

**DeRiemer Adventure Kayaking**  
**Bhutan Class III**  
**October 25- Nov 6, 2017**  
Sample Itinerary

Thank you for your interest in joining us in Bhutan. This year represents our ninth year into this enchanted Himalayan, Buddhist kingdom. Each visit feels like a gift. Our aim for you is twofold; that you paddle in the Himalaya and, that you are exposed to as much of the culture, people and surrounding countryside as is possible. We want you to experience the magic of Bhutan and the kindness of these people that we have come to know and appreciate.

We are very excited about our itinerary, not only because of the rivers we paddle and the areas of the country in which we travel, but also that we experience the Jamba Lhakhang festival in Chumkar in the center of the country. This festival is held at one of the oldest monasteries in Bhutan. Our adventurous journey is designed to take full advantage of each day, while still being open to the special moments that always present themselves in this unique land.

We know your vacation time is precious. Rest assured that your journey to the other side of the world, where you step back in time, is well worth the effort. We look forward to sharing with you this country that we find so special.

Tashi Delek,  
*Phil and Mary DeRiemer*

**Day 1, Oct 25, Wednesday:**

Flying into the beautiful valley of Paro, you glide over the tops of snow and pine covered ridges that are dotted with remote monasteries. Located in western Bhutan, this valley is a patchwork of rice fields. The harvest techniques used haven't changed for hundreds of years!

We meet you at the airport and, depending on your arrival time, go to lunch. The rest of the day we wander town to shop, and visit Paro's majestic Dzong (fortress). At the end of the day we settle into our Paro hotel and outfit boats.

**Day 2, Oct 26, Thursday:**

We leave our hotel to paddle the Paro Chu (river). This short but beautiful run is a great warm up to our week. From the take out we drive 45 minutes to Thimphu, the capital, where we have lunch and spend the rest of the day touring town. Lodge Thimphu 2 nights.

**Day 3, Oct 27, Friday:**

There's an optional pre-breakfast trip to (one of) the largest sitting Buddhas in the world. A short drive let's us experience sunrise over Thimphu and the surrounding mountains from the vantage point of the sitting Buddha. After breakfast we drive to the put-in of the Wang Chu, another low volume, technical class III+ run. We take out at the confluence with the Paro Chu then return to Thimphu for lunch and more touring of the town. Lodging in Thimphu.

**Day 4, Oct 28, Saturday:**

We leave Thimphu after a morning of site-seeing, and begin our 4-hour drive to Punakha Valley the religious center of Bhutan with lunch en route. This leg of the journey takes us over the stunning pass at Dochu La at 10,302 feet. If we have clear skies, there will be views of the snowcapped Himalayan range separating Bhutan from Tibet. From here we begin our descent into the Punakha Valley at 4000 ft, home of the Mo (Mother) and Po (Father) Chu. Perhaps we make a visit to Temple of Divine Madman. We lodge in Punakha for 2 nights.

**Day 5, Oct 29, Sunday:**

Drive further up-valley and begin our day with a stunning hike to a hilltop temple overlooking the Mo Chu (mother river) valley. We'll then walk down to lunch and put on the Mo Chu for an afternoon paddle. Lodge Punakha second night.

**Day 6, Oct 30, Monday:**

Today we pack up our things. We start the day with a paddle the Po Chu (Father river). We start with a walk in the countryside that takes us over the longest footbridge span in Bhutan. We cross the lower Po Chu onto a country road through rice fields in mid-harvest, allowing us to interact with the locals working the fields. Our vehicle meets us along the way and we drive to the put-in. The run finishes up floating past the Punakha Dzong at the confluence with the Mo Chu. Upon taking out we have a picnic lunch with a view of the Dzong then tour this impressive 16<sup>th</sup> century structure, once the center of government. Lodge Kichu.

**Day 7, Oct 31, Tuesday:**

This is a driving day that takes us to the beautiful Phobjikha Valley. Known as the valley of the black-necked cranes, it is the winter home of these majestic, migratory birds. Lodging in Phobjikha.

**Day 8, Nov 1, Wednesday:**

Tour Phobjikha Valley and the Gongtay Gompa monastery overlooking the valley. Afterwards we begin our drive to the town of Trongsa, passing over Pele La at 11,122 ft. Just prior to arriving in Trongsa we stop at the overlook directly across from the

spectacular Trongsa Dzong sprawled along a ridge high above the Mangde Chu river. Lodging in Trongsa.

**Day 9, Nov 2, Thursday:**

We sightsee Trongsa town in the a.m. hoping to visit the Dzong or the Watch Tower museum. After which we drive to Chumkar in Bumthang district, located in the middle of the country and the furthest point east our travels will take us. We might get in a short afternoon paddle in the valley. Lodging in Chumkar 3 nights.

**Day 10 Nov 3, Friday:**

We go to a higher put-in of the Chumkar Chu and have a riverside picnic lunch. The afternoon we sightsee and shop. The timing of our itinerary allows us to catch the beginning of the Jamba Lhakhang festival with the fire dance this evening! Lodging in Chumkar.

**Day 11 Nov 4, Saturday:**

Repeat the upper run of the Chumkar Chu and take in some of the sights at the Jamba Lhakhang festival. We'll have a picnic lunch along the river. Lodging in Chumkar.

**Day 12 Nov 5, Sunday**

We take a morning flight back to Paro. The views of the Himalaya during this flight are spectacular as we fly over much of the route we traversed during our drive east to the Bumthang area! Once in Paro we have breakfast and head to the trailhead for the most famous monastery in the country, Takstang, known as "the tigers nest". After the hike, our late lunch is followed by one last chance to wander Paro and do last minute shopping. Lodging in Paro.

**Day 13, Nov 6, Monday:**

Today we take you to the airport for your early morning departure and farewell to the Land of the Thunder Dragon!

**Being in Bhutan** - This is adventure travel. We work hard to provide you with this incredible experience. It is possible that the roads could become impassable for a spell or domestic flights may be cancelled. Then we will make the most of the situation. If we can't follow our exact itinerary, we substitute something just as unforgettable.

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[www.adventurekayaking.com](http://www.adventurekayaking.com)

[info@adventurekayaking.com](mailto:info@adventurekayaking.com)

(877) 529-2566