



# Make Memories in The Land of Thunder Dragon

11 Days 5 nights in Paro

5 nights Camping

❖ 1 December - 28 February	USD	13,330.-	2 Pax
❖ 1 June - 31 August			
❖ 1 March - 17 March			
❖ 27 March - 31 May	USD	16,700.-	2 Pax
❖ 1 September - 10 September			
❖ 17 September - 30 November			
❖ 18 March - 26 March			
❖ 11 September - 16 September	USD	17,050.-	2 Pax

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## HIGHLIGHT

- Visit the Taktsang 'Tiger's Nest' Monastery, one of Bhutan's architectural highlights
- Enter the awe-inspiring Jigme Dorji National Park the only park that contains the Bhutanese national animal and flower, the Takin and the blue poppy
- Cross the Taklung La pass (4,520m) to a sprawling view of four mountains: Mt. Jhomolhari, Mt. Jicchu Drake, Mt. Teri Kang and Mt.Kanchenjunga
- Explore Drukgyel Dzong, a fortress ruin that was originally built in 1648 to commemorate Bhutanese victory over a Tibetan invasion
- Pay respects at Kyichu Lhakhang, one of the oldest temples in Bhutan
- Be privy to the rich collection at Ta Dzong, the national museum of Bhutan
- Spend a day exploring the bustling capital Thimphu, including major attractions like the Buddha Dordenma, the National Memorial chorten and more



## CULTURAL NOTES

- Bhutan is the only country in the world whose constitution includes provisions for environmental protection. Bhutan is one of the only two countries in the world that is carbon negative because it absorbs more carbon dioxide than it produces. Also, Bhutan's regulations require that at least 60% of the country be covered by forests at all times.
- Bhutan's boundaries were not opened until 1974, when foreign media was permitted to cover the country's former king's coronation. Bhutan had previously isolated itself to keep its pure scenery and Buddhist culture safe from the effects of globalisation.
- In contrast to inheritance laws practically everywhere else, Bhutanese households transfer property to the eldest daughter rather than the son. This restriction on television and the internet was finally repealed in 1999. A man moves into his new wife's house after marriage, not the other way around.
- Gross National Happiness (GNH) was established by the fourth king of Bhutan as a development philosophy for Bhutan.
- Chilli is a necessary vegetable in Bhutan, not a condiment, therefore those who are sensitive to spicy food should beware. Our food is known for being extremely spicy by default, with natives reportedly refusing to eat a meal until it is sufficiently hot.
- Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan, does not have a single traffic light. Individuals navigate the narrow roadways cautiously and gently, and thus far it hasn't failed them. When local officials attempted to install a light, the public outcry was so strong that it was swiftly removed, and a traffic cop was dispatched to the intersection instead.
- Flying to Paro requires avoiding high peaks and strong winds under certain weather circumstances because the destination is located in a deep valley. The flight itself is an exclusive privilege.
- In Bhutan, the walls of certain homes are probably covered in several vibrant drawings of phalluses. These are not graffiti, but rather a custom that represents fertility and good fortune. Placed in place of scarecrows, phalluses are thought to fend off evil spirits.





**DAY-BY-DAY SCHEDULE** This itinerary is customizable. Please speak to us about your needs and requirements and we will do our utmost to accommodate you.

❖ **วันที่ 1 ARRIVAL, CHECK-IN AND LOCAL SIGHTSEEING**

You will be GREETED by Drukair representative at the airport CHECK-IN to COMO UMA Paro which is 10 minutes drive from the airport. You will meet your yoga teacher for the week and have an introductory private yoga practice. Your first private yoga practice will be in the late afternoon. Then, you will be taken on the first foray into the Himalayan kingdom, with sightseeing in Paro town and a temple visit. This afternoon trip allows you to acclimatise to the rarefied air at this altitude, as well as the chance to get to know your guide.

Accommodation: COMO Uma Paro

Meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner



## ❖ **DAY 2** WALK TO ZURIG DZONG, RINPUNG DZONG, TA DZONG, PARO TOWN, KYICHU LHAKHANG AND DRUKGYEL DZONG

### **Morning**

Wind through pine forests to the picturesque grounds of the Zurig Dzong monastery, which resembles a fortress. Go to Ta Dzong, Bhutan's National Museum and enjoy the stunning views of Paro, and then descend to Rinpung Dzong, also known as the Fortress on a Heap of Jewels. The path then passes the main archery range, Ugyen Pelri Palace, and crosses the Paro Chhu river via the historic covered bridge Nyamai Zam before entering Paro town.

### **Afternoon**

We travel a few kilometres north of Paro to Kyichu Lhakhang, one of the oldest temples in Bhutan, where we pay our respects under the enchanted year-round fruit-bearing orange tree. If we have time, we drive up the valley to the Drukgyel Dzong, which Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal constructed in 1648 to guard the northern route to Tibet.

Duration: 5 to 7 hours (subject to time spent in National Museum and Paro)

Difficulty: Easy to moderate

Accommodation: COMO UMA PARO

Meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner



### ❖ DAY 3 PARO VALLEY - TAKTSANG

#### Morning

Today's activities centre on the historic Paro Valley and end with a visit to the Taktsang "Tiger's Nest" Monastery, one of Bhutan's most significant architectural masterpieces. Legend has it that Guru Rinpoche (Padmasambhava) brought Buddhism to Bhutan from Tibet by landing on the back of a flying tigress on this cliffside. The journey begins early to beat the heat on the two-hours ascent, which is a steep walk that passes a waterfall and ends at the monastery's main entrance among stunning murals. Going even higher to see isolated temples is an option if time permits.

Afternoon You return to COMO Uma Paro after lunch, which can be either a packed picnic or food from the quaint Taktsang café. Here, you can unwind on your last night by using the steam room, gym, and swimming pool, or by indulging in one of the COMO Shambhala therapies.

Duration: 6 to 8 hours

Difficulty: Moderate to hard

Accommodation: COMO Uma Paro

Meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

## ❖ DAY 4

### **TREK DAY 1: DRIVE TO SHANA ZAMPA VIA GUNITSAWA, THEN WALK SHANA ZAMPA (2,850M) TO THANGTHANGKHA (3,610M)**

#### **Morning**

We begin our drive early, stopping along the way at Drukgyel Dzong, a fortress ruin that was originally built in 1648 to control the northern route to Tibet. Then we go off road, following the Pa Chhu River past traditional farmhouses, through rich farmlands and the small settlements of Mitshi Zampa and Sangatang. Before long, we reach the army check post 15 minutes before Shana Zampa – the village we previously passed through on our way to Tiger's Nest and Kyichu Lakang, and where the trek begins.

#### **Afternoon**

The journey enters Jigme Dorji National Park through a rhododendron and pine-clad side of the river valley. This park is awe-inspiring in its size, spanning all three climate zones of Bhutan from leafy forests, to permanent ice fields it is also the only park that contains the Bhutanese national animal and flower, the Takin and the blue poppy. We then make our way through the valley with rising mountain faces on either side of us, including that of Mt. Jhomolhari, towards our Thangthangkha (3,610m) meadow campsite.



Duration of drive: 1 to 1.5 hours

Duration of trek: 7 to 8 hours (21km), guided with picnic

Difficulty: Moderate (altitude gain: 770m, altitude loss:

Accommodation: Camping at Thangthangka Meadow

Meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

## ❖ DAY 5

### **TREK DAY 2: THANGTHANGKHA (3,610M) TO JANGOTHANG (4,080M)**

#### **Morning**

We navigate a muddy section of trail beyond the last army post, passing a Mani wall of pebbles inscribed with prayer mantras to enter yak country. Witness the yak herder settlements of Soe and Takethang where crops such as barley, potatoes and turnips flourish, as well as a chorten that marks our final approach to the campsite at Jangothang (4,080m).

#### **Afternoon**

After settling and taking a rest, our trekking guide will explain the following day's exploration of the hinterland around the base camp. Spend the remains of the day soaking in the Himalayan panorama that surrounds you.

Duration of trek: 5 to 6 hours (19km), guided with picnic

Difficulty: Moderate to hard (altitude gain: 480m, altitude loss: 0 m)

Accommodation: Camping at Jangothang

Meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner







## ❖ วันที่ 6

### **TREK DAY 3: EXPLORE JANGOTHANG (4,080M)**

#### **Morning**

The set activity for the day is a trek in yak herder territory, climbing the ridge to the north for views of Mt. Jichu Drakye (6,989m).

#### **Afternoon**

In the afternoon, you may go on a leisurely search for a rare sighting of a blue sheep or the blue poppy, the national flower of Bhutan. Alternatively, simply relax in camp surrounded by views of the snowcapped Mt. Jhomolhari – the day is yours to enjoy however you'd like.

Accommodation: Camping at Jangothang

Meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner



## ❖ DAY 7

### **TREK DAY 4: JANGOTHANG (4,080M) VIA TSO PHU LAKE AND BHONTE LA (4,890M) TO SOI YAKTSA (3,800M)**

#### Morning

We leave camp by crossing Pa Chhu River once again, and then climb to the lake at Tshophu towards Bhonte La (4,890m), the highest point of the trek. Here, we can stop to take in the unforgettable views of the Basingthang (5,500m) peak and Chatarake (Jo Drakey) at 5,570m.

Afternoon We then arrive at the Dhumzo Chhu River and follow it downstream, past waterfalls, farmhouses and yak herder camps, on the way to our campsite at Soi Yaktsa (3,800m). Duration of trek: 6 to 7 hours (16km), guided with picnic Difficulty: Hard (altitude gain: 810m, altitude loss: 1,090m)

Accommodation: Camping at Soi Yaksa

Meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner



## ❖ DAY 8

### **TREK DAY 5: SOI YAKTSA (3,800M) TO THOMBU SHONG (4,120M)**

#### **Morning**

Our morning trail climbs 100m over a ridge before dropping down towards a stream, eventually crossing the Takhung La pass (4,520m) where we are rewarded with views of four mountains: Mt. Jhomolhari, Mt. Jicchu Drake, Mt. Teri Kang and Mt. Kanchenjunga. The sheer scale and clarity of the landscape makes this an unforgettable vantage point and an invaluable photo opportunity - we must pause to take it all in.

#### **Afternoon**

We then descend switchback trails into the wide, grassy Thombu Valley (4,120m), which is usually bustling with yak herders and their families.

Duration of trek: 4 to 5 hours (11 km), guided with picnic Difficulty: Hard (altitude gain: 720m, altitude loss: (340m)

Accommodation: Camping at Thombu Valley

Meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner



## ❖ DAY 9

### **TREK DAY 6: THOMBU SHONG (4,120M) TO GUNITSAWA (2,850M), COMO UMA PARO CHECK-IN**

#### **Morning**

The trail crossing Thombu La pass (4,380m) descends into a pine and juniper forest and comes out at Gunitsawa. Our vehicle will be waiting to take us back through the farmlands of upper Paro Valley, back to COMO Uma Paro, where soothing treatments await your tired muscles and you can unwind across the resort grounds.

Duration of trek: 4 to 5 hours (13km)

Difficulty: Easy to Moderate (altitude gain: 200m, altitude loss: 1,650m)

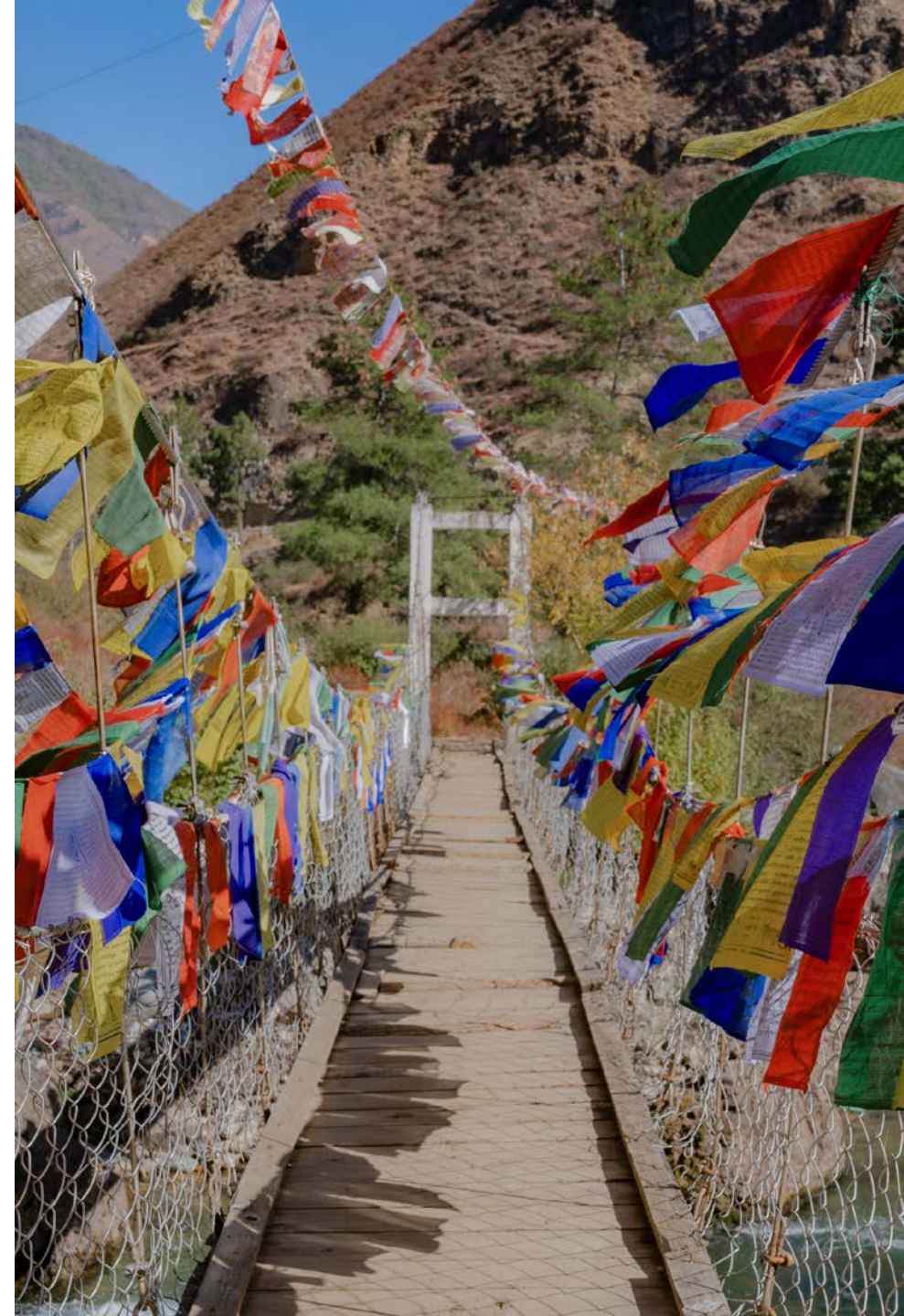
Accommodation: COMO Uma Paro

Meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

## ❖ DAY 10 THIMPHU DAY OUT

We've curated a list of places to see and things to do in Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan – spend your day with what interests you. Thimphu's markets take place on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. Spend a few hours wandering through the colourful stalls before heading into town for more exploration. The Kuensel Phodrang ruins were the palace of Sherab Wangchuck – the thirteenth Druk Desi – and overlooks the southern side of Thimphu. Today, they are home to the Buddha Dordenma, a gargantuan 51.5m statue of Buddha Shakyamuni. It is made out of bronze, gilded in gold and one of the largest statues of Buddha in the world.

Witness rows of young Bhutanese students at Zorig Chusum (National Institute of 13 Arts and Crafts) learning the national crafts of carpentry, masonry, carving, painting, sculpture, casting, weaving, bamboo work, embroidery, woodturning, papermaking, blacksmithing, gold and silver crafting. Stop at the Royal Takin Preserve, home of Bhutan's national animal, and meet the Takin - a strange looking animal which has been described as looking like a beestung moose. With both sentimental and political value, the National Memorial Chorten is a monument to world peace and prosperity was erected by the Royal Family and Cabinet to honour the wishes of Bhutan's third king, H.M. Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, who passed away before it could be completed





The original building of Trashi Chhoe Dzong, called the 'Fortress of the Glorious Religion' was built in 1641 and rebuilt in the 1960s. It is now home to government ministries, His Majesty's secretariat and the central monastic body. Entrance is granted only after 5.00pm For those with an eye for design and a passion for ceremony, peruse the Royal Textile Academy Museum's royal collection, comprising of the Raven Crown (Bhutan's royal wedding crown) and its accompanying royal wedding dresses. You can also learn more about the national art of weaving and its changing styles of 'Gho' and 'Kira', demonstrated by weavers on traditional looms.

Venture back in time as you explore the Folk Heritage Museum; this museum is a replica of a traditional Bhutanese house with care taken to detail it exactly as it would have looked a century ago. Thimphu sprawls up the wooded, western hillside of the Wang Chhu River, and is one hour away from COMO Uma Paro by car. It is important to note that museum, monastery, temple and Dzong opening times vary with national holidays, auspicious ceremonies and events such as Royal Family visits.

Duration: 7 to 10 hours

Difficulty: Easy (guided, with picnic or typical Bhutanese fare in local restaurant)

Accommodation: COMO Uma Paro

Meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner



## ❖ DAY 11 DEPART BHUTAN

Its time to bid farewell to the beautiful city of Paro. We will take you from Paro Airport to Suvarnabhumi Airport in Bangkok safely, with hearts full of cherished memories and romantic moments from this special journey. Bhutan will remain a place that eagerly awaits your return.



### THE PACKAGE INCLUDES

- 5-night accommodation at COMO Uma Paro with full-board meals, including a picnic lunch on sightseeing days.
- 5-night camping trip with complete services.
- Local guide services for 11 days, with an experienced English-speaking guide.
- 60-minute private yoga sessions daily (except Sundays).
- 1-hour COMO Shambhala spa massage for each guest.
- Bhutan visa fees and government taxes, including service charges and sales taxes in Bhutan.
- Entrance fees to museums, visitor centers, and travel permits in Bhutan.
- Access to the library, internet, swimming pool, steam room, and gym at no additional cost.
- Complimentary Wi-Fi throughout the accommodation.

### THE PACKAGE EXCLUDES

- Round-trip flight tickets from Bangkok to Paro.
- 7% value-added tax (VAT).
- Drinks during meals.
- Tips for the local guide, driver, and service staff.



## ACCOMMODATION

At COMO Uma Bhutan, you will experience the breathtaking beauty of the Himalayas every day through scenic journeys and visits to fascinating cultural heritage sites. Each night, you will return to the safety and modern comforts of COMO Lodge, ensuring a restful and luxurious stay.

## PLEASE NOTE

To ensure the best experience for your journey, we recommend booking your trip between March and May, or between mid-September and November. A minimum of 2 travelers is required.

COMO Uma Paro requests guests to check out during the overnight camping trip (we will take care of storing your luggage during this period).

Preparing for hiking in Bhutan is essential to ensure a smooth and safe adventure:

- You should be in good physical condition and ready to enjoy outdoor living.
- Make sure to stay hydrated and take regular rest breaks.
- Consult a doctor if you have any pre-existing health conditions or limitations.
- Be prepared for potentially changing weather conditions.
- Follow the advice of your guide and local staff.

Proper preparation will help ensure that your hiking experience in Bhutan is both memorable and safe.





## TREKKING INFORMATION

- For a trek at this level, you may wish to optimise your fitness to get the most out of the experience. A detailed pre-departure information sheet designed to help prepare for your adventure will be sent out with your booking confirmation.
- Packing essentials: Warm jacket, leather or waterproof fabric boots or shoes with good soles, waterproof jacket, sunglasses, warm hat, sunhat, sunscreen, torch, backpack (small day sack, 20-30 litres), duffle bag (30- 40 litres to be carried by ponies).
- Packing recommendations: Trekking pole, binoculars, gloves, tracksuit or thermal underwear, lip balm and moisturiser, sufficient supply of any medication required, and spare batteries or portable chargers.

## WHAT COMO UMA PARO PROVIDES

- Camping picnic lunch, dinner and breakfast, mineral water, the services of an experienced English-speaking Uma guide, cooks, ponies for carrying luggage and a first-aid kit.
- Tentage including one bathroom tent, one toilet tent with toilet paper, one kitchen tent, one dining tent and one sleeping tent for two people with sleeping bags, fleece blanket, hand towels, hot water bags and torches for each guest, camping beds and armchairs.
- To get the most from this experience you should be reasonably fit and ready to enjoy the great outdoors.
- For more details please refer to our pre- departure information sheet for trekking