5 Days Bhutan Tour

Five days is the shortest itinerary that touches all three of Bhutan's classic western valleys - Paro, Thimphu, and Punakha - which makes it the sweet spot for travellers spending precious annual leave. After a first day among Paro's dzong and temples, you shift to the capital for its museums, markets, and giant golden Buddha, then day-trip over Dochula Pass - 108 chortens and a horizon of Himalayan snow peaks - to Punakha's riverside fortress, the most beautiful building in the kingdom. The finale is the Tiger's Nest hike, placed on your last full day so you're properly acclimatized. Choose this length if you want the greatest hits with no wasted day; choose six days if you'd rather sleep a night in Punakha's warm valley than visit it in a day.

LOCATION	DURATION
Paro, Thimphu, Punakha	**5**

Highlights

- Ta Dzong - National Museum of Bhutan
- Rinpung Dzong (Paro Dzong)
- Tiger's Nest Monastery hike (2,600m to 3,100m)
- Kyichu Lhakhang - 7th century temple
- Buddha Dordenma - 51m tall statue
- National Library & Folk Heritage Museum
- Takin Preserve Center
- School of 13 Arts and Crafts
- Weekend Market & Archery
- Tashichho Dzong
- Dochula Pass - 108 chortens (3,140m)
- Chimi Lhakhang - Temple of Fertility
- Punakha Dzong - Palace of Great Happiness

Day-by-Day Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Paro - Valley Exploration

Paro | 2,280m | — | —

You will be received by a representative from Byways Tours and Travels at the airport and transferred to your hotel.

After lunch, visit **Ta Dzong**, an ancient watchtower built in 1656, renovated in 1968, and converted into the **National Museum of Bhutan**. Then visit **Rinpung Dzong (Paro Dzong)**, built in 1646 by Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal. The Dzong currently houses the administrative offices of Paro District and a monastery. In the evening, stroll around the charming town of Paro. Dinner and overnight at the hotel.

Meals: L/D | Hotel in Paro

Day 2: Paro to Thimphu - City Tour

Paro to Thimphu | 2,350m | 1.5 hrs | 55 km

After breakfast, drive from Paro to Thimphu (approximately 1.5 hours), stopping en route at **Tamchog Lhakhang**, the 15th-century temple of the famed iron-bridge builder Thangtong Gyalpo. On arrival, visit **Buddha Dordenma**, the tallest Buddha statue in the world at 51 meters. Then visit the **National Library**, which houses a vast collection of ancient Buddhist manuscripts, followed by the **Folk Heritage Museum**.

Continue to the **Takin Preserve Center** to see Bhutan's national animal, the Takin. Visit **Zhulikha Nunnery** and the **School of 13 Arts and Crafts (Zorig Chusum)**, famous for traditional carving and freehand art. Here you will find students whose aptitude is more artistic than academic. Lunch will be served at a tourist restaurant in the city center.

After lunch, visit the **authentic Bhutanese Craft Market** and the **Weekend Market**. You may also visit an **archery ground** to watch archery matches if available. In the evening, visit **Tashichho Dzong** (Fortress of the Glorious Religion), built in 1641 by Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal and reconstructed in 1961 by the Third King, Jigme Dorji Wangchuk, known as the Father of Modern Bhutan. Enjoy an evening stroll around Thimphu City. Dinner and overnight at the hotel.

Meals: B/L/D | Hotel in Thimphu

Day 3: Day Trip to Punakha via Dochula Pass

Thimphu to Punakha to Thimphu | 1,200m | 5 hrs | 150 km

After breakfast, drive to Punakha Valley via **Dochula Pass (3,140m)**. We stop at the pass to admire the 108 memorial chortens, and if the weather is clear, you will enjoy spectacular views of the Himalayan ranges.

Upon reaching Punakha Valley, visit **Chimi Lhakhang**, also known as the Temple of Fertility, built by Lama Drukpa Kuenley (the Divine Madman) in the 15th century. Then visit **Punakha Dzong**, built in 1637 by Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal, beautifully situated at the confluence of the Pho Chu (Male River) and Mo Chu (Female River). For many years until the reign of the second king, it served as Bhutan's capital. The construction was foretold by Guru Rinpoche in the 8th century. The Zhabdrung ordered his architect, Zowe Palep, to sleep before a Buddha statue; in his dreams, the Zhabdrung took him to Zangtopelri (Paradise) and showed him Guru Rinpoche's palace. From this vision, the architect conceived the design, never committing it to paper. The Dzong was named **Druk Pungthang Dechen Phodrang**, meaning Palace of Great Happiness. Punakha remains the winter residence of the **Chief Abbot (Je Khenpo)**, and King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk convened the first National Assembly here in 1952. After sightseeing, drive

back to Thimphu. Dinner and overnight at the hotel.

Meals: B/L/D | Hotel in Thimphu

Day 4: Thimphu to Paro & Tiger's Nest Hike

Thimphu to Paro | 3,120m | 5-6 hrs hike | 55 km + hike

After an early breakfast, drive from Thimphu back to Paro (approximately 1.5 hours). Then embark on an excursion to **Tiger's Nest Monastery (Taktsang)**. The total distance is **7.4 km (4.5 miles)** round trip and takes a **minimum of 5 hours**. The elevation at the starting point is **2,600m**, and the monastery sits at **3,100m** above sea level.

A 25-minute drive from the main town of Paro takes you to Satsam Chorten, where the trail begins. The path climbs through beautiful pine forests, with many trees festooned with Spanish moss and occasional groves of fluttering prayer flags. We stop for rest and refreshments at Taktsang Cafeteria, then continue until we see Tiger's Nest Monastery clearly within reach. The history dates back to the 8th century when Guru Rinpoche, a tantric master, flew to this place on the back of a flying tigress—said to be his Tibetan consort Yeshe Tsogyal—and meditated in a cave nearby. The temple was built in the 17th century by Penlop Gyaltse Tenzin Rabgye. This incredible monastery clings to the edge of a sheer cliff that plunges 600 meters into the valley below.

After lunch, visit **Kyichu Lhakhang**, one of Bhutan's oldest Buddhist temples, built in 659 AD by Tibetan King Songtsen Gampo. In the evening, celebrate the journey with a farewell dinner in Paro. Overnight at the hotel.

Meals: B/L/D | Hotel in Paro

Day 5: Departure

Thimphu to Paro Airport | 2,280m | 2 hrs | 65 km

Early morning, drive to Paro International Airport for your departure. Bid farewell to the Land of the Thunder Dragon. Tashi Delek!

Meals: B

What's Included

Included

+ Accommodation in 3* Hotels (1 Single room just for you).
+ All Three Meals (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner). Lunch will be served in a local Tourist Restaurant.
+ Daily Tariff.
+ Visa Fee.
+ Royalty and Government Taxes.
+ SDF (Sustainable Development Fee) of USD 100 per night per person, which directly goes towards free education, Free Healthcare and infrastructure development.
+ Transportation from receive till drop.
+ Museum and Monument fee.
+ Bottle Water in Car.
+ Sightseeing.
+ English Speaking Guide.
+ Driver.

Not Included

- Air Fare.
- Insurance Premiums.
- Payment for service provided on a personal basis.
- Cost for any services not mentioned in the "Inclusive Head"
- Cost incurred due to mishaps, strikes, political unrest, sudden death etc.
- Personal expenses in items such as laundry, soft or hard drinks, camera charges, bottle water in restaurants or in hotels, Portage, bellboy charges.
- Tips to guide and driver.

Ready to Book?

Contact our Bhutan travel experts to customize this itinerary.

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