

BEST OF NEPAL AND BHUTAN

Departing Kathmandu 31st October 2018
2nd departure 15 March 2019



NEPAL

Without a doubt this country is a potpourri of culture and diversity. It boasts as having the highest mountain in the world Mt Everest mixed with unique wildlife and exotic culture. Discover yourself amidst this strange world of mystical beliefs and incredible history. Every aspect of life is tainted with spiritual reasons. You will have many opportunities to witness this aspect of life, and to share with people your own ideas about it. The art and craft of Nepal are basically based on the religious themes taken from Buddhism and Hinduism. Nepalese art has been influenced and promoted since the earliest recorded times by the Newars. In Nepal, ethnical cultural groups are diverse and many of them have their own languages and customs. The country's capital Kathmandu and largest city simultaneously reeks of history and the wear and tear of increasing modernity. The tightly packed historical centre, with its squares and temples, continues to preserve a world light years away from shantytowns, expensive hotels, restaurants and shops on the city's outskirts. Kathmandu's core is Durbar Square, with the Vishnumati River to the west and Ratna Park to the east, The Bagmati River forms the southern boundary, whilst Thamel, the popular tourist hangout sprawls to the north. This would have to be one of the most exciting cities in the world today.

No other area in Nepal has such a splendid variety of natural beauties as the Annapurna region. It is a rare combination of long arrays of snow-capped peaks, crystal lakes, and turbulent rivers with deep gorges, Tibetan monasteries, and picturesque villages, inhabited by simple and friendly ethnic people.

BHUTAN

Nestled in the Himalayas is the idyllic nation of Bhutan - the world's only democratic monarchy. Bhutan cautiously emerged from isolation in the 1970's and has since embraced a policy of strictly controlled tourism and development.

Bhutan is a rare gem. In 2006 approximately only 12,000 tourists were permitted to enter and taste the delights of Bhutan's wonderful Buddhist culture, marvel at her magnificent scenery, trek through a stunning array of mountains and valleys and to view some of the world's rarest flora and fauna in a totally unspoiled environment. Bhutan offers sensational opportunities for Eco-friendly visitors and will continue to refrain from indulging in mass-market tourism, although a small increase in visitor numbers has been approved.

Bhutan has resisted globalization and therefore has protected its strong Buddhist culture and way of life. There is little crime, a stable government and exceptionally friendly people. Whether you are a bird-watcher, trekker, weaver, culture seeker or scenery lover... Bhutan is a must see destination, unlike no other.

The country boasts a glorious mosaic of botanical treasures and with its pristine environment these remain largely untouched and in some cases undiscovered. Bhutan is home to an enormous diversity of flora with over 50 species of rhododendrons alone and over 600 species of orchids. Bhutan is famous for the legendary Blue Poppy which blooms only once and then dies. With few people in the world ever setting eyes on it, a mystique surrounds this beautiful species and it is now the national flower of Bhutan.

PROPOSED ITINERARY

Day 1 Arrive Kathmandu Met by our office representative and transferred to the domestic airport for our 30mn flight to Pokhara. Arrive Pokhara where Lyn will meet you and transfer to your hotel the remainder of the afternoon will be free to relax and explore. Pokhara sits on banks of Phewa Lake surrounded by the magnificent Annapurna Ranges with the awesome Machhapuchhre (Fishtail Mountain) as its backdrop. Pokhara is part of a once vibrant trade route extending between India and Tibet. It is also the starting point of all treks in the Annapurna ranges. **(B) October 31**



Day 2 Pokhara This morning Lyn and your guide will take you on a boat trip across the lake, and an easy hike 1 hour to the Buddhist Peace Temple. Return to your hotel via the Tibetan Refugee Camp, time for a lovely lunch by the lake **(B) Overnight Hotel November 1**

Day 3 POKHARA – LWANG VILLAGE HOMESTAY is a beautiful experience.

After breakfast we will depart our hotel for the 1 hour drive to Lwang a beautiful scenic hilly village lying in the Kaski district. It is 20-30 km north west face from Pokhara. The village is highly famous for the organic tea gardens. As well as nowadays the place is getting familiar for the Homestay. Lwang is inhabited mainly by Brahmin, Chhetri, Gurung, Blacksmith, Tamang, Newar people. Thus, the visitors will have a great opportunity to experience the culture of people of various races and castes. Visitors are allowed to stay in a small stone roofs houses with clean lanes and surrounding, served with typical Nepali food (dal, rice, curry) and local chicken, alcohol made from local millet, cultural events and shows. Though, Homestay in Lwang can be an extraordinary experience with scene of the Pokhara Valley, tea farm in the surroundings with mountain at backdrop as well as typical mixed cultures and traditions. **We will leave our main luggage at the hotel in Pokhara and take a small bag with overnight toiletries and change of clothes. November 2 (BLD)**

Day 4 LWANG - POKHARA – BANDIPUR (Drive time approx. 1 Hour to Pokhara by jeep)

This morning we will depart Lwange village at 8am by jeep with a stop in Pokhara to collect your main luggage and have breakfast. At approx. 1030am we will drive to Bandipur which will take approximately 3-1/2 hours. Bandipur which was once a commercial centre along the trade route to Tibet. , Bandipur is a beautiful town situated at around 1,000 metres on a ridge part way between Kathmandu and Pokhara. It is a fantastic example of traditional Newari culture, and the town itself seems completely untouched by modernization. Arrive for lunch then the afternoon is free to explore this amazing town. **Overnight Hotel (BLD) November 3 (BLD)**

Day 5 – BANDIPUR -KATHMANDU (Drive time approx. 5 hours)

We will depart our hotel at 9AM and drive to Kathmandu. Arrive our hotel free afternoon to explore the tourist area of Thamel, **Overnight Hotel (B) November 4**

Day 6 BHAKTAPUR or DURBUR SQUARE THAMEL

After breakfast you will be met by your city guide who will take you on a ½ day tour of **BHAKTAPUR**: Bhaktapur meaning the City of Devotees, this place is the home of medieval art and architecture. Lying 14km/9 miles east of Kathmandu City, this place was founded in the 9th century and is shaped like a conch shell. The city is at the height of 5,600ft above sea level. In Bhadgaon you will visit the Durbar Square with its array of temples overlooked by the Palace of 55 Windows built by King Bhupatindra Malla, The Nyatapola Temple. This temple also built by King Bhupatindra Malla, is the best example of the Pagoda style and stands on five terraces on each of which stands a pair of figures, two famous strong men, two elephants, two lions, two griffins and two goddesses. Return to Kathmandu free afternoon to explore Thamel. Overnight hotel. **(B) November 5**

Day 7 KATHMANDU – PARO THIMPU After breakfast you will transfer to the airport for your flight to Bhutan with Druk Air Bhutan's National Air Carrier. The green wall of hills known as dooars, or gateways into Bhutan from the plains climbs continuously higher as the plane flies north towards the Tibet border. Silver rivers thread the valleys, waterfalls plunge down the forested mountain side, and to the north, the great snowcapped peaks of the inner Himalayas rise up into the sky. As the aircraft enters the Paro valley, look down and you will see the Paro Dzong overlooking Paro Chu (river) with Ta Dzong, watch tower, now the national a restaurant for lunch. After lunch you will visit the Paro Dzong before driving to the capital of Thimpu. **6th November (BLD)**

Day 8 THIMPU After breakfast our Bhutanese host will join us and we will drive through beautiful scenery to the Cheri Monastery one of the most popular monastery's in Bhutan, on the return journey you will be taken to see Bhutan's National animal the Tarkin. Return to Thimpu for lunch we will have an in depth sightseeing tour of Thimpu taking in such sights as the Cultural Museum and the School of Fine Arts **O/N Hotel (BLD) 7th November Overnight Hotel**

Day 9 THIMPU - WANGDUEPHONG After breakfast we will depart for Wangduephong and en route we will stop at Dochula Pass (3050 m) where we will have a fascinating view of the snowcapped eastern Himalayan mountain peaks. In the afternoon we will visit Chimi Lhakdang, the divine mad monk's temple. It is a beautiful walk through a lovely village. The temple can be visited and there is a tree outside which is supposed to have sprouted up after Drukpa Kunley sent a thunderbolt from an adjoining valley to kill some evil spirits who had gathered at the site. **Overnight Hotel Return to our hotel overnight (BLD) 8th November**

Day 10 WANGDUEPHONG – PUNAKHA DZONG – WANGDUEPHONG This morning we will have an early departure from your hotel to visit the sacred Punakha Dzong, a superb example of Bhutanese architecture. Fire, earthquake and floods have inflicted their devastating influence on this Dzong which under the direction of the king has been restored completely. After lunch at a local restaurant you will then visit a local farmhouse and school. **Overnight Paro (BLD) 9th November**

Day 11 WANGDUEPHONG –GANTEY 4 hour drive The drive to Gantey will take approximately 4 hours. You will pass through dense forests of oak trees and rhododendrons and on arrival in Gantey village where you will visit Gantey Gompa, the only Nyingmapa monastery in western Bhutan. From Gantey, you can see the picturesque Black Mountain range as well as Phobjika Valley, the winter habitat of the black-necked cranes. **In the afternoon you will visit the Black Crane information area and local school.** From your hotel you can see the picturesque Black Mountain range as well as Phobjika Valley, the winter habitat of the black-necked cranes **Overnight in a hotel in Gangtey. November 10**

Day 12 GANTEY – Today you will witness the Gantey Black Crane Festival The Black necked crane is one of the endangered species of crane. About 500 - 600 cranes migrate to Bhutan in winter from the Tibetan plateau. After realizing the crane's plight the Royal Society for The Protection of Nature set up a crane centre in Phobjikha. This crane festival is celebrated to raise awareness among the locals and to celebrate the arrival of a magnificent bird which has beautified the valley for centuries. The festival is celebrated with crane dance and local folk dances. **November 11**

Day 13 GANTEY - WANGDUEPHONG Today you will return by the same road to Wangduephong. **O/N (BLD) November 12**

Day 14 WANGDUEPHONG – THIMPU – PARO After breakfast return via the Dochla Pass to Thimpu. Lunch will be at a restaurant in Thimp, the afternoon is free to wander around the city, visit the Paper factory and Queen Mothers Chorten. Late afternoon continue to Paro and your hotel **November 13 (BLD)**

Day 15 PARO After breakfast you will have an optional hike to the famous Taktsang Monastery. It's a good half day hike, but as we have special permission to visit the monastery the tour should take between 5-6 hours. The remainder of the day is free you may wish to take a hot stone bath please suggest this to your guide. There will also be time to stroll around the town of Paro. **Overnight Hotel Paro (BLD) November 14**

DAY 16 Transfer to the airport for your onward journey November 15 (B)

Nepal/ Bhutan Tour

Cost Twin Share: AUST\$6470 if booked before 30 June receive \$1000 discount.

Nepal Trip Inclusions

- *International flights Kathmandu/Paro/Kathmandu flight
- *1 internal flight Kathmandu/Pokhara
- *Airport transfers
- *2 Nights Pokhara including b'fast
- *Private transfer Pokhara to Lwang village return
- *1 night Lwang Village Homestay including all meals
- *Sightseeing Pokhara
- *Private transfer Pokhara to Bandipur
- 1 Night Bandipur including all meals
- *Private Transfer Bandipur to Kathmandu
- *Sightseeing Bhaktapur including, entrance fees, guided tour
- *2 nights accommodation Kathmandu Thamel including b'fast,
- *All entries into monasteries

Bhutan Inclusions:

- *8 nights hotel accommodation on a twin share basis including all meals
- * All Airport Transfers
- *Excellent ground transport in Bhutan
- *Bottled Mineral Water
- *Bhutan Visa
- *All Sightseeing
- *Entry into all Monasteries
- *English speaking Bhutanese Guide.
- *Comprehensive Trip Notes:

Not Included:

International Airfare, apply for a 30 day Nepal Visa , Soft and Hard Drinks, Gratuities allow approx. US\$150 tourist. ,



www.tayloradventure.com

Tel: 9997 7442 Mobile: 0418917342 Email: enquiries@tayloradventure.com

PO Box 947 Mona Vale NSW 1660