



Buddhist Pilgrimage Tour - 8 Days

Embark on a transformative **Bhutan Buddhist Pilgrimage Tour** with Amen Bhutan Tours, a journey that invites you to explore the sacred **Buddhist sites in Bhutan**. This spiritual voyage promises deep connections with the ancient practices of Buddhism through visits to iconic monasteries and temples, including the breathtaking **Tiger's Nest Monastery**. Ideal for those seeking both spiritual growth and cultural immersion, our carefully curated itinerary offers a comprehensive exploration of Bhutan's rich spiritual heritage and stunning natural landscapes. Join us to discover profound **Bhutan Buddhism experiences** and embark on a **Bhutan spiritual journey** that will inspire and rejuvenate your soul.

At **Amen Bhutan Tours and Treks**, we pride ourselves on being the premier choice for those looking to embark on a **Buddhist Pilgrimage Tour** in Bhutan. With our deep local expertise and commitment to providing enriching spiritual experiences, we offer tailor-made itineraries that cover the most revered **Buddhist sites in Bhutan**. Our tours are designed to facilitate a profound connection with the ancient traditions of Buddhism, ensuring a journey that is as enlightening as it is unforgettable. Choose **Amen Bhutan Tours and Treks** for an unparalleled **Bhutan spiritual journey** that combines cultural immersion, spiritual growth, and personal reflection, all set against the backdrop of Bhutan's majestic landscapes.

Itinerary

Day 01: ARRIVE PARO BY AIR & TRANSFER TO THIMPHU (55 KMS / 1½ HRS DRIVE)

Arrival in Paro: The tour begins with your arrival at Paro International Airport, which is the only international airport in Bhutan. Paro is known for its scenic beauty and the historic Paro Dzong.

Meet and Greet: Upon exiting the airport, you'll be warmly welcomed by a representative from **Amen Bhutan Tours and Treks**. This representative will help you with your luggage and provide you with an initial briefing about the tour.

Transfer to Thimphu: After the meet and greet, you will be driven to Thimphu, the capital city of Bhutan. The drive covers 55 kilometers and typically takes about 1½ hours. This journey offers beautiful vistas of the Bhutanese landscape along well-maintained roads.

Scenic Route: As you travel from Paro to Thimphu, you'll pass through picturesque landscapes that include the winding Paro Chu (river) and lush green valleys. It's a good opportunity to see some of Bhutan's rich flora and fauna.

Arrival in Thimphu: Upon arriving in Thimphu, you will check into your hotel. Depending on the time of arrival, you might have the afternoon or evening free to relax or explore the city a bit on your own.

Brief Orientation: Either upon arrival at the hotel or during the transfer, you will receive a brief orientation about the rest of your tour, covering essential information, cultural etiquette, and tips to make the most of your pilgrimage.

Day 02: At Thimphu

Breakfast in Thimphu: Start your day with a hearty breakfast at your hotel. Typical breakfast options include both Bhutanese and international cuisine, allowing you to try local dishes such as

Bhutanese red rice porridge or stick to familiar foods like eggs, toast, and cereals.

Morning City Tour: The day begins with a guided city tour of Thimphu, Bhutan's capital and largest city. You will visit key attractions such as:

The National Memorial Chorten: This stupa was built in memory of the third Bhutanese king and is a focus for daily religious activities in the city.

Buddha Dordenma Statue: A massive, 51-meter tall statue of Buddha overlooking the valley, it is one of the largest Buddha rupas in the world, containing thousands of smaller Buddha statues, each also made of bronze and gilded in gold.

Cultural Institutions Visit: Explore important cultural sites such as:

The Folk Heritage Museum: Offering insight into the traditional Bhutanese lifestyle.

The National Textile Museum: Where you can learn about Bhutan's living national art of weaving, displaying a range of beautiful Bhutanese textiles.

Lunch at a Local Restaurant: Enjoy a traditional Bhutanese lunch at a local restaurant. Typical meals might include **Ema Datshi** (chili and cheese), **Phaksha Paa** (pork with spicy red chilies), and **Momos** (dumplings), providing an authentic taste of Bhutanese cuisine.

Afternoon Activities: Continue your exploration of Thimphu with visits to:

Tashichho Dzong: A beautiful fortress that houses the throne room and offices of the King of Bhutan.

Handicrafts Market: Where local artisans sell traditional crafts, textiles, and handmade paper, ideal for souvenirs.

Evening Free Time: The evening is yours to relax or explore Thimphu further. You might choose to stroll through the city, capturing photos or visiting local cafes where you can try Bhutanese snacks and butter tea.

Dinner: Conclude your day with dinner at your hotel, where you can continue to enjoy Bhutanese cuisine or opt for more international fare, depending on your preference.

Day 03: THIMPHU – GANGTEY (150 KMS / 05 HRS DRIVE)

Early Breakfast: Begin your day with an early breakfast at your hotel in Thimphu, enjoying a mix of local and international dishes to prepare you for the journey ahead.

Departure from Thimphu: After breakfast, you'll set off for Gangtey, located in the Phobjikha Valley. This drive covers about 150 kilometers and will take approximately 5 hours, depending on road and weather conditions.

Scenic Drive: The route to Gangtey takes you through some of Bhutan's most beautiful landscapes. You will drive over mountain passes, including the Dochula Pass, which offers stunning panoramic views of the Himalayan range, weather permitting. The pass is also famous for its 108 chortens, built as a memorial by the Queen Mother to honor the Bhutanese soldiers.

Coffee Break at Dochula Pass: Take a short break at Dochula Pass to enjoy the scenery and capture photos of the distant peaks and the chorten-laden landscape. It's a perfect spot to enjoy a warm drink and soak in the tranquility of the high Himalayas.

Continue to Phobjikha Valley: As you descend from the heights of Dochula, you'll enter the Phobjikha Valley, known for its expansive U-shaped glacial valley and as the winter home of the black-necked cranes that migrate from the Tibetan Plateau.

Lunch on the Way: Stop for lunch at a local restaurant along the route, where you can try more Bhutanese specialties or choose familiar international dishes.

Arrival in Gangtey: Upon arrival in Gangtey, check into your hotel. The area is celebrated not only for its natural beauty but also for the Gangtey Monastery, one of Bhutan's oldest and most important Nyingmapa monasteries.

Visit Gangtey Monastery: Depending on the time of your arrival, you may visit the Gangtey Monastery. This provides an excellent opportunity to learn about the spiritual practices of the region and enjoy the serene atmosphere of the monastery.

Evening at Leisure: Spend the evening at leisure in the valley. This might include a light walk around the village or simply relaxing at your hotel, enjoying the views of the valley and the peaceful rural setting.

Dinner at the Hotel: End your day with dinner at your hotel, where you'll have another chance to enjoy the local cuisine in the comfort of your accommodation.

Day 04: GANGTEY – PUNAKHA (75 KMS / 03 HRS DRIVE)

Breakfast in Gangtey: Start your day with a breakfast at your hotel in Gangtey, enjoying a variety of dishes that may include both local and international options.

Morning Exploration of Gangtey: Before departing, take some time to explore the beautiful Phobjikha Valley. This might include a walk through the valley to appreciate its natural beauty and observe the wildlife. The valley is especially famous for being a winter habitat for black-necked cranes.

Departure for Punakha: After your morning in Gangtey, begin the drive to Punakha. This journey covers approximately 75 kilometers and takes about 3 hours. The drive is scenic, with views of the lush landscapes that characterize this region of Bhutan.

Scenic Stops Along the Way: Depending on the route and the weather, you might make a few scenic stops. These could include viewpoints that offer panoramic views of the Himalayan ranges and photo opportunities of the rivers and forests.

Arrival and Lunch in Punakha: Arrive in Punakha around midday and settle into your hotel. Enjoy lunch either at your hotel or at a local restaurant, where you can try Punakha's regional dishes.

Visit Punakha Dzong: In the afternoon, visit the majestic Punakha Dzong, arguably the most beautiful dzong in Bhutan. Situated at the confluence of the Pho Chhu and Mo Chhu rivers, it's a stunning example of Bhutanese architecture and holds great historical significance.

Suspension Bridge: If time permits, you can also walk to the nearby suspension bridge. It's one of the longest in Bhutan and offers picturesque views of the river and dzong—perfect for those memorable photos.

Evening Leisure: Spend the rest of the evening relaxing at your hotel or take a gentle stroll through the local market in Punakha to observe daily life and perhaps pick up some handicrafts.

Dinner in Punakha: Conclude your day with dinner at your hotel, where you'll enjoy another opportunity to delve deeper into the culinary delights of Bhutan.

Day 05: PUNAKHA

Breakfast at the Hotel: Begin your day with a hearty breakfast at your hotel, offering a mix of local and international options to suit every palate.

Morning Activities:

Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten: Start the morning with a hike to the Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten, a stunning temple built on a hill overlooking the valley. The hike provides beautiful views of the surrounding countryside and the structure itself is a fine example of Bhutanese architectural and artistic traditions.

Insight into Bhutanese Spirituality: The chorten is renowned for its intricate religious paintings and statues inside, which are meant to remove negative forces and promote peace, stability, and harmony in the changing world.

Return to Punakha for Lunch: After your hike, return to Punakha for lunch. Enjoy a meal at a local restaurant, trying dishes such as red rice, river weed, and other specialties of the region.

Afternoon Exploration:

Punakha Dzong: If not visited the previous day, or for further exploration, visit Punakha Dzong, the administrative center of Punakha District. Known for its impressive structure and location at the confluence of two major rivers, it's also the winter residence of Bhutan's central monastic body.

Local Village Tour: Engage with local life by visiting a nearby village. This can provide insight into the daily lives and traditional farming practices of the Bhutanese people. It's also a great opportunity to see traditional Bhutanese house construction and local crafts.

Evening Activities:

Leisure Time: Spend some free time relaxing at your hotel, perhaps enjoying the amenities or simply soaking in the tranquil atmosphere of Punakha.

Walking Along the Mo Chhu: For a peaceful evening, take a leisurely walk along the banks of the Mo Chhu river. The riverside offers serene views especially as the sun sets.

Dinner at the Hotel: End your day with dinner at your hotel, reflecting on the experiences of the day and preparing for the continuation of your pilgrimage tour the following day.

Day 06: PUNAKHA – PARO (120 KMS / 4½ HRS DRIVE APPROX)

Breakfast in Punakha: Start your day with a nutritious breakfast at your hotel, enjoying a selection of local and international dishes to energize you for the day ahead.

Departure from Punakha: After breakfast, begin your drive back to Paro. This drive covers about 120 kilometers and typically takes approximately 4½ hours, offering more opportunities to enjoy Bhutan's stunning landscapes.

Scenic Drive: The route back to Paro will take you through Bhutan's picturesque landscapes, including mountain passes and valleys. Enjoy the diverse scenery from lush greenery to rugged mountain vistas.

Stop at Dochula Pass: If weather permits, make a stop at Dochula Pass again. On a clear day, the pass offers a stunning 360-degree panoramic view of the Himalayan mountain range. It's a perfect spot for photography and to enjoy a hot beverage from the local cafe;

Lunch on the Way: Stop for lunch at a local restaurant or cafe; along the way. It's an opportunity to try more Bhutanese cuisine or opt for lighter, international options.

Arrival in Paro: Upon arriving in Paro, check into your hotel and take some time to relax after the drive. Paro, known for its sacred sites and historic buildings, provides a serene atmosphere to rejuvenate.

Explore Paro Town: Depending on the time of arrival and your energy levels, take a leisurely stroll through Paro town. Explore local shops for souvenirs, traditional crafts, and perhaps sample some local snacks.

Visit a Local Farmhouse: If time and interest permit, visiting a traditional Bhutanese farmhouse can provide a unique insight into the local way of life. These visits often include the opportunity to try homemade local products like cheese and butter, and learn about traditional Bhutanese farming and cooking practices.

Dinner in Paro: Enjoy dinner at your hotel in Paro, where you can relax and savor the peaceful ambiance of this charming town.

Day 07: PARO CITY

Breakfast at the Hotel: Begin your day with a hearty breakfast at your hotel, enjoying a mix of local and international options.

Visit to Paro Dzong: Also known as Rinpung Dzong, this is one of Bhutan's most impressive and well-known dzongs. The dzong serves both as a religious and administrative center and offers stunning architectural details and historical artifacts. This is an excellent opportunity to learn about Bhutan's religious history and administrative traditions.

National Museum of Bhutan: Located above the Paro Dzong, this museum is housed in a renovated traditional watchtower and offers a fabulous view of the entire valley. The museum's collection includes Bhutanese art, artifacts, thangka paintings, and Bhutan's exquisite postage stamps. The visit provides insights into the Bhutanese ways of life, as well as the natural and cultural history of the region.

Lunch in Paro Town: Enjoy lunch at one of the local restaurants in Paro, where you can savor traditional Bhutanese dishes such as Ema Datshi and Jasha Maru, or choose from a variety of international cuisines.

Hike to Tiger's Nest Monastery: No visit to Bhutan would be complete without a trek to Taktsang Lhakhang, better known as Tiger's Nest Monastery. Perched dramatically on the side of a vertical cliff at 3,120 meters above sea level, this monastery is a significant pilgrimage site for both Bhutanese and international tourists. The hike takes about 2-3 hours each way and can be quite strenuous, but the spiritual and visual rewards are immense.

Tea Break at the Cafeteria: On your way up to or down from the Tiger's Nest, stop at the cafeteria strategically placed halfway for a rest and a cup of tea while enjoying the spectacular views of the monastery.

Return to Paro: Descend back to Paro, which might take slightly less time than the ascent but can be tough on the knees. It's a good idea to take it slow and enjoy the serene environment.

Relax at Your Hotel: After the hike, spend some time relaxing at your hotel. This could be a perfect time to reflect on the journey to the monastery and the overall spiritual experiences of the trip.

Dinner at the Hotel: Conclude your day with a relaxing dinner at your hotel, where you can continue to enjoy Bhutanese cuisine or opt for something lighter after a strenuous day.

Day 08: DEPART PARO BY AIR

Breakfast at the Hotel: Enjoy one last breakfast in Bhutan, giving you an opportunity to savor the local flavors or opt for familiar international dishes.

Packing and Preparation: Ensure you have all your belongings packed and check out of your hotel. It's a good idea to double-check your room and safe to make sure nothing is left behind.

Airport Transfer: Amen Bhutan Tours and Treks will arrange for your transportation to Paro International Airport. The drive from your hotel to the airport is typically short, but it's recommended to leave well in advance to accommodate any unforeseen delays and to allow ample time for airport security and customs procedures.

Final Souvenirs: If you have some spare time before your flight and haven't finished your souvenir shopping, Paro Airport offers a final chance to buy local crafts, textiles, and other mementos of your journey.

Flight Check-In and Security: Complete your check-in procedures at the airport. Since Paro is a small airport, the process is usually quick and straightforward, but it's always good practice to be early.

Reflections on the Journey: While waiting for your flight, take some time to reflect on your experiences during the pilgrimage. Consider jotting down key moments in your journal or planning how you might share your stories and photos with friends and family back home.

Departure: Board your flight back home or to your next destination, carrying with you the peace, spiritual insights, and beautiful memories of Bhutan.

Cost Details

What's Included

- ✓ Accommodation on twin sharing/Single room according to traveler number
- ✓ Breakfast & dinner at the hotel & lunch at the local restaurants
- ✓ All transfers and sightseeing as per the itinerary
- ✓ English speaking accompanying guide
- ✓ Governmental royalty and taxes
- ✓ Entrances fee
- ✓ 02 water bottle per person per day basis on the vehicle

What's Not Included

- ⊗ Luxury hotel upgrades are available at additional cost.
- ⊗ Travel insurance
- ⊗ Personal expenses such as drinks, postage, and laundry, etc.;
- ⊗ Telephone and internet
- ⊗ Emergency evacuation
- ⊗ Tips and gratuities
- ⊗ Costs arising from unforeseen events
- ⊗ Extra activities like cultural shows, kayaking, etc.

