# Bhutan Photography Tour - 13 Days

Embark on an unforgettable **Bhutan Photography Tour** with Amen Bhutan Tours and Treks, designed to capture the heart and soul of the Dragon Kingdom through your lens. This tour offers **Guided Photography Tours in Bhutan**, allowing you to explore **Best Photo Spots in Bhutan** from majestic fortresses and serene monasteries to vibrant festivals and untouched landscapes. Ideal for both novice and experienced photographers, the tour includes workshops on **Landscape Photography**, **Cultural Photography**, and **Nature Photography**. Whether you're aiming to enhance your photography skills or simply wish to preserve the stunning beauty of Bhutan in photos, this tour provides a comprehensive **Bhutan Photography Itinerary**, ensuring you experience the best of Bhutan in every frame.

Amen Bhutan Tours and Treks is renowned as the premier choice for a **Bhutan Photography Tour**, offering unparalleled expertise and bespoke services that cater to both amateur and professional photographers. Our tours are carefully curated to include the **Best Photo Spots in Bhutan**, ensuring participants capture stunning imagery of Bhutan’s rich cultural heritage and breathtaking landscapes. With expert guides who specialize in **Photography Travel in Bhutan**, we provide insightful workshops and personalized guidance throughout your journey. Our commitment to excellence and our deep understanding of the most photogenic locations make us the best company for your photographic expedition in the mystical Dragon Kingdom.

## Guided Tours by Photography Experts

When you join a **Bhutan Photography Tour** with Amen Bhutan Tours and Treks, guided by photography experts, you can expect a comprehensive and immersive experience tailored to enhance your photographic skills and deepen your appreciation of Bhutan's scenic and cultural beauty. Here’s what these expert-led tours offer:

**Expert Guidance**: Benefit from the expertise of professional photographers who understand both the technical nuances and the art of storytelling through images. They provide hands-on guidance to help you master various photography techniques in real-time.

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**Local Knowledge**: Our experts are also your insider guides to Bhutan’s hidden gems. They know precisely where to find breathtaking landscapes and culturally significant moments, often taking you off the beaten path to explore less known or accessible locations.

**Personalized Attention**: With a focus on small group settings, these tours ensure that you receive personalized feedback and support tailored to your individual skill level and interests. This approach helps you improve your technique much faster and gives you space to ask questions and engage deeply.

**Cultural Insights**: As you travel through Bhutan, your guides will share insights into the local culture and history, enriching your photographic content. Understanding the story behind your subject matter can profoundly impact the depth and emotion conveyed in your photos.

**Feedback and Critique**: Regular critique sessions are part of the journey, providing you with valuable feedback on your work. These sessions help refine your vision and technique, encouraging a thoughtful approach to your photography.

**Inspiration and Creativity**: Surrounded by like-minded individuals and guided by professionals, you'll find yourself inspired to push creative boundaries and explore new perspectives. These tours are designed to ignite your creativity and passion for photography.

Joining our guided tours means stepping into a world where every corner and every moment presents a potential masterpiece, all captured through your lens under the expert guidance of seasoned photographers.

## Diverse Photographic Opportunities

Embarking on the **Bhutan Photography Tour** with Amen Bhutan Tours and Treks provides a unique opportunity to explore and capture a wide array of photographic subjects. This tour is meticulously designed to present diverse photographic opportunities that cater to all interests and skill levels, ensuring participants leave with a rich portfolio of images and experiences. Here’s what you can expect:

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**Landscapes:** **Bhutan’s Landscape Photography** is unparalleled, with its dramatic mountain scenery, serene valleys, and lush forests. Capture the sweeping vistas of the Himalayas, the intricate patterns of terraced rice fields, and the mystical beauty of morning mists enveloping the hills.

**Cultural Scenes:** **Cultural Photography Bhutan** offers a window into the vibrant traditions and daily life of the Bhutanese people. Photograph colorful tsechus (festivals) with dancers in elaborate masks, the quiet moments of monks in prayer, and the intricate details of traditional Bhutanese architecture.

**Architecture:** Bhutan’s unique Dzong architecture provides fascinating subjects for photographers, featuring grand structures that are both monastic and administrative centers. The symmetry, ancient woodwork, and striking fortress-like features against mountain backdrops make for compelling compositions.

**Wildlife and Nature:** For nature lovers, **Wildlife Photography Bhutan** includes tracking rare species like the Black-necked Crane or capturing the biodiversity of Bhutan’s national parks. The country’s commitment to conservation ensures lush wildlife habitats, which are ideal for nature photography.

**Local Life: **Engage with the Bhutanese people and capture the essence of their everyday lives. From bustling market scenes to rural life in the countryside, these images tell stories of tradition, resilience, and the changing face of Bhutan.

**Night Photography: **Bhutan offers clear, unpolluted skies that are perfect for night photography. Capture star trails, the Milky Way, or experiment with long exposures to photograph Bhutan’s iconic landscapes under moonlight.

**Spiritual Moments:** Photographing the spiritual aspect of Bhutanese life can be profoundly moving. Capture moments of meditation, prayer flags fluttering against the sky, and serene monastic retreats that are open to visitors.

**Macro Photography:** For those interested in details, the flora and fauna of Bhutan, including its diverse plant life and intricate cultural artifacts, offer abundant opportunities for macro photography.

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**Panoramic and Aerial Shots:** Using drones or climbing to higher vantage points for panoramic views can offer new perspectives on Bhutan’s stunning landscapes and architectural wonders.

Each of these opportunities not only enhances your skills but also deepens your connection to the subjects you photograph, making the **Bhutan Photography Tour** an enriching journey of discovery and artistic expression.

## Visit Iconic Landmarks

Joining a **Bhutan Photography Tour** with Amen Bhutan Tours and Treks offers the extra-ordinary opportunity to visit and photograph Bhutan's most iconic landmarks. These landmarks are not just stunning visually but are also imbued with deep cultural and historical significance, making them perfect subjects for both professional photographers and enthusiasts alike. Here’s what you can expect to experience:

**Paro Taktsang (Tiger’s Nest Monastery):** Perched dramatically on the side of a cliff, 900 meters above the Paro Valley, Tiger’s Nest is perhaps the most photographed site in Bhutan. The hike to the monastery offers several vantage points for capturing its stunning architecture and the breathtaking views of the surrounding mountains and forests.

**Punakha Dzong: **Known as the Palace of Great Happiness, Punakha Dzong is situated at the confluence of the Pho and Mo Chhu rivers. It is one of the most beautiful and significant dzongs in Bhutan, with its splendid structure and location making for spectacular photographic compositions, especially in spring when the lilac jacaranda trees bloom.

**Thimphu’s Tashichho Dzong: **This impressive fortress serves as the governmental and religious center of Bhutan. With its golden roofs and whitewashed walls, Tashichho Dzong is a magnificent example of Bhutanese architecture and provides numerous opportunities for both daytime and twilight photography.

**Trongsa Dzong: **The largest dzong fortress in Bhutan, Trongsa Dzong is a pivotal part of Bhutanese history. Its strategic position on a steep ridge offers panoramic views of the deep valleys surrounding it, making it a prime subject for landscape and architectural photographers.

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**Dochula Pass:** This mountain pass is famous for its 108 memorial chortens or stupas and offers a panoramic view of the Himalayan range. It’s a significant and scenic spot that provides photographers with awe-inspiring views of the snow-capped mountains, particularly on clear days.

**Rinpung Dzong: **Located in Paro, this fortress is known for its towering walls and is a fine example of Bhutanese architecture and art. The dzong is especially vibrant during the Paro Tshechu, one of the biggest religious festivals in Bhutan.

**Gangtey Valley:** In the heart of the Phobjikha Valley, this vast U-shaped glacial valley is a favorite for nature and wildlife photographers, especially during the winter months when it becomes the roosting ground of the rare Black-necked Cranes.

**The National Memorial Chorten:** Located in Thimphu, this stupa is a prominent landmark in the city, built in memory of the third king of Bhutan. Its richly painted annexes and elaborate mandalas offer unique photographic opportunities.

These landmarks provide not only a visual feast but also a deep insight into the spiritual and historical essence of Bhutan, making your **Bhutan Photography Tour** an unforgettable journey.

## Wildlife Photography

The **Bhutan Photography Tour** offered by Amen Bhutan Tours and Treks includes an exciting component for nature lovers: **Wildlife Photography Bhutan**. Bhutan, with its pristine environments and commitment to conservation, provides a unique opportunity to photograph a diverse array of wildlife in their natural habitats. Here’s what enthusiasts can expect during this tour:

**Rich Biodiversity:** Bhutan is known for its rich biodiversity, which includes over 770 species of birds, 200 species of mammals, and a wide range of endemic plants and insects. This diversity offers endless opportunities for captivating wildlife photography.

**Black-necked Cranes:** One of the highlights is the chance to photograph the elegant Black-necked Cranes in the Phobjikha Valley, especially during the winter months. These birds are revered in Bhutanese culture and seeing them in their natural roosting grounds is a treat for any wildlife photographer.

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**Bengal Tigers and Snow Leopards: **For those interested in larger fauna, Bhutan’s protected parks like Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park offer potential sightings of elusive Bengal Tigers and Snow Leopards. Capturing images of these majestic animals, though challenging, can be the pinnacle of any wildlife photography adventure.

**Diverse Ecosystems: **From the subtropical forests in the south to the alpine zones in the north, Bhutan’s varied ecosystems allow photographers to capture a wide range of flora and fauna. Each zone offers different species and landscapes, enhancing the variety of your photographic collection.

**Ethical Photography Practices:** Amen Bhutan Tours and Treks promotes ethical wildlife photography practices, ensuring that the natural behavior of animals is not disturbed. This commitment not only helps preserve Bhutan’s wildlife but also educates photographers on responsible photography.

**Guided Expeditions: **Guided tours into the more remote areas are led by knowledgeable local guides who understand animal behavior and tracking. This expertise increases the likelihood of witnessing and capturing spectacular wildlife moments.

**Photographic Workshops: **The tour often includes workshops focused on wildlife photography techniques, such as the use of camouflage, understanding light in outdoor settings, and the best practices for capturing fast-moving subjects.

**Seasonal Variations:** Participants are advised on the best times to visit for optimal wildlife photography. For instance, the spring and autumn months are particularly good for bird watching, while the colder months might offer better opportunities to photograph migratory species.

The **Bhutan Photography Tour** combines these elements to provide a comprehensive and thrilling wildlife photography experience, making it a must-do for photographers passionate about nature and conservation.

## Scenic Drives and Hikes

The **Bhutan Photography Tour** by Amen Bhutan Tours and Treks isn't just about capturing stunning images; it's about the journey to each destination through **Scenic Drives and**

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**Hikes** that offer their own array of visual delights and photographic opportunities. Whether winding through the mountains or trekking to remote locations, these drives and hikes are integral parts of the experience, allowing you to immerse yourself in Bhutan's natural beauty.

## Scenic Drives

**Bhutan's roadways** offer some of the most beautiful drives in the world. They wind through mountains and valleys, offering dramatic views that are perfect for landscape photography:

**Paro to Thimphu**: This drive takes you along the banks of the Paro and Thimphu rivers, with excellent opportunities to photograph riverside communities and lush woodland.

**Thimphu to Punakha**: Crossing the Dochula Pass, this drive provides panoramic views of the Himalayan range, making it a perfect spot for wide-angle shots.

**Bumthang to Mongar**: Known as one of the most picturesque drives, it features steep cliffs and deep gorges, with the road snaking through dense forests and past traditional farmhouses.

## Hikes

**Hiking in Bhutan** is a photographer's dream. Each trail leads to breathtaking landscapes and close encounters with traditional Bhutanese life:

**Tiger’s Nest Monastery Hike**: The hike to Paro Taktsang is filled with scenic views of the monastery and surrounding valleys, with the final destination being one of Bhutan’s most iconic images.

**Gangtey Valley Trail**: This relatively easy hike through the beautiful Phobjikha Valley offers stunning views of the glacial valley and opportunities to photograph the rare Black-necked Cranes during their winter migration.

**Druk Path Trek**: Connecting Paro and Thimphu, this trek passes through a stunning landscape of thick alpine forests, high ridges, and pristine lakes, providing varied scenes for dynamic compositions.

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## Photographic Opportunities

These drives and hikes offer diverse photographic opportunities:

**Landscapes**: Capture vast horizons, intricate natural patterns, and dramatic interplays of light and shadow.

**Wildlife**: Keep an eye out for wildlife like the Bhutanese Takin on higher altitudes or the elusive snow leopard during specific seasons.

**Cultural Interactions**: Meeting local people during these travels provides insights into the Bhutanese way of life, offering chances for poignant cultural portraits and storytelling through images.

**Architectural Elements**: Ancient dzongs, temples, and bridges seen along these routes present architectural photography opportunities, each with a backdrop of stunning natural beauty.

## Planning for Photography

When planning scenic drives and hikes for photography, consider the following tips:

**Time of Day**: Early morning or late afternoon drives offer the best light for photography.

**Weather Conditions**: Be prepared for sudden weather changes, which can offer dramatic photographic conditions.

**Equipment**: Bring appropriate gear, including sturdy tripods and various lenses, to capture both landscapes and detailed shots.

With Amen Bhutan Tours and Treks, every turn in the road and every step on the trail is an opportunity to discover and document the breathtaking beauty of Bhutan, making **Scenic Drives and Hikes** an essential part of the Bhutan Photography Tour experience.

## Cultural Immersion

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The **Bhutan Photography Tour** provided by Amen Bhutan Tours and Treks goes beyond mere sightseeing to offer a deep **Cultural Immersion** into the heart of Bhutanese life. This experience allows photographers not only to capture stunning images but also to connect on a personal level with the traditions and everyday practices of Bhutan's people. Here's how participants can expect to engage deeply with Bhutan's rich cultural heritage:

**Participating in Local Festivals:** One of the most vibrant aspects of Bhutanese culture is its festivals. Tours are often timed to coincide with these events, such as the famous Paro Tshechu or Thimphu Tshechu, which are high-spirited affairs with colorful mask dances and cultural performances. Photographers have the opportunity to capture the elaborate costumes and expressive dances that are integral to these celebrations.

**Visits to Sacred Sites:** Bhutan is dotted with numerous monasteries, temples, and dzongs, each with its own history and significance. Visiting these sites provides insights into the spiritual practices that are a cornerstone of Bhutanese life. Photography tours include guided visits where monks often share insights about their practices and the history of their institutions.

**Interaction with Local Artisans:** Bhutan is known for its artisanal skills, including weaving, painting, and sculpture. Participants can visit artisan workshops or village homes where these crafts are practiced. Such visits not only support local artisans but also provide a glimpse into the meticulous artistry that goes into making traditional Bhutanese textiles and crafts.

**Culinary Experiences:** Food is a significant aspect of any culture, and Bhutanese cuisine is no exception. From tasting Ema Datshi (a spicy dish of chillies and cheese) to enjoying Ara (a local spirit), participants can delve into local flavors. Cooking classes may also be arranged, providing a hands-on experience with Bhutanese culinary traditions.

**Home Stays and Village Visits:** For a more immersive experience, some photography tours arrange stays in local homes or visits to remote villages. This allows participants to witness and document daily life in Bhutan, from farming practices to family gatherings, providing a more nuanced perspective of the country.

**Language and Etiquette Learning:** Understanding the basics of the local language and familiarizing oneself with Bhutanese etiquette can enhance interactions with locals and make the cultural

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exchange more meaningful. Brief sessions on language and customs can be part of the tour, aiding photographers in engaging more respectfully and effectively with their subjects.

**Environmental and Social Responsibility: **Amen Bhutan Tours and Treks emphasizes sustainable travel practices that respect the local environment and culture. Participants are encouraged to engage in ways that are mindful and considerate, ensuring that their photographic activities do not disrupt the local community or environment.

This deep **Cultural Immersion** not only enriches the photographic journey but also ensures that participants leave Bhutan with a profound understanding and respect for its people and traditions, capturing images that are as meaningful as they are beautiful.

The **Bhutan Photography Tour** provided by Amen Bhutan Tours and Treks is more than just a photographic journey; it is an immersive experience that marries the art of photography with the profound beauty and rich culture of Bhutan. Each aspect of the tour, from the scenic drives through majestic landscapes to the intimate cultural interactions and meticulous guided sessions, is designed to enrich your skills and deepen your appreciation of this mystical kingdom. Whether capturing the ethereal beauty of Bhutanese festivals, the intricate details of monastic life, or the untouched natural landscapes, participants will find themselves engaged in a truly transformative experience. Join us to explore, learn, and photograph, as each image you take becomes a testament to the unique spirit of Bhutan, making every moment on this tour an unforgettable story in your photographic odyssey.

# Itinerary

### Day 01: Arrive Paro Drive to Thimphu (2250m)

**Arrival at Paro International Airport**: Land in the heart of the Himalayas, where you'll be welcomed by the breathtaking views and your tour guide from Amen Bhutan Tours and Treks.

**Warm Welcome**: Receive a traditional Bhutanese greeting from our representative who will assist you with all formalities and provide an introduction to the culture and itinerary.

**Scenic Drive to Thimphu**: Depart for Thimphu in a comfortable vehicle. This 50-kilometer drive takes approximately one hour and offers your first glimpse into Bhutan’s scenic landscapes and unique architecture.

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**Introduction to Thimphu**: Thimphu is a fascinating blend of tradition and modernity, featuring unique aspects such as its status as the world’s only capital without traffic lights. The city is nestled at an altitude of 2,250 meters, providing a mild, pleasant climate.

**Hotel Check-in**: Settle into your hotel, relax, and acclimatize to the altitude. You will have time to freshen up and take a short rest after your journey.

**Exploration and Photography**: If you’re eager to start capturing memories right away, take a leisurely walk around Thimphu to photograph the local life and environment. The city offers a mix of traditional and modern motifs that make for compelling subjects.

**Welcome Dinner**: Enjoy a welcome dinner where you can taste local Bhutanese dishes, a great opportunity to mingle with your tour companions and discuss the exciting days ahead.

## Day 02: Thimphu – Trongsa (2200m)

**Early Start**: We begin our day early to make the most of the daylight hours. After a hearty breakfast at your hotel, we'll depart Thimphu.

**Scenic Drive**: The drive to Trongsa is one of the most picturesque journeys in Bhutan, covering a distance of approximately 129 kilometers. It takes around 5 to 6 hours, depending on weather and road conditions.

**Photography Stops**: We will make several stops along the way for you to capture images of the stunning landscapes. One of the highlights includes the Dochula Pass, where on a clear day, you can enjoy panoramic views of the Himalayan mountain range, including Bhutan’s highest mountain, Gangkar Puensum.

**Visit Chendebji Chorten**: En route, stop at the Chendebji Chorten, a large Buddhist stupa situated in a picturesque spot by a river. This stupa is patterned on Kathmandu’s Swayambhunath Stupa, with eyes painted at the four cardinal points.

**Arrival in Trongsa**: Upon arrival in Trongsa, check into your hotel. Trongsa is known for its impressive dzong, which is the largest in Bhutan and strategically located above the Mangde River.

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**Exploring Trongsa**: Depending on our time of arrival and how the group feels, we may begin exploring some of Trongsa's highlights, including the Trongsa Dzong itself, a key administrative building and monastery, which also offers more exceptional photography opportunities.

**Rest and Dinner**: After a day of travel and photography, enjoy some rest at your hotel followed by dinner. This will also be a good time to review your photos from the day with guidance from your tour leader, who can offer tips on how to capture even more stunning images in the days to come.

## Day 03: Trongsa - Mongar(1700m)

**Morning Start**: After enjoying a nourishing breakfast at your hotel, prepare for an early departure. The journey from Trongsa to Mongar is about 198 kilometers and takes approximately 6 to 7 hours, traveling through some breathtaking mountainous terrain.

**Scenic Drive**: The drive to Mongar is known for its scenic beauty. You’ll pass through dense forests and over high mountain passes, offering expansive views and excellent opportunities for landscape photography. The route includes one of Bhutan’s most picturesque roads, with sharp bends and stunning vistas at every turn.

**Thrumshing La Pass**: One of the highlights of today's journey is crossing the Thrumshing La Pass, which at 3,780 meters is one of the highest passes accessible by vehicle in Bhutan. The area around the pass is beautiful, often draped in mists and clouds, providing a mystical backdrop for photography.

**Lunch Stop**: We'll stop for lunch at a local restaurant along the way, where you can try some regional specialties. It's also a great opportunity to capture the rural lifestyle of central Bhutan through your lens.

**Arrival in Mongar**: Upon arrival in Mongar, check into your hotel. Mongar marks the beginning of eastern Bhutan, which is known for its distinct dialects, traditions, and scenic beauty.

**Exploring Mongar**: If time permits, take a short walk around Mongar town in the evening. The town offers a less touristy experience and showcases an authentic slice of life in eastern Bhutan.

**Rest and Refresh**: After a day of travel and exploration, relax and refresh at your hotel, followed by dinner. This is also an excellent time to backup and review your photographs, taking note of any adjustments you might want to apply in future shoots.

## Day 04: Mongar – Galing

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**Breakfast in Mongar**: Start your day with a hearty breakfast at your hotel in Mongar. Enjoy local Bhutanese cuisine that will energize you for the day ahead.

**Departure from Mongar**: After breakfast, we'll set off for Galing. The drive is relatively short compared to previous days, allowing more time for stops and photography along the way.

**Scenic Drive and Photography Stops**: The route to Galing takes you through beautifully diverse landscapes. The road winds through agricultural fields and past traditional Bhutanese farmhouses. Keep your camera ready for impromptu stops to capture the stunning vistas and perhaps some wildlife sightings.

**Visit Galing Village**: Galing is a quaint and picturesque village, known for its serene environment and beautiful views of the surrounding countryside. Here, you’ll have the opportunity to interact with local villagers and learn about their daily lives, providing a perfect backdrop for engaging and authentic cultural photography.

**Lunch in Galing**: Enjoy a traditional lunch possibly prepared by a local family. This is not just a meal but an experience, as you learn about the ingredients and techniques used in Bhutanese cooking.

**Exploration and Photography in Galing**: Spend the afternoon exploring Galing. You can visit local homes, photograph the architecture, and enjoy the landscapes. The pace of life here is slow and offers a stark contrast to the more tourist-centric locations.

**Nature Walks**: Depending on the group's interest, take a nature walk around the village. The area is lush and green, ideal for practicing landscape and macro photography.

**Sunset Photography**: Capture the sunset over the hills, which provides magical lighting and a peaceful end to the day's shooting.

**Dinner and Overnight Stay**: Return to your accommodations in Galing or nearby for dinner. This is a great time to share experiences with fellow travelers and discuss the day's captures.

**Review and Relax**: After dinner, you might want to spend some time reviewing your photographs, backing up your data, and preparing gear for the next day.

## Day 05: Trashiyangtse Excursions

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**Breakfast and Early Start**: Begin with an early breakfast at your accommodation in or near Galing. Starting early will help you make the most of the daylight hours for photography and exploration in Trashiyangtse.

**Drive to Trashiyangtse**: Enjoy a scenic drive to Trashiyangtse. The journey itself is picturesque, with opportunities to stop along the way to capture photos of the changing landscapes and rural life.

**Visit Trashiyangtse Dzong**: One of your first stops will be the Trashiyangtse Dzong, a significant and beautiful fortress that serves both as a monastic and administrative center. It's a great place to capture architectural details and vibrant daily activities of monks.

**Chorten Kora**: Visit the Chorten Kora, one of the most important stupas in eastern Bhutan, modeled after the famous Boudhanath stupa in Kathmandu. The site offers excellent opportunities for both architectural and people photography, especially when locals circumambulate the stupa in devotion.

**Artisan Workshops**: Trashiyangtse is renowned for its traditional Bhutanese arts and crafts. Visit local artisan workshops where you can photograph craftsmen at work, creating intricate wooden bowls, paper products, and other crafts. This is also a perfect chance to pick up unique souvenirs.

**Lunch in Local Setting**: Enjoy lunch in a local restaurant or perhaps a picnic if the weather permits. This will give you a taste of the local cuisine and a break before you continue your explorations.

**Nature Walks and Wildlife Photography**: Depending on the group’s interest, you may take a guided nature walk. Trashiyangtse is known for its rich biodiversity, including numerous bird species, making it a wonderful spot for nature and wildlife photography.

**Cultural Interaction and Portrait Opportunities**: Engage with the local people, who are often friendly and open to being photographed. This interaction not only enriches your travel experience but also adds depth to your photographic portfolio with authentic portraits.

**Return to Accommodation**: After a full day of exploration and photography, return to your accommodation to rest and refresh.

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**Dinner and Photo Review**: Enjoy a group dinner where you can discuss the day's experiences. This is also a great time to review your photos with fellow photographers and receive feedback, which is invaluable for improving your skills.

**Prepare for the Next Day**: Recharge your batteries, both metaphorically and literally, and prepare your gear for the next day's adventures.

## Day 06: Trashigang – Bumthang(2800m)

**Breakfast and Early Departure**: Begin your day with an early breakfast at your accommodation in Trashigang. Given the long drive ahead, it's important to start early to maximize daylight for sightseeing and photography.

**Scenic Drive to Bumthang**: The drive to Bumthang is long but incredibly scenic, covering diverse landscapes. It typically takes about 6 to 7 hours, depending on road conditions and stops along the way.

**Photography Stops**: The route traverses through several high mountain passes, offering stunning panoramic views. Notable stops include Thrumshing La, one of Bhutan's highest drivable passes, which provides spectacular views and photo opportunities of the surrounding valleys and snow-capped peaks.

**Lunch En Route**: Enjoy lunch at one of the local restaurants or picnic spots along the way. This break will also serve as an opportunity to capture some candid shots of local life and landscapes.

**Arrival in Bumthang**: Upon arriving in Bumthang, check into your hotel. Bumthang is often considered the spiritual heartland of Bhutan, with several ancient temples and monasteries.

**Evening Exploration**: Depending on the time of arrival, take a gentle walk around Bumthang’s town center. The area is known for its beautiful traditional Bhutanese architecture and handicraft shops, offering more relaxed photographic opportunities.

**Dinner in Bumthang**: After settling in, enjoy a local dinner at your hotel or a nearby restaurant. Bumthang is known for its unique culinary specialties, such as putka (mushrooms) and khuli (buckwheat pancakes).

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**Briefing for the Next Day**: Over dinner, discuss the next day’s itinerary, which will explore Bumthang’s rich array of cultural and historical sites. This briefing will help you prepare your gear and expectations for the photography sessions ahead.

**Rest and Recharge**: After dinner, take the time to back up your photos, recharge batteries, and rest well to be ready for another day full of activities and photography.

## Day 07: Bumthang sightseeing

**Early Breakfast**: Start your day with an early breakfast at your hotel. Bumthang is known for its serene mornings, and getting an early start can help you capture the soft morning light which is perfect for photography.

**Jakar Dzong**: Begin your sightseeing with a visit to Jakar Dzong, the "castle of the white bird," strategically located on a ridge above Jakar town. The dzong provides panoramic views of the Chokhor Valley and is a fantastic subject for architectural and landscape photography.

**Kurje Lhakhang**: Next, visit Kurje Lhakhang, one of the most sacred monasteries in Bhutan, comprising three temples. The temples are surrounded by 108 chorten walls and are associated with Guru Rinpoche’s subjugation of a local demon. Capture the intricate details and the spiritual ambiance of this historic site.

**Tamshing Lhakhang**: Continue to Tamshing Lhakhang, located across the river from Kurje Lhakhang. Founded in the 16th century by Terton Pema Lingpa, the monastery houses ancient religious paintings and thangkas. It’s an excellent spot for those interested in Bhutanese religious art and architecture.

**Lunch at a Local Restaurant**: Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant, trying out Bumthang’s unique dishes such as buckwheat noodles or pancakes.

**Bumthang Valley Exploration**: In the afternoon, explore the valley’s beautiful landscapes. Visit the Red Panda Brewery and Cheese Factory, where you can photograph the production processes and taste local cheese and beer.

**Burning Lake (Mebar Tsho)**: Towards the late afternoon, visit the Burning Lake, a sacred site where Terton Pema Lingpa discovered several of Guru Rinpoche’s hidden treasures. The lake offers a tranquil setting for photography, especially with its reflections and surrounding natural scenery.

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**Evening Free Time**: Return to your hotel in Bumthang. Use the evening to review your photographs, recharge your batteries, and relax.

**Dinner and Cultural Show**: Enjoy dinner at your hotel, followed by a cultural show featuring traditional Bhutanese music and dance, providing another great photographic opportunity.

## Day 08: Bumthang to Punakha

**Early Morning Breakfast**: Enjoy an early breakfast at your hotel in Bumthang. Starting early will help you make the most of the day, especially considering the scenic drive ahead.

**Departure from Bumthang**: Set out for Punakha early in the morning. The drive is approximately 6-7 hours, covering around 215 kilometers. Though lengthy, the drive is incredibly scenic, passing through diverse landscapes that showcase the geographical beauty of Bhutan.

**Pele La Pass**: Along the way, you'll cross the Pele La Pass, which marks the boundary between central and western Bhutan. At an altitude of 3,300 meters, it offers panoramic views of the surrounding mountains, including Mount Jomolhari. The pass is a great spot for high-altitude landscape photography.

**Photography Stops**: Make several stops along the drive to capture images of the ever-changing terrain, from alpine meadows to lush valleys. The route provides ample opportunities to photograph rural life and natural beauty.

**Lunch En Route**: Enjoy lunch at one of the local restaurants or roadside eateries. This break will also give you the chance to stretch your legs and capture some candid shots of local interactions.

**Chimi Lhakhang Visit**: As you approach Punakha, visit Chimi Lhakhang, also known as the Fertility Temple. Situated on a round hillock, this temple is known for its humorous yet revered fertility blessings. The walk through the fields to the temple also offers unique photo opportunities of the rural landscape and daily life.

**Arrival in Punakha**: Arrive in Punakha and check into your hotel. Rest for a bit after the long journey.

**Evening Exploration**: If time and energy permit, take a gentle evening walk around Punakha town. The area near the Punakha Dzong, especially around the Mo Chhu and Pho Chhu rivers, provides spectacular sunset photography scenes.

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**Dinner at the Hotel**: Enjoy a quiet dinner at your hotel, where you can discuss the day’s journey and prepare for the next day’s adventures.

**Review and Prepare**: Spend some time in the evening reviewing the photographs taken during the day. It's also a good time to prepare your camera gear for the next day’s exploration of Punakha’s iconic sights.

## Day 09: Punakha – Thimphu (2350m)

**Breakfast in Punakha**: Start with an early breakfast at your hotel in Punakha. This will fuel a day rich with activities and travel.

**Punakha Dzong Visit**: Begin your morning with a visit to Punakha Dzong, arguably one of the most beautiful dzongs in Bhutan. Located at the confluence of the Pho Chhu and Mo Chhu rivers, the dzong serves as a stunning subject for photography with its impressive architecture and vibrant morning light.

**Suspension Bridge**: After exploring the dzong, take a short walk to visit the nearby suspension bridge, one of the longest in Bhutan. The bridge offers panoramic views of the river and valley and is an excellent spot for landscape and dynamic human-interest photography.

**Drive to Thimphu**: Depart from Punakha and head towards Thimphu. The drive takes about 2-3 hours and is scenic, with several stops possible along the way for capturing the landscapes.

**Lunch En Route**: Stop for lunch at a local restaurant where you can also capture some candid shots of everyday Bhutanese life.

**Dochula Pass**: On your way back to Thimphu, make a stop at Dochula Pass, if the weather permits. The pass offers a 360-degree panoramic view of the Himalayan mountain range and is famous for its 108 chortens and the Druk Wangyal Lhakhang (temple).

**Arrival in Thimphu**: Arrive back in Thimphu in the afternoon. Check into your hotel and take some time to relax or explore more of the city at your own pace.

**Thimphu Evening Walk**: In the evening, consider taking a leisurely walk through Thimphu's market area. It’s a great chance to engage in street photography, capturing the hustle and bustle of urban Bhutanese life.

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**Dinner in Thimphu**: Enjoy dinner at one of Thimphu’s restaurants, offering both local and international cuisines. It's a good time to taste different dishes and capture some food photography.

**Review and Discuss**: End your day by reviewing photos with fellow travelers or your tour guide, discussing techniques and compositions that could be used in the upcoming days.

## Day 10: Thimphu Sightseeing

**Breakfast at Hotel**: Start your day with a hearty breakfast at your hotel in Thimphu, preparing you for a full day of exploration and photography.

**National Memorial Chorten**: Your first stop will be the National Memorial Chorten, a prominent landmark in Thimphu. This stupa was built in memory of the third king of Bhutan and is a focal point for daily religious activities. Photograph the intricate murals and sculptures that adorn this beautiful structure.

**Buddha Dordenma Statue**: Visit the Buddha Dordenma, a gigantic Shakyamuni Buddha statue in the mountains of Bhutan overlooking the Thimphu Valley. The site offers panoramic views of the capital city and is an excellent location for both landscape and architectural photography.

**Folk Heritage Museum**: Explore the Folk Heritage Museum, which provides insights into traditional Bhutanese lifestyle, agricultural practices, and historical artifacts. The rustic architecture and the recreated traditional household settings offer unique photo opportunities.

**Lunch at a Local Café**: Enjoy a leisurely lunch at one of Thimphu’s local cafés, giving you a taste of urban Bhutanese cuisine.

**Textile Museum**: After lunch, visit the Textile Museum to learn about Bhutan’s rich weaving traditions. The museum displays a range of Bhutanese textiles and patterns that are significant to the culture and history of the country.

**Craft Bazaar**: Walk through the Craft Bazaar where local artisans display and sell their crafts. It's a great place to capture the vibrant and dynamic atmosphere of Thimphu’s craft scene, and perhaps pick up some handmade souvenirs.

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**Tashichho Dzong**: Towards the evening, visit Tashichho Dzong, a fortress that houses the throne room and offices of the King of Bhutan, as well as the central monk body. The Dzong's majestic structure and its significance as the political and religious center of Bhutan make it a must-photograph site.

**Dinner in Thimphu**: Conclude your day with dinner at a local restaurant, enjoying another chance to delve into the culinary delights of Bhutan.

**Night Photography**: If energy permits, engage in some night photography around Thimphu, capturing the city lights or the starry sky over the valley.

## Day 11: Thimphu – Paro sightseeing

**Breakfast in Thimphu**: Begin your day with a hearty breakfast at your hotel in Thimphu, preparing for the day’s journey and exploration.

**Departure from Thimphu**: After breakfast, depart for Paro. The drive takes approximately 1 hour, covering about 50 kilometers. This short journey offers scenic views and, depending on the season, beautiful roadside flora.

**Visit to Simtokha Dzong**: En route to Paro, stop at Simtokha Dzong, one of the oldest fortresses in Bhutan, dating back to 1629. It now serves as a school for language and cultural studies. The dzong is a fine example of traditional architecture and offers a quiet spot for photography away from the more crowded sites.

**Arrival in Paro**: Once in Paro, begin your sightseeing tour with a visit to Rinpung Dzong, also known as Paro Dzong. This large dzong is a striking example of Bhutanese architecture and a vital administrative and religious center.

**Ta Dzong - National Museum**: Visit Ta Dzong, originally built as a watchtower and now housing the National Museum. The museum’s circular shape provides unique photographic angles, and its collection offers insights into Bhutanese culture and history.

**Lunch in Paro**: Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant in Paro, where you can sample traditional Bhutanese dishes.

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**Kyichu Lhakhang**: After lunch, visit Kyichu Lhakhang, one of the oldest and most sacred temples in Bhutan. The temple is believed to be one of the 108 temples built by the Tibetan King Songtsen Gampo in the 7th century to subdue a demoness.

**Paro Town Exploration**: Spend the afternoon exploring Paro town. The main street is lined with colorful shops, traditional houses, and cafes. It's a great place for street photography and to interact with locals.

**Dinner in Paro**: Return to your hotel in Paro for dinner. This is a good time to review your photographs from Thimphu and today’s journey.

**Preparation for Tiger’s Nest Hike**: Since the following day includes the hike to Tiger’s Nest Monastery, ensure you prepare your gear and rest well. Review and adjust your equipment for an early start.

## Day 12: Excursion to Tiger's Nest Monastery (3120m) Hike duration: approx. 6-7 hours round trip)

**Early Morning Breakfast**: Begin with an early breakfast at your hotel in Paro to fuel up for the hike. Starting early not only helps to avoid the crowds but also captures the golden light of sunrise, which offers magnificent photographic opportunities.

**Drive to Trailhead**: A short drive from Paro town takes you to the base of Tiger's Nest. The base is the starting point of the hike, where you can prepare your camera gear and hydration packs.

**Hike to Tiger's Nest**: The hike to Tiger’s Nest Monastery is challenging but incredibly rewarding. The trail winds through beautiful pine forests adorned with Spanish moss and colorful prayer flags. Remember to take breaks not only to rest but also to capture the stunning views of the valley below.

**Photography at Viewpoints**: There are several viewpoints along the trail that provide perfect opportunities to photograph the monastery perched on the cliffside. As you get closer, the details of Tiger’s Nest’s impressive architecture and its dramatic setting become clearer.

**Visit Tiger’s Nest Monastery**: Upon reaching the monastery, explore its sacred shrines and temples. Photography inside the main temples is restricted, but the exteriors and views from the monastery offer ample photographic material. The serene ambiance and architectural beauty make for unforgettable photos.

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**Lunch at the Cafeteria**: On your way back, stop at the cafeteria which is roughly halfway down the trail. Use this time to rest and refuel while enjoying the views of Tiger’s Nest from a different perspective.

**Return Hike**: Descend back to the trailhead. The return hike is usually faster but can be hard on the knees; take it slow and steady.

**Drive Back to Hotel**: Once back at the base, drive back to your hotel in Paro. This is a good time to relax and rejuvenate after the strenuous hike.

**Dinner and Relaxation**: Enjoy a well-deserved dinner at your hotel. This is also a great opportunity to share experiences and photographs with your fellow travelers.

**Photo Review Session**: Spend some time reviewing and editing the day’s photographs. The images captured at Tiger’s Nest are often some of the most memorable of any trip to Bhutan.

## Day 13: Departure

**Breakfast at Hotel**: Enjoy your last breakfast in Bhutan at your hotel. It’s a good time to reflect on your journey and the experiences you've had.

**Packing and Preparations**: After breakfast, finalize your packing. Ensure you have all your belongings, especially any photographic equipment and souvenirs you’ve acquired during the trip. Double-check that you've left nothing behind.

**Check-out**: Complete the check-out procedures at your hotel. Depending on your flight time, your tour guide from Amen Bhutan Tours and Treks will advise you on the best time to leave for the airport.

**Farewell at Paro International Airport**: Your guide will accompany you to Paro International Airport. Take the time to say goodbye to your guide and the friends you’ve made during the tour. Your guide will assist you with any final arrangements, ensuring a smooth departure process.

**Flight Departure**: Proceed through airport security to board your flight. As you wait for your departure, browse through your photographs or jot down notes in your travel journal, reliving the moments of your adventure.

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**Reflection on the Journey**: Use the flight time to reflect on the experiences you've had in Bhutan. Think about the landscapes, the people, and the culture you’ve captured through your lens. Consider how you can share these stories and images with others, perhaps through a blog, photo exhibition, or a presentation.

**Planning Next Steps**: If you’re inspired by your travels in Bhutan, start thinking about your next photography adventure. Bhutan often leaves visitors longing to explore more, whether it's another region of Bhutan or another country with a rich cultural tapestry.

# Cost Details

## What's Included

- **Accommodations:** Comfortable lodging throughout the trek, including hotels in Paro and Thimphu.
- **Meals:** All meals throughout the trek, including local delicacies and provisions for dietary restrictions.
- **Transport:** All internal transport, including transfers to and from the airport.
- **Guides:** Experienced and knowledgeable guides fluent in English, dedicated to providing a safe and informative trekking experience.
- **Permits:** All necessary trekking and entry permits.
- **Support Staff:** Additional support staff, including porters and cooks, to enhance your trekking experience.
- **Equipment:** Provision of essential trekking equipment like sleeping bags, tents, and mats.

## What's Not Included

- **International Airfare:** Flights to and from Bhutan are not included in the trek cost. Participants need to book their international air travel separately.
- **Travel Insurance:** It is highly recommended that all trekkers have comprehensive travel insurance that covers medical evacuation, as the trek involves high altitudes and remote locations.

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- **Personal Expenses:** Expenses such as laundry, telephone calls, bar bills, and Wi-Fi services are not covered. Participants should plan their budgets accordingly.
- **Additional Meals and Drinks:** While all scheduled meals are provided, any extra meals outside of the itinerary, alcoholic beverages, and bottled drinks are not included.
- **Tips for Guides and Staff:** Gratuity for the trekking staff and guides is not included and is left to the discretion of the participants.
- **Emergency Evacuations:** Costs incurred due to emergency evacuation or alterations to the itinerary for health or personal reasons are not included.
- **Visa Fees:** Bhutan visa fees are not included. However, **Amen Bhutan Tours and Treks** will assist participants in the visa application process.
- **Equipment Rental:** Any specialized personal trekking equipment, other than the basic provisions (sleeping bags, tents, and mats), must be brought by the participants or rented at an additional cost.
- **Souvenirs and Handicrafts:** Purchases of local handicrafts and souvenirs are the responsibility of the participants.

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