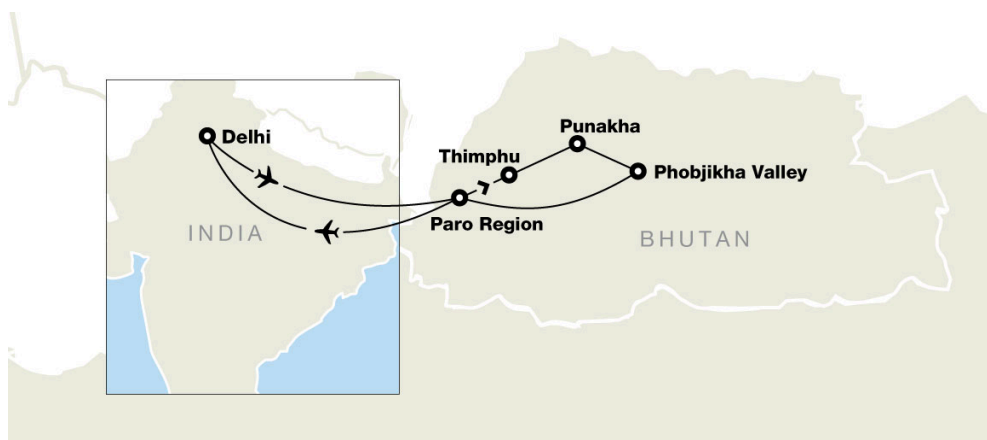




# Bhutan Convention

11 days | Mar 16 2024—Mar 26 2024

Join fellow Group Coordinators and Go Ahead staff for an unforgettable adventure thanks to the 2022 re-opening of the historic Trans Bhutan Trail after a 60-year hiatus. When you journey to this small, Himalayan nation, you can explore its ancient fortresses, dramatic mountain landscapes, and charming local villages on a series of breathtakingly beautiful hikes. Plus, when you chat with local monks, students, and villagers, you'll learn firsthand why Bhutan, birthplace of the innovative Gross National Happiness concept, is consistently ranked one of the happiest places on earth. Tour point value: 2,900 for one; 5,000 for two.



## Your tour package includes

- 8 nights in handpicked hotels
- 8 breakfasts
- 7 lunches
- 7 dinners with local beer
- 1 cooking demonstration
- 8 sightseeing tours
- Expert Tour Director & local guides
- Private deluxe motor coach
- 2 on-tour flights

## Included highlights

- Gross National Happiness chat
- Dochula Pass
- Changjiji READ Library
- Nalanda Monastery monk chat
- Optional Trans Bhutan Trail hike
- Convention Tour meeting and networking
- Punakha Dzong
- Gangtey Gonpa
- Farmhouse cooking demonstration
- Tiger's Nest
- Hot stone bath

## Tour pace

You will walk/hike for at least 2 hours daily, across uneven terrain and along unpaved trails that are mostly flat, but with some steep hills.

For more information, contact

[grouptoursite.ca/tours/bhutan-convention](https://grouptoursite.ca/tours/bhutan-convention) | 1-800-742-1731

# Bhutan Convention

11 days

## Overnight Flight → 1 night

### Day 1: Travel day

Board your overnight flight to Delhi, India, today.

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## Delhi → 1 night

### Day 2: Arrival in Delhi

Welcome to India! Get settled in at your hotel this evening.

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## Thimphu → 2 nights

### Day 3: Flight to Paro, transfer to Thimphu & Gross National Happiness chat

*Included meals: breakfast, lunch, welcome dinner*

This morning, fly to Paro, Bhutan. Then, transfer to Bhutan's capital city, Thimphu, for an included lunch.

After lunch, learn about the country's Gross National Happiness Index from a local expert.

- Learn how the fourth King of Bhutan declared that one's well-being requires equal importance of non-economic aspects
- Hear about the nine domains that the index is broken into, such as psychological well-being, cultural diversity, and community vitality

Later, get to know your fellow group members at tonight's welcome dinner.

### Day 4: Sightseeing tour of Thimphu Valley & cultural dinner

*Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner*

Set out for a day in the scenic Thimphu Valley and get a closer look at Bhutan's cultural traditions.

- Pay a visit to the Pangri Zampa Monastery, the oldest in the country
- Sit down with a monk astrologer for a private reading to learn the meaning of your name and birth year in Bhutanese tradition
- Stop to see the massive, 125-foot-high Buddha Dordenma statue that sits atop a gilded meditation hall

- Enter the Gagyel Lhundrup Weaving Centre to see the weavers craft traditional cloth and learn about royal ceremonial textiles

Sit down for an included lunch before travelling through the snow-covered Himalayas as you continue on your journey to Thimphu Valley.

- Climb to 10,200 feet to the Dochula Pass, where you can join locals in paying your respects to the gods by hanging a colorful prayer flag
- Step inside Druk Wangyal Lhakhang, a temple built in honor of His Majesty the fourth Druk Gyalpo, Jigme Singye Wangchuck
- Visit the Druk Wangyal Chortens, a collection of 108 Chortens, or Lamaist shrines, commissioned by Her Majesty the Queen Mother Ashi Dorji
- Meet local women at the Changjiji READ Center to hear about the international non-profit organization's programs and how the women use its library
- Explore VAST Gallery, a contemporary art gallery founded by artists to help educate Bhutanese youth

Tonight, sit down for an included dinner and meet with Thimphu locals to learn about their culture and way of life.

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## Punakha → 2 nights

### Day 5: Nalanda Monastery & the Trans Bhutan Trail

*Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner*

Begin the morning with a visit to the Nalanda Monastery to meet and chat. Here you'll help the monastery's residents practice their English skills as they study the language.

Afterwards, set off for an optional afternoon hike along the Trans Bhutan Trail.

- Start in Sew Drangsa, the historic site where monks stop for lunch, and make your way toward Punakha Dzong fortress
- Take in spectacular views of the valley from the fortress
- Enjoy an included lunch back in Punakha followed by a free afternoon to explore the area at your leisure

After freshening up, sit down for an included dinner at a local restaurant.

*Hiking notes: Sew Drangsa to Punakha – 4.5 miles / 2.5 hours. A moderate hike along a dirt trail that is mostly downhill with some uneven terrain.*

### Day 6: Convention Meeting & sightseeing tour

*Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner*

Join your group for a Convention Tour meeting, a series of presentations and discussions designed with Group Coordinators' questions, experiences, and interests in mind.

- Begin with a keynote address by senior members of Go Ahead Tours' staff, followed by an insider's view of the company and tours
- Discuss tour planning and recruiting best practices with Go Ahead Tours' staff and your fellow Group Coordinators
- Get an overview of the many benefits available to you as a Go Ahead Tours Group Coordinator and learn about new program updates
- Enjoy a break with coffee, tea, and biscuits

This afternoon, set out on a guided walk of Punakha town.

- Cross the Punakha Bazam, a wooden cantilever bridge used for processions and coronation celebrations
- Enter the Punakha Dzong for a guided tour of the fortress, which houses sacred relics and is part of the Kagyu School of Tibetan Buddhism
- Visit Chimi Lhakhang, the Temple of the Divine Madman

This evening, enjoy an included dinner at a local restaurant.

*Please note: Punakha Dzong's dress code strictly prohibits shorts and sleeveless shirts.*

Sit down for an included dinner at a local restaurant this evening.

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## Phobjikha Valley → 1 night

### Day 7: Sightseeing tour of Gangtey Gonpa & Bhutanese lunch

*Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner*

Make your way to the glacially formed Phobjikha

For more information, contact

[grouptoursite.ca/tours/bhutan-convention](http://grouptoursite.ca/tours/bhutan-convention) | 1-800-742-1731

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Valley, home to several types of wildlife, including the endangered black-necked crane. Here, you'll have a chance to visit the Gangtey Gonpa monastery, which is the main seat of the Pema Lingpa tradition.

Afterward, visit a local restaurant for a traditional Bhutanese lunch, then hear about potato farming and try your hand at some farm chores.

This afternoon, set off on an optional hike along the Gangtey Nature Trail, which is considered one of the most beautiful in Bhutan.

Enjoy an included dinner this evening with your group.

*Hiking notes: Gangtey Nature Trail – 2.5 miles / 1.5 hours. Easy hike downhill along a dirt trail.*

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## Paro Region → 2 nights

### Day 8: Transfer to Paro Region, sightseeing tour & cooking demonstration

*Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner*

Make your way to Paro today, known for its sacred sites and beautiful scenery.

- Enjoy a Bhutanese cooking demonstration, followed by a delicious farmhouse lunch
- Try your hand at archery, which is Bhutan's national sport, and khuru, a traditional dart-throwing game and competitive sport in Bhutan

Join a local guide and get to know the Paro region on a guided sightseeing tour.

- Visit the Ta Dzong watchtower, a structure that was built in the 17th century to protect Paro Dzong from the Tibetan military and that now houses Bhutan's National Museum
- Explore the stunning Paro Rinpung Dzong fortress

Tonight, sit down with your group for an included dinner at a local restaurant.

### Day 9: Tiger's Nest, hot-stone bath & cultural show

*Included meals: breakfast, lunch, farewell dinner*

Head out to Bhutan's most famous landmark, Paro Taktsang, more commonly known as Tiger's Nest.

- Hike along the ancient pilgrimage trail through a dense, pine forest
- Catch your first glimpse of the awe-inspiring Tiger's Nest, a cliffside, golden-roofed monastery that's accessible only by foot or horseback
- Enjoy an included lunch at Tiger's Nest and take in stunning views of the ravine nearly 3,000 feet below

- Make your way to a farmhouse for a relaxing, rustic hot-stone bath

Tonight, celebrate your trip and experience a vibrant performance of Bhutanese dances followed by a delicious farewell dinner.

*Hiking notes: Tiger's Nest – 4 miles / 5 hours. A long and difficult uphill climb.*

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## Overnight Flight → 1 night

### Day 10: Flight to Delhi & departure

*Included meals: breakfast*

Today, fly back to Delhi, India, and relax in a dayroom before boarding your overnight or early morning flight home.

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## Arrive Home

### Day 11: Arrival at home

Arrive home today.