

DeRiemer Adventure Kayaking

Land Tour

October 17 – 29, 2018

Sample Itinerary

(The timing of this trip is to coincide with our class III+ kayaking and culture trip to allow non-kayaking friends and family to join. There are rafting and biking options available on some of the days and we welcome all folks interested in experiencing Bhutan to join.)

Thank you for your interest in joining us in Bhutan. This year represents our tenth year into this enchanted Himalayan, Buddhist Kingdom. Each visit feels like a gift. Our aim for you is 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 this itinerary, not only because of the places we visit and the areas of the country in which we travel, but also that we'll experience the Jakar Tsechu, a festival held in the intimate Jakar Dzong overlooking the Chumkar valley, Bumthang located in the center of the country. 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

Cost: 1-3 folks \$5580 per person
 4 or more \$5300 per person (difference refunded after trip runs with 4 min.)

Day 1: 17th Flying into the beautiful valley of Paro, you will 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 and many of the harvest techniques used haven't changed for hundreds of years.

We'll meet you at the airport and, depending on your arrival time, go to lunch. The rest of the day we'll wander the town and shops, visit the national museum and/or Paro's majestic Dzong (fortress). We lodge in Paro (approx elevation 7800 ft.).

Day 2: 18th In the morning we'll board a flight to Chumkar, located in Bumthang Province in the center of the country. The views of the Himalaya during this flight are spectacular as we fly over much of the route we will spend

the next 2 weeks traveling by road. Upon arrival in Chumkar, we'll go to our lodging, drop our bags, and depending on the time, have lunch. Afterwards, while the kayaking group paddles the Chumakr Chu, we can walk in the countryside and visit one or two temples along the way. We stay 2 nights in Chumkar (approx elevation 8000 ft.).

Day 3: 19th Today is the Jakar Tsechu, the festival of the Jakar Dzong. We'll structure the day to take advantage of what the festival has to offer which includes traditional dancing and ceremonies. After leaving the festival we'll head up river for a picnic lunch alongside the Chumakr Chu (river). There is much to see and do in the Chumkar valley and we'll spend the rest of the day seeking out some of these interesting sites.

Day 4: 20th Today we drive to Trongsa . Highlights during our stay include a visit to the Dzong and the Watch Tower museum. We spend the night in Trongsa (approx elevation 6800 ft.). .

Day 5: 21st 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. We will drive over Pele La at 11,122 ft. On the way we'll have lunch then finish our day with a hike on the valley trail. We lodge the night in Phobjikha (approx elevation 9500 ft.).

Day 6: 22nd We'll spend some of the morning in the Phobjikha valley, including a visit to the Gangtey Gompa Monastery then move on toward the Punakha valley. If time permits we'll visit the temple of the divine madman, Drupak Kinley, then head to our lodging for the next 3 nights Punakha (approx 4500 ft.).

Day 7: 23rd Drive further up-valley and begin a short 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, there's a paddle raft option for the non-kayakers and we can all run this stretch together. This will be our second night in Punakha.

Day 8: 22th Today we 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. Again, there is a paddle raft for the non-kayakers. 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 16th century structure, once the center of government. This will be our last night in Punakha.

- Day 9: 25th An early morning begins with a drive toward Thimphu, the capital. 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. We'll lunch and sightsee in Thimphu, spending the night here (approx 7600 ft.).
- Day 10: 26th There is an optional, pre-breakfast visit to the Buddha Dordenma statue, one of the largest sitting Buddhas in the world. This short drive allows us to experience sunrise over Thimphu with a commanding view of the valley. Following this, we'll stop at the Memorial Chorten, built in memory of the third King. After breakfast we can sightsee, wander and shop until lunch. When the group leaves for the river, the land group has many site seeing options like a visit to the Takin Preserve (national animal of Bhutan, found only in the Himalaya) and mountain biking. We spend the next 3 nights in the town of Paro (approx 7800 ft.).
- Day 11: 27th While the paddlers are on the Paro Chu, there is an option to mountain bike the road up the Paro Valley stopping at sites of interest. Groups reunite for lunch and a chance to sightsee around town.
- Day 12: 28th Our early start to the day sees us at the trailhead for the most famous monastery in the country, Takstang, known as "tigeress' nest", the most sacred monastery in the country. After the hike, our late lunch is followed by one last chance to wander Paro and do last minute shopping. Lodging and farewell dinner in Paro.
- Day 13: 29th Today we'll take you to the airport for your early morning departure, a farewell to the Land of the Thunder Dragon!