

DeRiemer Adventure Kayaking

Bhutan Class IV

Nov 2 –14, 2024

Skill Level: **Participants should be solid and experienced at Class IV**

Sample Itinerary

We first traveled to this enchanted Himalayan, Buddhist Kingdom in 2006 and have return nearly every year since. 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 people, culture and surrounding countryside as possible. We want you to experience the magic of Bhutan and the kindness of these people we have come to know and deeply 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 it takes place during the Jakar Tsechu (festival) located in Bumthang Province. **Our travels will take us from Paro in the west, to Bumthang province, located in the center of the country.** Each day is packed, yet we are still open to the special moments that always present themselves in this unique land.

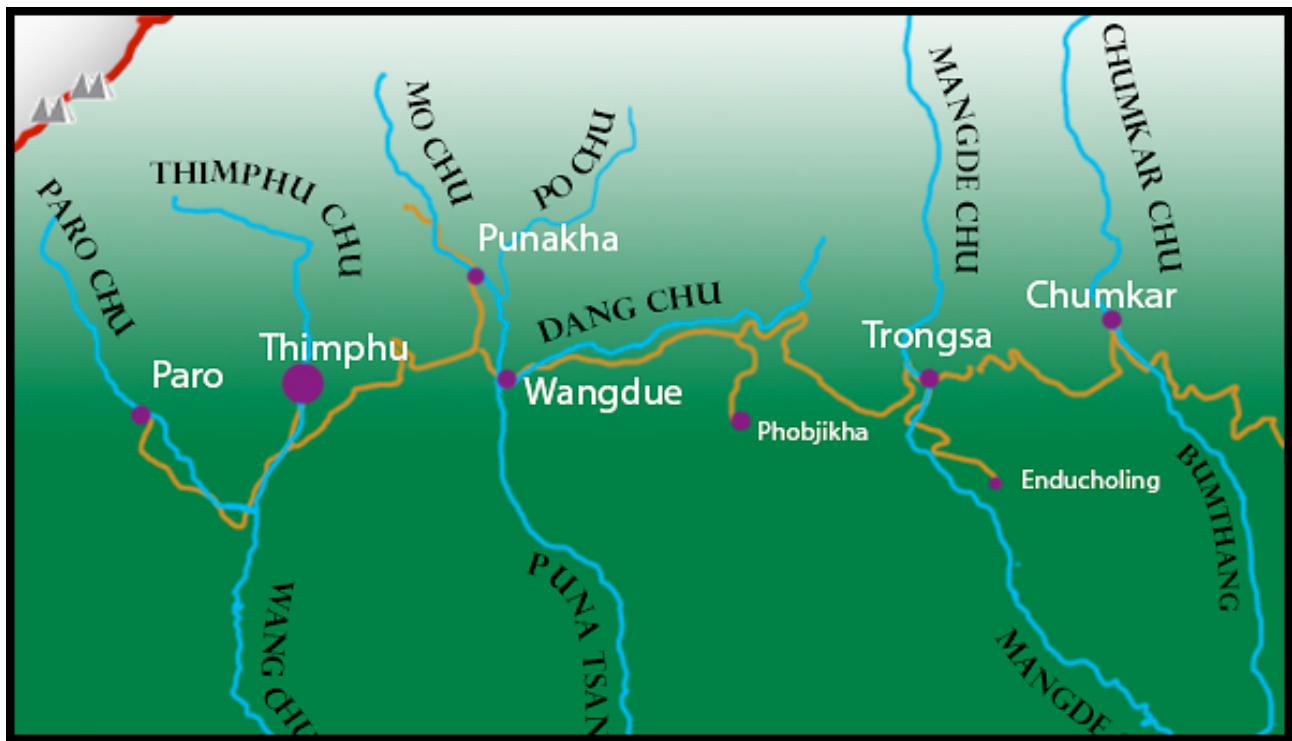
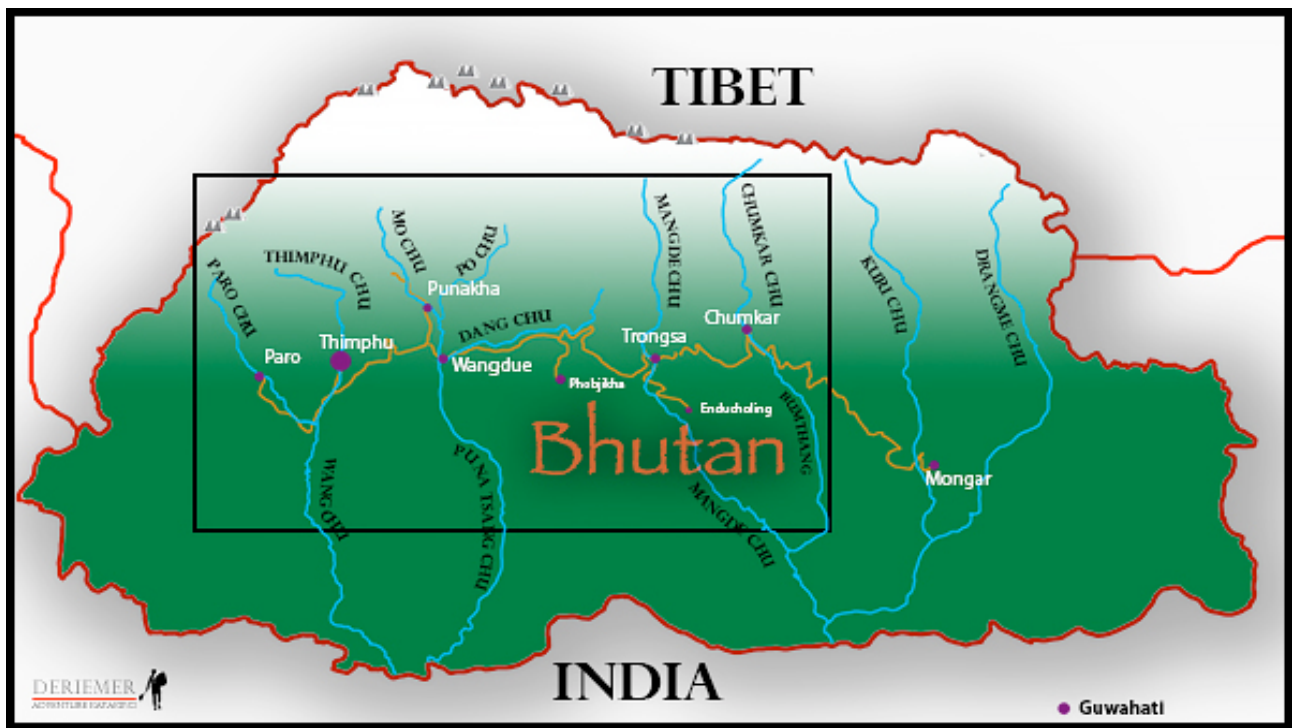
We know your vacation time is precious. Rest assured that your journey to the other side of the world is well worth the effort. We look forward to sharing with you this country that we find so special.

Tashi Delek,

Phil, Mary and Sami

Cost: Land Cost \$7100* US for double occupancy with a \$495.00 single occupancy surcharge for those that wish this option. *Based on 6 or more participants.

- Price **includes** domestic flight from Bumthang to Paro, in country meals, lodging, transportation, cultural guide, kayak, kayak guides, visa, Sustainable Development Fee (\$100/day) and entry fees to all sites we tour.
- Price does **not** include international flights to and from home country to Paro, Bhutan.
 - Current cost for the Bangkok-Paro round-trip is \$975 US. These reservations are made by our Bhutanese outfitter.
 - We recommend using Bangkok, Thailand as your gateway city into Bhutan.



Day 01: Nov 2, Saturday

Flying into the beautiful valley of Paro at 7500 ft, you glide over the tops of snow and pine-covered ridges dotted with remote monasteries. Located in western Bhutan, the valley is a patchwork of rice fields where the harvest techniques haven't changed for hundreds of years. We meet you at the airport and go to lunch. The rest of the day we explore various sites, wander the town and shop, and/or visit Paro's majestic Dzong (fortress). At our lodge we outfit boats for the following day's paddle. Lodge Paro (approx elevation 7800 ft.).

Day 02: Nov 3, Sunday

We drive down valley to the put-in for our run on the **Paro Chu** (Chu means river and/or water). Locally called the Pa Chu, this low volume river starts with Class II-III and transitions to Class IV. Upon taking out at the confluence with the Thimphu Chu, we'll load up and drive 45 minutes to Bhutan's Capital, Thimphu. After a late lunch we'll use the remainder of the day to **explore town**. Lodge Thimphu (approx 7600 ft.).

Day 03: Nov 4, Monday

There's an optional pre-breakfast trip to the one of the largest sitting Buddha in the world. Dordenma Buddha is located on a hill overlooking the town. From its vantage point, enjoy sunrise over the Thimphu Valley and the surrounding mountains. After breakfast, we pack up and drive to the put-in of the Thimphu Chu (also called **Wang Chu**), another low volume, technical Class III+ run. We take out at the confluence with the Paro Chu and begin our **3-hour drive** to Punakha Valley, the religious center of Bhutan. We'll stop for lunch along the way. This leg of the journey takes us over the stunning pass at Dochu La at 10,302 feet. If skies are clear, there are views of the snowcapped Himalayan range that separate Bhutan from Tibet. From the pass we begin our descent into the Punakha Valley at 4000 ft, home of the Mo (mother) and Po (father) Chus. Lodge in Punakha Valley.

Day 04: Nov 5, Tuesday

We drive up river to our put-in for the **Upper Mo**. The Mo and Po Chu are both large volume and pool-drop in character. Our take-out and lunch spot is the start of a hike to Khamsum Yulley Chorten, a hilltop temple with extraordinary views overlooking the river. The valley is dotted with terraced rice fields in mid-harvest. Night 2 in Punakha Valley (approx elevation 4,265 ft.).

Day 05: Nov 6, Wednesday

After a short drive up valley, we start a casual hike that will take us past the Punakha Dzong to the longest footbridge span in Bhutan, over our run for the day, the **Po Chu**. Our vehicle will meet us on the other side and drive us upriver where we transfer into a 4WD vehicle to get to our put-in. The run finishes floating past the Punakha Dzong at the confluence with the Mo Chu. The Dzong was built by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal, who is credited with unifying the country. At take-out we'll change into temple worthy clothes so we can tour this impressive 16th century structure. This one-time center of Bhutan's government is now the religious center of the country in winter, and still serves as administrative offices of the government year round. We'll then drive an hour or so to our lodging along side the Dang Chu, our river for the next day (approx elevation 5,000 ft.).

Day 06: Nov 7, Thursday

Today's run is on the **Dang Chu**, a delightfully continuous Class IV creek. It is short in length, yet big on fun. After our run we'll drive to the town of Trongsa, the old capital of Bhutan. Our route takes us over Pele la (pass) 11,230 ft. Lodge Trongsa (approx elevation 6800 ft.).

Day 07: Nov 8, Friday

This will be a long day as we drive south from Trongsa to the **Lower Mangde Chu** for the famous **Ema Datsi Canyon**. Ema datsi is the *spicy* national dish of chilis and cheese. This exciting Class IV+, technical stretch lies in a stunning canyon. This is the hardest run of the trip. We return to Trongsa and lodge for our second and final night there.

Day 08: Nov 9, Saturday We drive upstream from the town of Trongsa to reach the put-in trail for the Class IV **Upper Mangde Chu**. This sweet, short section of river has beautiful water quality and fun rapids., Drive to Chumkar, Bumthang Province, Lodge Chumkar (approx elevation 8000 ft.).

Day 09: Nov 10, Sunday

Jakar Tsechu (festival), held at the Jakar Dzong (one time fortress) starts this day. After attending the festival we'll tour the sites in the valley. Lodge Chumkar.

Day 10: Nov 11, Monday

Today's run is a Class IV section of **Chumkar Chu** above town. This continuous, low volume, technical run has an isolated feel to it. Night 2 in Chumkar

Day 11: Nov 12, Tuesday

We fly back to Paro and spend the rest of the day exploring the valley. Lodge Paro

Day 12: Nov 13, Wednesday

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 monastery is the most sacred in the country and a must-make pilgrimage for all Bhutanese. A fully enlightened being, Guru Rimpoche, or Padmasambava, first came to Bhutan in 810 AD, bringing Buddhism to the country. He meditated here in a cave that is now a temple within the monastery .

This **vigorous hike** of 2000 vertical feet on a well-worn path is worth the effort! It has fantastic views of the monastery and the Paro valley below. After the hike, a late lunch is followed by the final chance to wander Paro and do last minute shopping. A **celebratory dinner** will be in order for our last night in country here in Paro.

Day 13: Nov 14, Thursday

After breakfast, we take you to the airport for your early morning **departure**, a farewell to the Land of the Thunder Dragon!