

Adventures to the Himalayas and Beyond

Wind Horse Holidays, Inc

Bhutan, Sikkim & Nepal

- Type** : Mostly cultural highlights, some short walks
- Duration** : 16 Nights/17 Days
- Accommodation** : Hotels, resorts and guesthouse
- Meals** : All meals included
- Season/Dates** : Year round (best from Feb-May, Sep till Dec)
- Rating** : ★★★★★



Cost Per Person in USD (based on Group Size)

2 People: \$ 3550

3-5 people \$ 3280

Single Room Supplement US\$ 590

Internal Air Fare: Included (Bangkok-Paro, Bhadrapur-Kathmandu-Bangkok)

Cost Includes

All private transfers, sightseeing with entrance fees and English speaking local Guides, Accommodations with all meals. Also included Bhutan Visa and royalties. Internal airfares as specified above. Airfares are subject to changes.

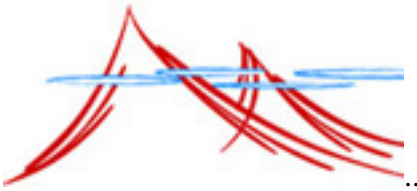
Exclusion:

Travel Insurance, departure taxes, India and Nepal Visa, personal expenses and others not specified on the cost includes section.

Accommodation List

Wind Horse reserves the right to change hotels, when specified hotels are not available

Place	Hotels
Paro	Gangtey Palace or similar
Punakha	Meri Phensum or Zangdopelri
Thimphu	River View or Jumolhari
Phuntsoling	Druk Hotel
Darjeeling	New Elgin
Gangtok	Norkhil Hotel
Kalimpong	Himalayan Hotel
Kathmandu	Soaltee Crowne Plaza
Nagarkot	Club Himalaya Resort



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This trip covers the main highlights of Himalayan Kingdoms of Bhutan, Nepal and Sikkim with Darjeeling. These countries lie in the laps of the mighty Himalayas and contend each other in their natural beauty and cultural heritage.

The Journey begins with a flight from Bangkok to Bhutan, where you will tour the main villages and towns of western Bhutan, visiting its museums, farm houses, markets, schools, craft workshops, fortresses and monasteries.

Then travel overland through the lowland areas known as "Daurs" - or gateway to the Himalayas" to the hill resort of Darjeeling. In Darjeeling, visit the Tibetan monasteries, ride on the renowned mountain railway, sip the most popular tea in the world, view sunrise over Kangchenjunga from Tiger Hill and much more.

Drive through the tea gardens and enter Gangtok, the capital of Sikkim, which was an independent Buddhist kingdom until 1975.

After Gangtok, stay overnight in Kalimpong which was once an important trading post for these parts of the world with Tibet. Kalimpong is a nice little town with great views of rolling hills and mountains. There are flower nurseries, temples and renowned boarding schools to see.

From Kalimpong, it takes about 4 hours to Nepal border at Kakarbhitta. After completing border formalities, transfer to the Bhadrapur airport and fly to Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal. In Kathmandu, tour the medieval palaces, temples, stupas and monasteries and take an easy walk from Nagarkot to Nala, visiting the traditional Newari villages at Panauti that has remained untouched by the modernization in nearby Kathmandu.

Your Himalayan Odyssey ends with the flight to Bangkok from Kathmandu or request other extension.



DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: Bangkok/Paro (L/D)

Arrive at Bangkok Suvarnabhumi airport in time for your flight. Flights to Bhutan depart early in the morning. Upon arrival you are met by Wind Horse Guide and driver and transferred to hotel. In the afternoon visit the national museum, housed in an ancient watchtower. Later visit Rinphung Dzong, the fortress cum monastery, which houses the local District administration offices, courts and also the living quarters for hundreds of monks. Also included is a visit to a farm house to get a glimpse of the rural bhutanese life. Upon available time, stroll through the town square of Paro. Overnight hotel Olathang or similar in Paro.



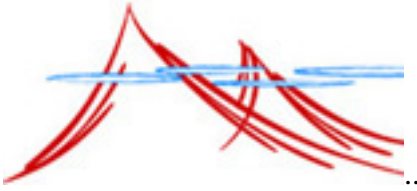
Day 2: Paro Valley Sightseeing (B/L/D)

This morning, drive north of Paro and start a one-two hours hike to the famed Taktsang Monastery (its name means "tiger's nest"). Ponies are provided for uphill part on request. Opportunity is provided for enthusiasts to hike further to the monastery itself. The monastery is perched on a the face of sheer cliff some 1000m above the floor of the Paro valley. Besides the monastery, the hike itself is beautiful with great views and there is something special about it. After lunch at the tea house, return trek is all downhill. Depending on the available time, visit the ruins of Drugyal Dzong and the 7th century Kichu temple. Overnight and dinner at the hotel.

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Day 3: Paro-Punakha (B/L/D)

After visiting sites missed on previous day in Paro, drive to Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan, where you have some time to take a stroll before lunch. After lunch drive to Punakha, stopping en-route at Dochula pass, for spectacular Mountain views (weather permitting). From Dochula pass at 3,050m descend into Punakha and Wangdi valley at 1,200m, through ever-changing vegetation. Drive to Wangdiphodrang and visit its town and the fortress. (about 3 hours drive total) Check into the hotel near Punakha for dinner and overnight. Hotel Meri Phuensum or Zangdopelri.

Day 4: Full day sightseeing in Punakha and Wangdue (B/L/D)

Spend the day in this low lying Punakha and Wangdi valley at (approx. 1200m). Punakha was a former winter capital, a tradition which is still held by the central monastic body. The head abbot and the monks reside in Punakha Dzong during the winter months and move back to Thimphu Tashicho Dzong in summer. Drive north of Punakha to an idyllic countryside and hike up hill for about 40 minutes to visit a newly built Khamsum Yeulley temple. Return walk along the banks of Pho chu river, possibly sighting some birds and visit the architectural wonders of Punakha Dzong. In the evening, take an easy walk through the village to Chimi Lhakhang temple, dedicated to Drukpa Kuenely also popularly known as “divine madman”. Overnight Meri Phuesum or Zangdopelri hotel



Day 5: Return to Thimphu B/L/D)

After breakfast, retrace your drive back across Dochula pass, which provides one more opportunity for mountain views. This afternoon in Thimphu, visit traditional Painting school and watch the gold and silver smiths create traditional jewelry and relief- work for the country's monasteries and temples. If you here during the weekend (Fri through Sunday) visit the colorful open market. Evening is free to stroll through the town or for souvenir shopping. Overnight and dinner at River view or similar.

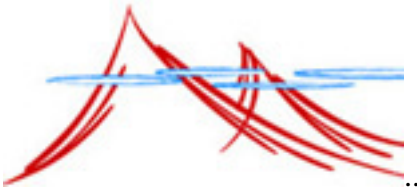
Day 6: Thimphu Valley Sightseeing(B/L/D)

After breakfast visit Memorial Chorten, a shrine built in the memory of the late king, Jigme Dorji Wangchuk, where many Bhutanese people gather to pray every day. Visit a nunnery on the outskirts of Thimphu, followed by visit to textile museum and the folk heritage museum. Visit handicraft workshops and temple or two and also visit mini zoo to see Takins, the national animal of Bhutan. At the end of the day, we also pay a visit to the great Tashichho Dzong, seat of Bhutan's administrative and religious center. Overnight hotel River View or similar



Day 7: Thimphu-Phuntsholing (B/L/D)

Drive to Phuntsoling, the southern border town with India. The road drops gradually along the forested hills to the



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base of foothill, passing through many villages and spectacular landscape. Phuntsoling, being the border town has slightly Indian character although it does desperately try to maintain the Bhutanese appearance. In the evening visit Zangopelri Monastery in the center of the town. Later you will be introduced to the Wind Horse Guide from Darjeeling who will lead your trip in this region.

Day 8: Phuntsholing-Darjeeling (B/L/D)

After breakfast, complete exit formalities and drive through plains of India. The journey passes through many villages, hills and tea-estates, offering spectacular views. These regions are also inhabited by tribal groups called Adivasi, whom you can recognize with the tattooed body. After crossing the plains, climb up the hills and arrive in Darjeeling around late afternoon. In the evening, we will take short walks to visit the markets, town square etc.



Day 9: Darjeeling Sightseeing (B/L/D)

If you wish, you can wake up early morning (before dawn) for a short drive to Tiger Hill to see the amazing colors of sunrise on Kanchendzonga. At 2550m, Tiger Hill commands superb views (weather permitting) of the mountains and valleys of the eastern Himalayas with Everest, Lhotse and Makalu visible in the far distance. Stop at New Ghoom monastery on the way back to the hotel for possible opportunity to see the morning ritual. After breakfast, visit Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, which houses a considerable collection of items used by the early Everest explorers. Visit the zoo for several interesting Himalayan species including snow leopards and red pandas. Visit Tibetan self help center, nearby tea plantation. After lunch, take a short toy train ride experience on the 120 year old Darjeeling Hill Railway and stop to visit the old Ghoom monastery on the way back. Evening is free to browse the "Chowrasta" or town square. You could also walk down to the lower Bazaar where the local residents shop for produce, fabrics and spices.

Day 10: Darjeeling-Gangtok (B/L/D)

An early departure for our steep tour through a series of tea plantations to the tropical Teesta Valley. Passing through sal forests and cinchona (quinine bark) plantations, stop briefly at the Teesta Bridge checkpoint to show our Sikkim entry documents before continuing onwards to Gangtok, the capital of Sikkim. Located in the eastern Himalayas, Sikkim forms a natural border between Nepal to the west and Bhutan to the east. To the north lies Tibet and to the south the Teesta and Ranjit rivers form a natural boundary with the Indian state of West Bengal. The climate is subtropical in the lower valleys, but changing fast to temperate and alpine with increase in elevation. Vast rhododendron forests cover most of the slopes between 3300-4000m and the Himalayan Cypress is widely found near the tree line. Mixed forests of bamboo and dozens of orchid species are common between 1500-3000m. Stay for 2 nights at the traditional style Netuk House hotel run by the Sikkimese Denzongpa family or the Norkhil Hotel.

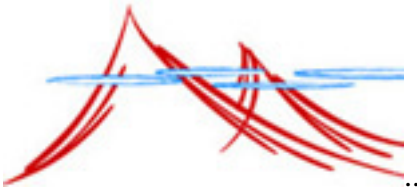


Day 11: Gangtok Sightseeing (B/L/D)

Gangtok, the capital sprawls along ridge and from many places you can see the Kanchendzonga range. It is a kempt town with interesting mix



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of people of Indian origin, Nepali, Tibetan, the Denzongpas or Bhutias and the original Lepchas. Sightseeing in and around Gangtok includes Enchey monastery, several view points to see Mt. Kanchenjunga, flower exhibits which has display of wide varieties of orchids, Tshuk Lhakhang (royal chapel), Institute of Tibetology, and Handicrafts workshop with display showroom. In the afternoon, visit Rumtek Monastery on the ridge, opposite Gangtok. Rumtek monastery complex is the center of Tibetan Kagyugpa sect and Tibetan religious studies. The 16th Gwalpa Karmapa, the head of the Kagyugpa sect, took refuge in Rumtek after the Chinese invasion of Tibet in the 1950's; he and his followers escaped with whatever statues, 'thangka' paintings and scriptures they could and built Rumtek monastery as a replica of the Chhodruk monastery that they had left behind in Tibet.

Day 12: Gangtok -Kalimpong (B/L/D)

A scenic tour past forest covered slopes and fast flowing rivers to Kalimpong (4,100 feet), an important market town located strategically at the crossroads of Tibet, Bhutan, Nepal and Bengal, is well known for its numerous flower and orchid nurseries. During our time in Kalimpong, we have time to drive to the monastery that overlooks superb views of Kalimpong town (and the Himalayan peaks) and tour the historic Dr Graham's home. This extensive boarding and day school facility was established over a century ago. We will see its classrooms and boarding houses to get an idea how students of both sexes from all over India and neighboring countries like Bhutan spend their days during the study year. There is an Anglican church with fine stained glass windows nearby and you can also visit one of the flower nurseries for which Kalimpong is well known across India. Overnight in Kalimpong. Himalayan Hotel.

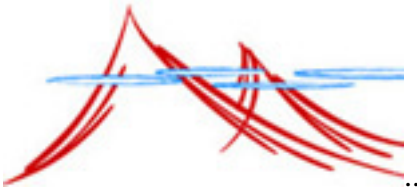
Day 13: Overland to Bhadrapur and flight to Kathmandu (B/L/D)

Bid farewell to the Queen of the Hills and drive towards Nepal border town of Kakarbhitta, which takes around 3 ½ hours. Complete exit and entry formalities. After entering Nepal, transfer to Bhadrapur airport in time for your flight to Kathmandu. It is about one hour flight offering splendid views of mighty Kanchendzonga and other Himalayan Peaks. Upon arrival at Kathmandu airport, Wind Horse representative of Kathmandu will meet and greet you and transfer you to your hotel. In the evening, stroll along the busy streets of Indrachowk and Asan, vibrant, crowded with people buying and selling. Overnight hotel Soaltee Crowne Plaza



Day 14: Kathmandu Valley Sightseeing (B/L/D)

After breakfast, take the tour of Pashupatinath Temple, the holiest Hindu temple on the bank of sacred Bagmati River. Visit Boudhanath Stupa, the largest stupa architecture of its kind and a must visit place of Buddhists in their lifetime. After a lunch, visit the 2000 years old Swayambhunath Stupa, a Buddhist shrine situated on a hillock. The stupa is associated with the story of evolution of Kathmandu valley and draws thousands of visitors every day. And finally enter the old city center to visit the Kathmandu's Durbar Square that includes the old Royal Palace Complex and numerous ancient and medieval temples. Dinner with cultural performance at a local restaurant . Overnight at Soaltee Crowne Plaza or Hyatt Regency (for Deluxe). Everest Hotel or Grand Hotel (First Class).



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Day 15: Visit Bhaktapur and drive to Nagarkot (B/L/D)

After breakfast, check out hotel. Carry a small pack of what you need for one night stay in Nagarkot and rest of the things, you can store in the hotel. Drive and visit Bhaktapur city, which has the best preserved Malla Principality where you will see the ancient and medieval Malla palaces, temples and monasteries. The most picturesque ones are Golden Gate, the Palace of 55 Windows and its courtyard, 5 storied Nyatapola Temple, Dutturaya temple dedicated to Hindu Trinity gods and Pujarimath Monastic complex with intricate wood carving. Continue drive to Nagarkot passing through the villages and terraced farmlands. Nagarkot lies 20 miles north-east of Kathmandu at an elevation of 6,560 ft. It is popular for panoramic views of the Himalayas. Overnight Club Himalaya Resort or The Fort (for Deluxe) & Country Villa (for first class)



Day 16: Walk Trek to Nala, visit Panauti and drive to Kathmandu. (B/L/D)

Rise, wake up early for sunrise view over the Himalayan range of mountains (weather permitting). On a clear day you can see the magnificent mountains, some of which above 8000m. After breakfast at the hotel, walk for about 3-4 hours towards Dhulikhel. The trail passes through the forested ridges, villages and terraced farmlands with snow capped peaks at the backdrop. The trail ends at Nala from where you are met by the transport and transferred to Panauti, the traditional Newari Villages which is well preserved, untouched by the modernization, despite being so close to Kathmandu. Lunch en-route. Overnight and dinner at the hotel.



Day 17: Departure (B)

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfer to the airport in time for your flight. Our cost includes Bangkok flight but you may choose other destination such as Delhi, Lhasa, Chengdu, Hongkong etc and we can adjust the difference in the fares.

Tibet Extensions:

Lhasa, Tibet (3 Nights/4 Days) US\$ 450 per person.

Lhasa, Samye and Tsedang (5 Nights/6 Days) US\$ 750 per person

Kathmandu-Zhangmu-Lhatase-Shigatse-Gyantse-Lhasa Overland Tour (7 Nights/8 Days): US\$ 899

Airfares (Subject to change)

Kathmandu-Lhasa: US\$ 320

Lhasa-Chengdu: US\$ 215

Chengdu-Bangkok: US\$ 290

Visa and Permits

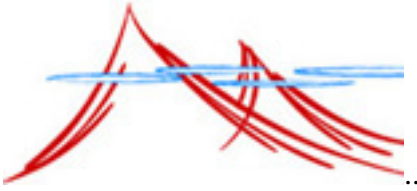
Bhutan visa is processed by us. You will need to send us copies of your passports along with trip application. You will get Bhutan visa clearance letter prior your departure. You will get your passport stamped with actual visa upon arrival in Bhutan. Bhutan visa is valid for the period of your booked tour only.

India Visa: You will have to obtain Indian visa before you land in INDIA. There is no provision of visa on arrival in India. Sikkim permit will be done at the entry.

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Nepali visa can be obtained at Nepal border immigration upon arrival. You will have to fill up visa application form and attach two passport size photographs. Visa fee for a single entry costs USD 30

Booking: US\$ 200 (non refundable) tour deposit and cost of internal airfares have to paid at the time of booking. The balance is due 60 days prior departure. However Airline such as Druk Air tickets should be purchased to secure the seats. We will inform you when it's due. We will mail you the invoice and payment schedule upon receipt of deposit.