Nov to Feb), the endangered black-necked cranes migrate here from Tibet, circling the sky over the Gangtey Monastery — a sight that's both spiritual and spectacular. Apart from birdwatching, Phobjikha offers serene walking trails, village visits, and a deep sense of calm. With its open meadows, crisp air, and gentle pace of life, it's one of the best places to experience Bhutan's rural beauty and soulful stillness.

➔ *With HighOnTrips naturalist partners, you'll explore trails, observe black-necked cranes respectfully, and connect deeply with Bhutan's environment.*

➔ (Every journey with HighOnTrips is supported by trained local partners, ensuring responsible travel and authentic exchange.)

? WHY TRAVELLERS AROUND THE GLOBE TRUST US...

At HighOnTrips, we believe travel isn't about ticking destinations — it's about connecting with the soul of a place.

Every journey we design across Bhutan reflects our core philosophy of comfort, culture, and connection.

- Local Expertise: Every HighOnTrips guide and driver is Bhutanese, trained to share deep cultural stories, ensure utmost safety, and create meaningful memories.
- Seamless Coordination: From permits to personal preferences, our team ensures your itinerary runs like clockwork — so you can focus on experiencing, not managing.
- Authentic Encounters: Whether it's sharing butter tea in a farmhouse or meditating beside a monk, we bring real, unscripted moments into your journey.
- Handpicked Comfort: Every stay, car, and experience is curated to reflect Bhutan's warmth and HighOnTrips' attention to detail well reflected on our google reviews via essay sized deeply loved feedback from our lovely guests.

With HighOnTrips, Bhutan isn't just a destination — it becomes your story.

HIGHONTRIPS EXPERT TRAVEL TIPS

- Don't miss the weekend market with our local guide — it's the best way to understand Bhutan's everyday rhythm.
- Hike to Tiger's Nest early in the morning for fewer crowds and cooler weather.
- Try the local delicacy Ema Datshi (chili cheese) at a riverside café.
- Carry a light jacket — even summer evenings in Paro can be cool.
- Best time to visit Phobjikha Valley is Nov to Feb for black-necked crane sightings.
- Carry light cotton clothing — Punakha's climate is warmer than Thimphu and Paro.
- Spend at least 1N in Haa Valley for an authentic local experience.
- Carry warm layers — both Haa & Phobjikha valleys are cooler and windier than Thimphu or Paro.



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