# Bhutan Tour

Phuentsholing-Thimphu-Punakha Paro

Tour PackagesCustomised

## Tour Basics •

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| **Duration:** 7 Days 6 Nights | **Route:** Phuentsholing-Thimphu-Punakha Paro |

Bagdogra — 7D 6N

## About This Trip •

Bhutan, known as the Land of the Thunder Dragon, is a Himalayan kingdom famous for its pristine landscapes, rich Buddhist culture, and unique policy of measuring progress through Gross National Happiness. Nestled between India and China, Bhutan offers a perfect blend of ancient monasteries, stunning valleys, and breathtaking mountains. Unlike many destinations, Bhutan has preserved its traditions and natural surroundings, establishing it as one of the world's most sustainable travel experiences. With its welcoming people, serene atmosphere, and unmatched natural beauty, Bhutan is ideal for travellers seeking peace, spirituality, and adventure in a pollution-free, authentic setting.

**Top Attractions in Bhutan**

Bhutan is home to iconic attractions that blend spirituality with scenic beauty. The most famous is the Tiger's Nest Monastery (Paro Taktsang), perched on a cliffside. The capital Thimphu showcases the Buddha Dordenma statue, traditional markets, and cultural museums. Punakha Dzong, with its riverside setting, is a masterpiece of Bhutanese architecture. In Paro, visit the National Museum and historic dzongs. Dochula Pass offers panoramic Himalayan views with 108 memorial chortens. Adventure lovers can explore Phobjikha Valley, home to black-necked cranes. Each attraction offers a glimpse into Bhutan's spirituality, history, and natural beauty, making the country a must-visit destination.

**Things to Do in Bhutan**

Bhutan offers a range of activities for every traveller. Trekking is popular, with routes like the Druk Path Trek and Snowman Trek offering spectacular Himalayan views. Cultural experiences include

attending local festivals such as Paro Tsechu, where traditional masked dances are performed. Adventure seekers can try archery, Bhutan's national sport. Nature enthusiasts will love bird watching in Phobjikha Valley or hiking through lush forests. Visitors can enjoy traditional hot stone baths, explore local handicraft markets, or savour Bhutanese cuisine with dishes like Ema Datshi. Bhutan's mix of adventure, spirituality, and culture makes it a rewarding and diverse travel experience.

**Best Time to Visit Bhutan**

The ideal time to visit Bhutan is during the spring months of March through May and the autumn months of September through November. In spring, valleys bloom with rhododendrons, skies are clear, and temperatures are pleasant, perfect for trekking and sightseeing. Autumn offers crisp air, excellent mountain visibility, and vibrant festivals like Thimphu Tsechu. Winter (December–February) is cold but peaceful, ideal for cultural tours. Monsoon (June–August) brings lush greenery but also heavy rains. The season offers a unique experience, though spring and autumn provide the most favourable weather, and scenic beauty remains the most popular, ensuring the best weather, scenery, and cultural immersion for travellers seeking Bhutan's magic.

Bhutan for Indians

For Indian travellers, Bhutan is one of the most convenient and affordable international destinations. Indian citizens can enter Bhutan with a valid passport or Voter ID card; no visa is required. However, the Sustainable Development Fee (SDF) of ?1,200 per person per night is applicable. Popular entry points include Phuentsholing by road or Paro International Airport by flight. Bhutan is budget-friendly for Indians, with shared vehicles, local guides, and vegetarian meals widely available. Scenic monasteries, stunning valleys, and cultural festivals make it an ideal getaway. Bhutan offers Indians a hassle-free escape into tranquillity, just across the border.

**Bhutan for Foreigners**

Foreign travellers require a visa to visit Bhutan, which must be arranged through licensed tour operators. The government has implemented a Sustainable Development Fee (SDF) of USD 100 per person per night, which promotes high-value, low-impact tourism. All foreign visitors are required to book guided tours, which include accommodation, meals, and transport. Bhutan offers foreigners an exclusive opportunity to experience an untouched Himalayan kingdom where ancient traditions thrive. From hiking to monasteries like Tiger's Nest, exploring cultural festivals, or enjoying pristine landscapes, Bhutan provides a unique, authentic travel experience unlike any other destination in the world.

**Top Places to Visit in Bhutan**

Bhutan's must-visit places include Paro, home to Tiger's Nest Monastery and the National

Museum. Thimphu, the capital, offers cultural landmarks like Buddha Dordenma, Tashichho Dzong, and bustling handicraft markets. Punakha Dzong, majestically located where two rivers meet, is a stunning masterpiece. Dochula Pass offers panoramic mountain views and 108 chortens. Phobjikha Valley, famous for black-necked cranes, is a serene nature spot. Adventure seekers can explore the Haa Valley or trek in Bumthang. Each destination highlights Bhutan's culture, spirituality, and natural beauty, making them essential stops on your journey.

**Bhutan in Summer (June–August)**

"In Bhutan, summer falls during the monsoon season, ushering in abundant rains and vibrant greenery: lush green landscapes and refreshing mountain air. Rainfall is frequent, especially in southern regions, but mornings often remain clear for sightseeing. The countryside comes alive with waterfalls and vibrant greenery, making it a photographer's paradise. Although trekking may be challenging on slippery trails, summer is perfect for cultural experiences, hot stone baths, and monastery visits. Tourist crowds are fewer, and hotels often offer discounted rates, making it a good option for budget travellers. Bhutan in summer is peaceful, scenic, and ideal for those who enjoy monsoon beauty.

**Bhutan in Winter (December–February)**

Winter in Bhutan is cold, especially in high-altitude regions, but it offers clear skies and spectacular Himalayan views. Snow often falls in northern and central Bhutan, creating magical landscapes around monasteries and valleys. Popular places like Paro, Thimphu, and Punakha remain accessible, while higher trekking routes may be closed. Winter is also the season for cultural festivals such as Trongsa Tsechu. Tourist crowds are minimal, making it a perfect time for a peaceful and authentic Bhutanese experience. For those who don't mind chilly weather, Bhutan in winter is serene, spiritual, and visually stunning.

**Bhutan in Monsoon (June–September)**

Monsoon in Bhutan brings heavy rainfall, particularly in the southern plains, while central and northern valleys receive moderate showers. Rain turns the country into a verdant paradise, adorned with rich greenery and colourful blooms, flowing rivers, and misty mountains. Trekking routes may be muddy, but the countryside is breathtaking for nature lovers and photographers. Tourist numbers are low, so it's an excellent season for travellers seeking solitude and discounted hotel rates. Monsoon is also a good time to experience Bhutan's vibrant local life, indoor cultural activities, and hot stone baths. Bhutan in the monsoon is raw, green, and rejuvenating.

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Attractions of Bhutan

## ?? Tiger’s Nest Monastery (Paro Taktsang)

The Tiger’s Nest Monastery, or Paro Taktsang, is Bhutan’s most iconic and spiritual landmark, perched dramatically on a cliff some 900 meters above the Paro Valley According to legend, Guru Rinpoche (Padmasambhava), who brought Buddhism to Bhutan, is believed to have arrived at this site riding on the back of a tigress and and meditated in a cave, making it one of the holiest pilgrimage sites in the Himalayas. The monastery complex consists of several shrines and prayer halls connected by stairways carved into the rock. Its dramatic setting, combined with its deep religious significance, makes it a must-visit on any Bhutan itinerary.

Things to Do Tiger’s Nest Monastery: The main highlight is the hike to the monastery, a moderately challenging trek that takes 2–3 hours through pine forests adorned with prayer flags. Along the way, travellers can stop at viewpoints offering breathtaking panoramas of the valley. The cafeteria midway is a good resting spot for tea and snacks. Inside the monastery, visitors can explore shrines, meditation caves, and courtyards, though photography is not allowed inside.

Best Time to Visit Tiger’s Nest Monastery: Spring (March–May) and autumn (September–November) are the best seasons, with clear skies and comfortable weather for hiking. Winter is also possible, with fewer crowds, though mornings can be chilly.

Nearby Highlights: After visiting Tiger’s Nest, explore Paro Dzong, the National Museum of Bhutan (Ta Dzong), and the charming Paro town with its traditional shops and eateries. For nature lovers, hikes around the Paro Valley offer stunning scenery.

A visit to Tiger’s Nest Monastery is both a physical and spiritual journey, challenging yet enriching. For many, it becomes the highlight of their Bhutan trip.

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## ?? Thimphu

Thimphu, Bhutan’s vibrant capital, offers the perfect blend of tradition and modernity. Unlike many capitals, it has no traffic lights, yet it’s bustling with markets, monasteries, and cultural institutions. Nestled in a picturesque valley, Thimphu is home to Bhutan’s royal government and also serves as the cultural heart of the nation.

Thimphu: The towering Buddha Dordenma, a 169-foot golden statue overlooking the valley, is one of the city’s most famous landmarks. The Tashichho Dzong, a majestic fortress-monastery, houses the throne room of the King of Bhutan. The National Memorial Chorten is another must-visit, a place where locals gather for prayer and reflection. Other attractions include the Folk Heritage Museum, Textile Museum, and the Changangkha Lhakhang, one of the oldest temples in the valley.

Things to Do Thimphu: Thimphu is ideal for cultural exploration. Visitors have the opportunity to shop for unique souvenirs and traditional handicrafts at the Weekend Market, watch locals practice archery (the national sport), or visit the Motithang Takin Preserve to see Bhutan's national animal. Hiking enthusiasts can trek to Wangditse Lhakhang or Tango and Cheri Monasteries for beautiful views and spiritual experiences.

Best Time to Visit Thimphu: Spring and autumn offer pleasant weather and clear skies. Autumn is particularly lively with festivals such as Thimphu Tsechu, featuring vibrant masked dances and cultural performances.

Nearby Highlights: Short drives from Thimphu take travellers to Simtokha Dzong or Dochula Pass, offering panoramic Himalayan views.

Thimphu provides a deep insight into Bhutan's unique way of life, modern enough for convenience, yet deeply rooted in culture and tradition.

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**? Punakha Dzong**

The magnificent Punakha Dzong, often called the "Palace of Great Happiness", is one of Bhutan's most stunning fortresses and a masterpiece of traditional architecture. Built in 1637, it played a crucial role in Bhutanese history, serving as both the administrative and religious centre of the kingdom. The dzong majestically stands where the Pho Chhu and Mo Chhu rivers meet, creating a dramatic setting that attracts travellers year-round.

Top Attractions Punakha Dzong: Punakha Dzong's architecture features grand courtyards, intricate wood carvings, and towering whitewashed walls. Inside, visitors can explore sacred relics, prayer halls, and the central utse (tower). During spring, the dzong is surrounded by blooming jacaranda trees, creating a breathtaking purple backdrop.

Things to Do Punakha Dzong: Visitors can walk across the suspension bridge near the dzong, one of the longest in Bhutan, offering incredible river views. Exploring the Chimi Lhakhang (Fertility Temple) nearby is another highlight, especially for those interested in Bhutan's cultural traditions. Attending festivals such as the Punakha Drubchen or Punakha Tsechu provides a chance to witness colourful masked dances and local rituals.

Best Time to Visit Punakha Dzong: Spring (March–May) is the best season, with blooming flowers and pleasant weather. Autumn (September–November) also offers clear skies and vibrant festival celebrations.

Nearby Highlights: The Punakha Valley itself is beautiful, with rice terraces, villages, and scenic hikes. The Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten, a hilltop temple, is worth the short trek for

panoramic valley views.

Punakha Dzong is not just an architectural wonder but also a living cultural treasure, offering travellers a glimpse into Bhutan’s glorious past and vibrant present.

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**?? Dochula Pass**

Situated at an altitude of 3,100 m, Dochula Pass is one of the most scenic places in Bhutan, offering sweeping views of the eastern Himalayas. Located on the road from Thimphu to Punakha, it is famous for the Druk Wangyal Chortens, a collection of 108 white stupas built to honour Bhutanese soldiers.

Top Attractions  Dochula Pass: On clear days, Dochula offers panoramic views of Himalayan peaks, including Gangkar Puensum, the world’s highest unclimbed mountain. The site also features the Druk Wangyal Lhakhang, a temple with unique modern murals depicting Bhutan’s history and culture.

Things to Do  Dochula Pass: Most travellers stop here for photography, to admire the serene stupas, and to enjoy the mountain atmosphere. In winter, Dochula is particularly magical with snow-covered landscapes. Many visitors also stop at the nearby café to warm up with tea while enjoying the views.

Best Time to Visit Dochula Pass: Autumn and winter are best for clear skies and mountain views. Spring offers rhododendron blooms along the road, while summer and monsoon often bring fog and limited visibility.

Nearby Highlights: The pass is en route to Punakha, making it a perfect stopover. Trekkers can also explore the Lungchutse Hike, a trail leading to a meditation retreat with even higher panoramic views.

Dochula Pass offers more than just breathtaking views; it is also a cultural landmark, symbolising Bhutan’s reverence for nature, history, and spirituality.

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**? Phobjikha Valley**

The Phobjikha Valley, also known as the Gangtey Valley, is one of Bhutan’s most beautiful and pristine glacial valleys. Surrounded by mountains and dotted with villages, it is renowned as the winter home of the rare black-necked cranes, which migrate here from Tibet between November

and March.

Top Attractions: The valley is home to the Gangtey Monastery (Gangtey Gompa), a significant Nyingma Buddhist site offering panoramic views of the valley. The Black-Necked Crane Information Centre educates visitors about the birds and conservation efforts.

Things to Do in Phobjikha Valley: Travellers can enjoy village walks, hiking trails like the Gangtey Nature Trail, bird watching, and photography of the serene landscapes. Homestays in the valley allow cultural immersion with local families. In November, the Black-Necked Crane Festival celebrates the arrival of the birds with traditional songs, dances, and conservation-themed performances.

Best Time to Visit Phobjikha Valley: October to April is ideal, especially November to March, to see the cranes. Spring offers blooming flowers, while autumn brings clear skies.

Nearby Highlights: The valley is surrounded by forest trails and rural villages, making it perfect for off-the-beaten-path exploration.

Phobjikha Valley is a heaven for nature lovers & those seeking tranquillity, combining wildlife, culture, and natural beauty in one unforgettable destination.

## Stay Categories & Options •

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| **Double Sharing** | Persons: 2 | INR 35,999.00 | ~~INR 38,999.00~~ | Save INR 3,000.00 |
| **Triple Sharing** | Persons: 3 | INR 33,999.00 | ~~INR 37,999.00~~ | Save INR 4,000.00 |

## Itinerary •

Day 1: Bagdogra to Phuentsholing

- Upon your arrival at Bagdogra Airport, our local representative will welcome you and help you board your vehicle for the journey to Phuentsholing (165 km / 4 hours).
- Upon reaching Phuentsholing, you will be met by our representative, complete the immigration formalities, and check in at your hotel.

- In the evening, you can explore the local market.

Meals: Buffet Dinner

Night: Stay in the hotel in Phuentsholing

## Day 2: Phuentsholing to Thimphu

- After breakfast, we will proceed to Thimphu.
- The drive to Thimphu is incredibly scenic, as we ascend from the Indian plains to the Bhutanese foothills, passing through beautiful forests, towns, and roadside villages.
- Along the way, we will pass through Gedu, Chukha, and Chuzom before arriving at Thimphu, Bhutan’s only multicultural city.
- Upon arrival, check in at the hotel, and later in the evening, enjoy a walking tour to explore the city.

Meals: Buffet Breakfast and Dinner

Night: Stay in the hotel in Thimphu

## Day 3: Thimphu Sightseeing | Morning 10:00 am

- After breakfast, drive to visit Buddha Dordenma, perched atop a hill in Kuenselphodrang Nature Park, and home to the largest seated Buddha statue in the world (51.5 m).
- Next, visit the Takin Preserve to see Bhutan’s unique national animal, the Takin. Continue to Sangaygang Viewpoint to enjoy the magnificent vistas of Thimphu Valley.
- On the way to lunch, drive past the King’s Memorial Chorten, a stupa built in memory of Bhutan’s Third King, widely regarded as the Father of Modern Bhutan.
- After lunch, visit Trashichhoedzong, the centre of the Bhutanese government and religion. This historic fortress houses the monarch’s throne room and the office of the Je Khenpo (Chief Abbot). It was initially built in 1641 by the political and religious unifier of Bhutan.

- In the evening, spend time strolling through Thimphu city centre, the local market, and the local crafts bazaar. Browse Bhutan’s exquisite traditional arts, including hand-woven textiles, Thangka paintings, masks, ceramics, slate and wood carvings, jewellery, and other unique items crafted from local materials.

Meals: Buffet Breakfast and Dinner

Night: Stay in the hotel in Thimphu

## Day 4: Thimphu to Punakha

- After breakfast, drive toward Punakha (approximately 3 hours). En route, stop at Dochu La, a picturesque mountain pass that acts as the gateway to Punakha Valley.
- From here, enjoy a stunning 360-degree panoramic view of the Eastern Himalayan ranges.
- On clear winter days, the snow-capped peaks create a breathtaking backdrop to the 108 chortens that adorn the pass.
- Stop for lunch at the newly opened Druk Wangyel Café, then continue your journey with visits to Punakha Dzong, an architectural marvel and historic fortress, and Chimi Lhakhang, the iconic fertility temple, before arriving in Punakha.

Meals: Buffet Breakfast and Dinner

Night: Stay in the hotel in Punakha

## Day 5: Punakha to Paro

- After breakfast, check out of your hotel and continue your drive to Paro. The Paro Valley stretches from the confluence of the Paro Chhu and Wang Chhu rivers at Chuzom up to Mt. Jomolhari on the Tibetan border to the north.
- This picturesque valley, one of the widest in Bhutan, is dotted with fertile rice fields and traversed by a beautiful, crystalline river.
- Upon arrival in Paro, visit a local farm to participate in farmhouse activities, including

archery, trying on traditional Bhutanese attire, and enjoying a local Bhutanese lunch.

- Later, explore Rinpung Dzong and Ta-Dzong, the National Museum of Bhutan, before checking in at your hotel.

Meals: Buffet Breakfast and Dinner

Night: Stay in the hotel in Paro

## Day 6: Paro Sightseeing

- In the morning, embark on a hike to the Tiger's Nest Temple (Paro Taktsang), Bhutan's most revered monastery, perched dramatically on a granite cliff 900 meters above the Paro Valley.
- The temple is intimately linked with Guru Rinpoche, who visited in the 8th century, meditated in the cave for three months, and is credited with introducing Buddhism to the entire valley.
- For an average hiker, the uphill trek takes about 2 hours, though the whole excursion can take most of the day.
- In the evening, return to the hotel to relax and unwind.

Meals: Buffet Breakfast and Dinner

Night: Stay in the hotel in Paro

## Day 7: Paro to Phuentsholing

- After breakfast, check out of the hotel and drive to Bagdogra Airport to board your return flight.
- A representative will assist you with the exit formalities and see you off

Meals: Buffet Breakfast

Night: Nil

## Inclusions •

Accommodation on twin-sharing basis at the listed hotels (or similar).

Enjoy daily breakfast and dinner, as per the itinerary.

Vegetarian lunches are included as per the itinerary.

One special Farmhouse Lunch in Paro, along with activities such as a cooking demonstration, archery, and darts.

01 local SIM card per family (rechargeable and returnable).

Services of a local English-speaking guide.

1 bottle of water per person per day. Professional Tour Manager ex-Bagdog

Bhutan sector transfers and sightseeing by Non-AC Toyota Coaster/Hiace/Similar (as per group size).

India sector transfers from IXB airport to Phuentsholing by AC vehicle (as per group size).

Vehicles are provided on a shared basis for all categories of packages.

Vehicles are not at disposal, they will be used strictly for transfers and sightseeing as per the itinerary.

Seat allotment in vehicles will be on a first-come, first-served basis at the venue, regardless of booking date.

## Exclusions •

Airfare or railway fare.

Entrance fees for monuments and museums.

Sustainable Development Fee (SDF).

Meals other than those specified in the inclusions.

Destinations not mentioned in the itinerary.

Expenses of a personal nature (laundry, tips, telephone calls, etc.).

GST applicable as per prevailing government rates.

TCS is applicable over and above the total cost (including GST).

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# FAQs •

**Q:** Do I need a visa to visit Bhutan?

**A:**

Yes, all foreign visitors require a visa to enter Bhutan, except nationals of India, Bangladesh, and the Maldives. Visas are arranged through licensed Bhutanese tour operators, ensuring a smooth entry process.

**Q:** What is the Sustainable Development Fee (SDF)?

**A:**

The SDF is a mandatory daily fee set by the Bhutanese government to support sustainable tourism. For international travellers, the current rate is $100 per night, helping preserve Bhutan's natural and cultural heritage.

**Q:** Is Bhutan open for tourism?

**A:**

Yes, Bhutan welcomes tourists. All visitors must adhere to the entry requirements, which include obtaining a visa and booking tours via licensed operators, ensuring a safe and regulated travel experience.

**Q:** Can I travel independently in Bhutan?

**A:**

Independent travel is allowed, but using a licensed Bhutanese tour operator is strongly recommended. Guided tours are mandatory for visiting dzongs, monasteries, and other sacred sites.

**Q:** What is the best time to visit Bhutan?

**A:**

The most favourable periods to visit Bhutan are spring (March–May) and autumn (September–November). These months offer clear skies, comfortable temperatures, and vibrant cultural festivals.

**Q:** What should I pack for a Bhutan tour?

**A:**

Pack clothing in layers for fluctuating temperatures, comfortable walking or hiking shoes, a raincoat, and modest attire for religious sites. Don’t forget sunscreen, sunglasses, a hat, and a camera for stunning landscapes.

**Q:** What currency is used in Bhutan?

**A:**

Bhutan’s official currency is the Ngultrum (BTN), which is pegged to the Indian Rupee (INR). Both BTN and INR are widely accepted for transactions throughout the country.

**Q:** Is Bhutan safe for tourists?

**A:**

Bhutan ranks among the safest travel destinations in the world. Crime rates are extremely low, and visitors are welcomed with warmth and respect for cultural traditions.

**Q:** What are the must-see attractions in Bhutan?

**A:**

Key attractions include:

- Tiger’s Nest Monastery (Paro Taktsang): Iconic cliffside monastery.
- Thimphu: Capital city with vibrant markets and monasteries.
- Punakha Dzong: Historic fortress at the confluence of two rivers.
- Dochula Pass: Stunning panoramic Himalayan views.
- Phobjikha Valley: Scenic valley known for black-necked cranes.

**Q:** Can I use my mobile phone in Bhutan?

**A:**

Mobile coverage is available in most towns and major routes. However, remote areas may have limited connectivity. International roaming is available, but check charges with your service provider.

**Q:** What languages are spoken in Bhutan?

**A:**

Dzongkha is the national language. English is widely spoken, especially in cities, hotels, and by younger Bhutanese, making communication easier for tourists.

**Q:** Are there any cultural etiquettes I should be aware of?

**A:**

When visiting religious or cultural sites, dress modestly, remove hats and sunglasses, and avoid pointing your feet toward sacred objects. Always ask before photographing locals.

**Q:** What is the food like in Bhutan?

**A:**

Bhutanese cuisine is hearty, flavorful, and often spicy. Staples include rice, chillies, cheese, and meat. A must-try is Ema Datshi, a signature dish made with chilli and cheese.

**Q:** Can I book a Bhutan tour package?

**A:**

Yes! Bhutan tour packages provide convenience and comfort, usually including accommodations, meals, transportation, and guided sightseeing. Packages help travellers make the most of their trip.

**Q:** What is the currency exchange rate?

**A:**

Currency rates vary, so check current rates before travelling. Exchange can be done at banks or authorised centres, and ATMs are available in major towns for convenience.

**Q:** Are there any health precautions I should take?

**A:**

Consult your doctor before travelling. Ensure routine vaccines are up-to-date and consider immunisations for hepatitis A, hepatitis B, typhoid, and malaria based on your travel itinerary.

**Q:** What transportation options are available in Bhutan?

**A:**

Transportation includes private cars, buses, and domestic flights. Road conditions vary, so using a licensed tour operator ensures reliable and comfortable transfers.

**Q:** Can I trek in Bhutan?

**A:**

Absolutely! Bhutan offers trekking for all levels. Popular treks include the Druk Path Trek and the legendary Snowman Trek, offering stunning mountain scenery and cultural experiences.

**Q:** What is the dress code in Bhutan?

**A:**

Traditional attire is the gho for men and kira for women. Tourists are not required to wear these but should dress modestly, especially in religious sites, to respect local customs.

**Q:** How can I book a Bhutan tour?

**A:**

You can book tours through licensed Bhutanese tour operators or international partners approved by the Tourism Council of Bhutan. Ensure the operator is certified to guarantee a smooth experience.

## Get in Touch •

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