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Valley Of Bhutan

Duration: 11N/12D

Key Sights: Kolkata - Paro - Thimpu - Punakha – Trongsa - Bumthang - Paro - Kolkata

Day	Program	Mode
Day 1	Arrived Kolkata	By Flight
Day 2	Kolkata	
Day 3	Kolkata – Paro	By Flight
Day 4	Paro – Thimpu	By Surface
Day 5	Thimpu – Punakha	By Surface
Day 6	Punakha – Trongsa	By Surface
Day 7	Trongsa – Jakar (Bumthang)	By Surface
Day 8	Jakar (Bumthang)	
Day 9	Jakar – Phobjika Valley	By Surface
Day 10	Phobjika Valley	
Day 11	Phobjika Valley – Paro	By Surface
Day 12	Paro – Kolkata	By Flight



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Day 1

Arrived Kolkata

By Flight

You will be met on arrival and transferred to hotel. Overnight stay at Hotel.

Day 2

Kolkata

Breakfast at hotel. This morning proceed for the full day city tour - Visit the colourful and bustling flower and vegetable market followed by a boat ride down the Hooghly river. Later continue the tour and visit old Calcutta. This square has many old historic buildings, to name a few - Silver Mint (1824-31) built in Greek style is presently in a dilapidated condition, The Writers Building - designed by Thomas Lyon as a trading house for East India Company in 1780 has 57 sets of identical windows on 3 storeys built like a barrack inside. The Old Mission Church, built by Swedish missionary Johann Kiernander was consecrated in 1770, General Post Office designed by Walter Granville in 1868 has a white dome and Corinthian pillars, The Raj Bhawan, once a residence of British Governors-General and Viceroys, it is now the home of Governor of West Bengal, next to it is the most important Gothic building of Kolkata - the Calcutta High Court, built in 1872.

The Mother Teresa's Home - Mother Teresa came as a Loreto Sister in 1931 to teach in a local school in Kolkata and 19 years later with Pope's permission started her Order of the Missionaries of Charity to serve the destitute. The Nuns of this order always work in pairs and the mission has many Homes, Clinics and Orphanages. Nirmal Hriday (pure heart) was opened in 1952 for the dying among the poorest.

The Pareshnath Jain Temple is an ornate Digambar Jain temple built in central Indian Style in 1867 by a jeweller. The interior is richly decorated in European baroque and Italianate styles with mirrors and Venetian glass mosaics. The gardens have formal geometric flower beds. Belur Math was founded in 1899 by Swami Vivekanand, a disciple of Saint Ramakrishna. It is presently the international headquarters of Ramakrishna Mission and preaches the unity of all religions. Symbolizing the belief of "Math" (monastery) it has Hindu, Christian and Islamic style of architecture.

Later visit the Victoria Memorial - a gift by Lord Curzon to Queen Victoria in honor of her commemoration and as a symbol of her Indian Empire. It has been designed in Italian Renaissance -Mughal style and built in White Marble in 1921 and has many galleries with over 3000 exhibits. At the entrance it has an impressive 'weather vane' in form of a 5mt tall bronze figure of Victory, weighing over 3 tons. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 3

Kolkata – Paro

By Flight

Breakfast at hotel and later check-out, in-time transfer to airport to flight for Paro. You will experience breathtaking views of the Himalayan ranges. After your arrival in Paro, you will be welcomed by our representative at the airport and then transferred to your hotel. Check-in at hotel.

Remaining day will be at leisure, free to rest or walk around Paro (7,380 ft.) and savor the feeling of a country that seems to be existing in an earlier century. From the dress of the



people to the traditional architecture, you know you are in a different kind of place than exists anywhere else on earth. You will be amazed at the fresh, clean air and peaceful environment. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 4

Paro – Thimpu

By Surface

After breakfast, visit Ta Dzong, an ancient citadel housing the National Museum. This interesting building is said to be in the shape of a conch shell and contains a collection of ancient and modern thangkas (embroidered and painted silk pieces depicting Buddhist life). Afterwards, drive to the ruins of Drugyel Dzong from where there are spectacular views Mount Chomolhari (if the weather is clear). From the road, you have the option of hiking up to Kali Goema Nunnery (approximately 35-40 minutes each way). Continue on with the journey to Thimphu (approx. 1 hr drive). Along the way, make a stop in the road to view Taksteng Monastery, the most famous monastery in Bhutan that sits on the side of a cliff almost 3,000 feet above the Paro valley (option of hiking up to the monastery).

Thimphu (7,656') is the capital of Bhutan and located in a wooded valley. Here you visit Tashichho Dzong, built in 1216 and completely renovated between 1962 and 1969 without the use of nails or written plans and the National Library, established to preserve many ancient Dzongkha and Tibetan texts. Choose among many other wonderful places to visit such as the Folk Heritage Museum, a replica of a traditional farm house as it would have looked about a hundred years ago, the National Institute of Traditional Medicine, where traditional herbal medicines are prepared and distributed, or the National Textile Museum, where you can learn about the national art of weaving. With advance notice, you can also witness a folk dance from the Royal Academy of Performing Arts in the evening. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 5

Thimpu – Punakha

By Surface

Today's estimated three hour drive takes you to Punakha. Blessed with temperate climate and fed by the Pho-chu (male) and Mo-chu (female) rivers, Punakha is the most fertile valley in the country. Until 1955, Punakha served as the capital and is even today the winter seat of Je Khenpo (Chief Abbot) and central monk body. The Punakha Dzong was built at the confluence of the Pho-chu and Mo-chu Rivers in 1638 by Shabdrung and renovated from 1994-2003 with detailed arts and crafts. Punakha is also home to many different types of Himalayan birds including the heron, kingfishers, lapwing, ibis, shell duck, and cormorant, which all migrate in the winter. The rest of your day is free to relax. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 6

Punakha – Trongsa

By Surface

In the morning, visit the Punakha Dzong, followed by the Khe-mi Lhakhang, built by Lama Drukpa Kuenley in the 15th century. The legend says that the lama subdued an evil spirit that appeared half human and half dog. Khe means dog and Mi means human. The temple is a short hike from the road through paddy fields and villages. You also visit the newly-built temple of Khumsum Yuele Chorten, built for the crown prince by the queen mother. The temple is built on a ridge of a mountain overlooking the Punakha valley, reached on a one-



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hour gradual uphill hike through fields and pine forests. Afterward, drive about five and a half hours across the Pele La region. Along the way you can see many different species of rhododendrons in bloom (April and May only) and many other plants. Trongsa (7,596') forms the central hub of the nation and is historically the place from where attempts at unifying the country were launched. It is from here the first monarchy was elected and still traditionally, the crown prince has to take the position of governor before he takes the seat of the throne. The landscape around Trongsa is spectacular for miles. This afternoon, visit the Kuenga Rabten village where you can visit the waterfall. Just above the king's second palace is a nunnery where hundreds of nuns practice Buddhism. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 7

Trongsa – Jakar (Bumthang)

By Surface

In the morning, visit the imposing Trongsa Dzong (exterior only), ancestral home of Bhutan's royal family and an impressive work of traditional Bhutanese architecture. It was built in 1648 by Chhoyje Minjur Temple, a well-trusted follower of Shabdrung. You then visit Ta Dzong from where there are wonderful views. After lunch, drive to Jakar (approx. 3 hr drive - 9,184'), the major trading center of the region. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 8

Jakar (Bumthang)

After breakfast, visit a few of the local sites such as the Jakar Dzong, said to be the largest in Bhutan overlooking the Choskhor Valley, and Lamey Goemba, a large palace and monastery built as a residence for King Ugyen Wangchuk. If you are interested, you may want to stop to see the Vegetable Dye Project, which produces traditional vegetable dyes for use in cotton thread and raw silk production. Continue on to Ura, the highest of Bumthang's valleys and considered to be one of the holiest valleys in Bhutan. Here you will enjoy seeing the closely-packed houses along cobblestone streets which give this town its medieval atmosphere. Return to Jakar. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 9

Jakar – Phobjika Valley

By Surface

Today's drive is about six hours to the Phobjika Valley (9,800'), a designated conservation area and one of the most important wildlife preserves in Bhutan. Some of the wildlife you might see are barking deer, wild boars, Himalayan black bears, and even leopards if you are lucky enough to spot one. You stop at Gangtey Village and visit the Gangtey Gompa, a monastery that dates back to the 17th century. This Gompa overlooks the Phobjika Valley, and its complex includes monk quarters, meditation centers, a school, and small hotel. The Phobjika Valley provides some wonderful short hiking and exploration opportunities. It is also the perfect place to relax and enjoy the scenery. Overnight at Dewachen Resort.

Day 10

Phobjika Valley

Spend the day relaxing or enjoying some lovely hiking around the Phobjika Valley. Overnight stay at hotel.



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Day 11	Phobjika Valley – Paro	By Surface
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After a leisure breakfast, make the estimated six hour drive to Paro, where you spend a final overnight. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 12	Paro – Kolkata	By Flight
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Breakfast and check-out, in the morning, transfer to airport to board flight for Kolkata, arrive proceed to international terminal to board return journey flight.