

KUZUSANGPO LA / GUTEN TAG / HELLO

15 Days itinerary in Bhutan for Simone Mathieu and David Weber

1/9 Fri. Joenpalekso Welcome to Bhutan

Your sightseeing begins right from the air. The approach to Paro international Airport is like no other. You get spectacular view of Mount Everest, Kanchenjunga and other famous Himalayan peaks, including the sacred Mount Chomolhari where you will go for trekking. On the arrival at the airport you will be received and escorted to the Pedling hotel in Thimphu by Mr. Ugen Dorji. The drive from Paro to Thimphu is very smooth and takes only one and a half hours, then check into Hotel.

2/10 Sat. Thimphu sightseeing

Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan is located in a wooded valley, along the banks of the Wang Chu River. Over the past couple of years Thimphu has not only developed in terms of infrastructure but the population has drastically increased as well. With population of roughly 100'000, you will notice that the rural urban migration is very high here. Start your day by visiting the handmade paper factory silversmith, National Traditional Medicine, National Library, Zilukha Nunnery, the Takin Zoo (National Animal of Bhutan). Simtokha Dzong, oldest fortress in the country built in 1222. Tashichodzong, Bhutan's administrative and the religious center. Lot of possibilities but one can keep it open and talk with your guide as per your will.

3/11 Sun. Easy Day with or without guide

After breakfast walk down to the Sunday market explore the real moving life of Bhutanese, stroll through the main street, visit shops and handicrafts Emporium where Bhutanese textiles and other Handicrafts are available. Walk up to the memorial Chorten. The Memorial Stupa was built in 1974 in memory of third King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk by his mother. Today many Bhutanese visit especially in the early morning and evenings. May be you will have your own interest so you can make use out of your free day.

4/12 Mon. Thimphu to Gangtey 4-5 hours drive

After breakfast drive to Gangtey over Dochula pass (3100 meters). Gangtey, the famous Monastery in the kingdom, which is also the seat of my teacher, Gangtey Tulku Rinpoche the reincarnation of Pema Lingpa. The valley itself is very famous and beautiful called Phobjikha. It is the winter roosting place for the black necked cranes where they migrate from Tibet. They stay here from November until about March, before embarking on their journey back to Tibet. Overnight stay Dewachen Hotel.

5/13 Tues. Gangtey to Wangdi 2 hours drive

Arrive at Wangdiphodrang where I come from. Check into Dragon root Resort. Afternoon drive to Punakha, visit Punakha Dzong which is one of the most impressive Dzongs in Bhutan. It was the ancient winter residence of the king and the capital. Still today it is the residence of the Chief Abbot and the central monk Body. Visit the monastery at Khuruthang. Overnight in Hotel

6/14 Wed. Wangdiphodrang to Paro

After breakfast, visit Chimi Lhakhang, the Tempel of fertility. Take lunch at the Dochula Cafeteria. En-route to Paro, visit Tachong monastery which dates back to 14th century. Overnight stay in hotel Tashi Namgyal or Rinchenling lodge.

7/15 Thur. Paro Sightseeing

Morning visit Paro Dzong, which was built in 1646 during the reign of the first theocracy ruler of Bhutan. Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal and it is the finest example of Bhutanese architecture. It also serves as the district Administration Centre and for the Monk Body. Continue visit to Paro National Museum housed in the old Ta Dzong (Watch Tower) built in the early seventeen century to protect the Paro valley from the Tibetan invasions. It was transformed into a Museum in 1968 by the late King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk. Afternoon drive to Drugyal Dzong (ruined fortress). Although in ruins, holds great historical significance. This literally means Bhutan's victorious fortress. It was from this fortress that the Bhutanese repelled many Tibetan invasions. This spot unfolds a magnificent view of Mount Chomolhari, where your trek begins the next day. Over night at the hotel.

8/16 Fri. Paro to Shana/17km/4-5 hours trek/ alt. 2800m

Drive up to car road end at Drugyal Dzong where the trek begins. The trail follows the Paro Chu gently uphill through the river valley and agricultural fields. The night's camp is just beyond an army outpost by the river site.

9/17 Sat. Shana to Soi Thangthangka / 23 km/ 6-7 hours/alt. 3400m

The trail continues uphill through the river valley. The valley narrows so much that the path takes to the slopes. There are quite a lot of descendings along this stretch. Camp is on a meadow.

10/18 Sun Soi Thangthankha to Jangothang/19 km/4 hours trek/alt. 4040m

The trek starts up along the Pa Chu. An army outpost is established at Soi which passes along the way. The valley begins to widen again. All around high mountain ridges and snow-capped peaks come into view. Yak herder's winter homes becomes a regular feature of the landscape. The night camp is beside a ruined fortress at the base camp of mount Chomolhari. It is spectacular site where we can enjoy the scenes of mount Chomolhari, mount Jichu Drakey and mount Tsheringang.

11/19 Mon. Jangothang Halt

You can enjoy the trek up to Tsophu lake or hike around the area. Mount Chomolahari and it subsidiary mountains chains lies directly west, Jichu Darkey to north and numbers of un-scaled peaks to the east.

12/20 Tues. Jangothang to midway between Shana and Soi Thangthankha (Thongdo zam)

Your journey back will bring you across the same way that you went uphill. But it will be much more relaxing and easy walk.

13/21 Wed. Thongdo Zam to Paro

Your trek will end when you reach the beginning point at the road where you started your trek. You will be picked up by car and overnight stay in the same hotel.

14/22 Thur. Last Highlight Excursion to Taktshang or Relax day

If you are not tired, enjoy the hike to Taktshang which is supposed to be your highlight for the last stay in Bhutan. Enjoy lunch at the cafeteria.

Taktshang Monastery is one of the most famous in Bhutan from over two thousand monasteries. It is perched on a cliff more than 200 feet above Paro Valley.

The name Taktshang means Tiger's Nest because it is believed that Guru Rinpoche, the founder of Buddhism in Bhutan, was said to have flown on the back of a tiger to the cave for meditation and this is where the monastery stands today. The original monastery was built by Desi Tenzin Rabgay in 1646. This site is considered sacred by pilgrims of all schools of Mahayana Buddhist and a highlight of one's visit to Bhutan.

15/23 Logjayel (Good bye) Depature Paro to Dhaka by Druk Air.

KARDENCHE LA / DANKE SCHÖN / THANK YOU