

DeRiemer Adventure Kayaking
Land Tour
October 21 – Nov 2, 2024
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 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.

Our Land Tour runs concurrent with the Class III+ Kayak Trip so that non-kayaking friends and family can experience their own adventures each day, yet rejoin with the kayaking group at the end of the day and lodge together. There are some opportunities for rafting along with the kayakers as well.

We'll be flying to the Bumthang Province, halfway across the country, from our arrival town of Paro in the west. 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 spend each night in nice, comfortable accommodations.

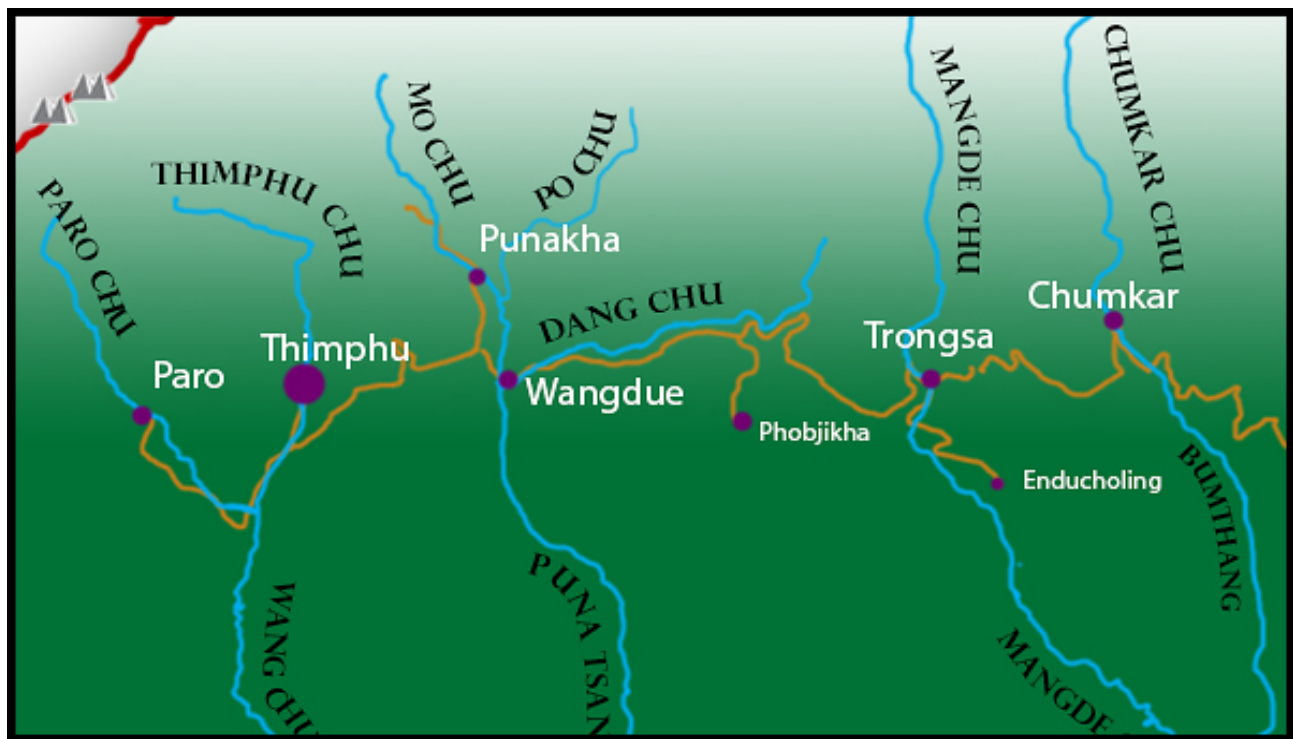
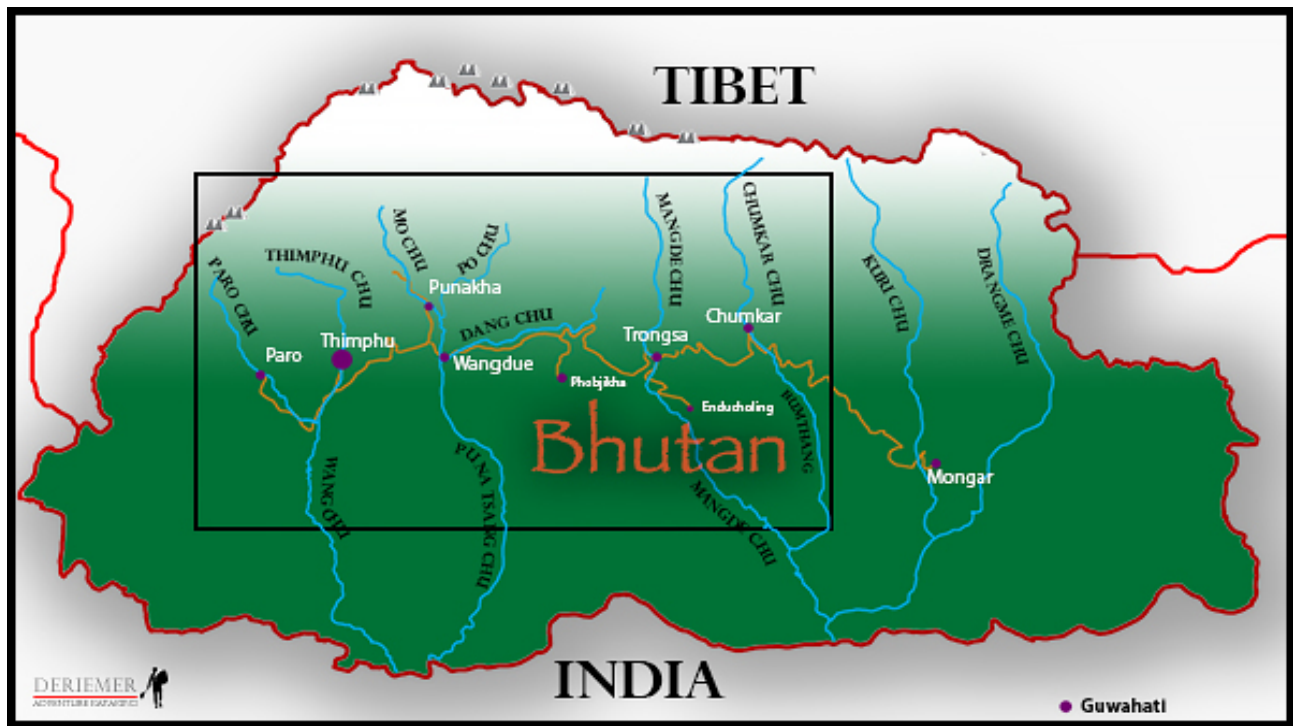
We know your vacation time is precious. Rest assured that your journey to the other side of the world is well worth the effort. We look forward to sharing with you this country we find so special.

Tashi Delek,

Phil, Mary & 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 Paro to Bumthang, in country meals, lodging, transportation, cultural guide, raft, raft 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 1: Oct 21, Monday

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 where the farmers use harvest techniques that 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 explore various sites, wander the town and shops and visit the national museum and/or Paro's majestic Dzong (fortress). We lodge in Paro (approx elevation 7800 ft.).

Day 2: Oct 22, Tuesday

Today we board a flight to Chumkar, located in Bumthang Province, halfway across the country. The views of the Himalaya during this flight are spectacular. We fly over much of the route that will take us the next 10 days by road to return, hiking and sight-seeing along the way. There is much to see and do in the Bumthang Valley and we will make the most of it during our time there. The remainder of the day we spend exploring sites in the area. We stay 2 nights in Chumkar (approx elevation 8000 ft.).

Day 3: Oct 23, Wednesday

Burning Lake, Jakar Dzong, Jampa Lhakhang, Kurjey Lhakhang and Pema Tekchok Choling Nunnery these are just a few of the interesting sites to see in the Valley. There are also numerous hikes of varying lengths in the beautiful countryside that can be done. Lodge in Chumkar.

Day 4: Oct 24, Thursday

Today we drive to Trongsa, the one-time center of government under the first king, Ugyen Wangchuck. Highlights during our stay include a visit to the sprawling Trongsa Dzong and/or the Watch Tower Museum. We spend the night in Trongsa (approx elevation 6800 ft.).

Day 5: Oct 25, Friday

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. To get there we drive over Pele La (pass) at 11,122 ft. En route we have lunch and finish our day with a hike on the valley trail. We spend the night in Phobjikha (approx elevation 9500 ft.).

Day 6: Oct 26, Saturday

Some of the morning we spend in the valley, including a visit to the Gangtey Gompa Monastery and the black necked crane center. After which we begin our drive to the Punakha Valley and our lodging there.

Day 7: Oct 27, Sunday

A drive up the Mo Chu (Mother River) valley brings us to a short hike to a hilltop temple; the Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten. There is a commanding view of the valley's rice terraces and meandering river. At the trailhead we switch into rafting mode and paddle the Mo Chu, stopping for lunch along the way. Our river take out will be within sight of one of the most significant Dzongs in Bhutan, Punakha, winter home of the head religious leader and many monks. A late afternoon visit to the Sangchen Dorji Lhuendrup nunnery perched high above the valley is the end to a full day. Lodge Punakha (approx 4500 ft.).

Day 8: Oct 28, Monday

Today we paddle the Po Chu (Father River). This begins with a tour of the Punakha Dzong, an impressive 16th century structure and center of Buddhist learning. From here we walk the countryside, over the longest footbridge span in Bhutan. For a bit, we continue to walk the country road that winds through rice fields in mid-harvest. At times we are able to interact with the locals working the fields. Our vehicle meets us along the way to take us to our put-in, and a picnic lunch. There is a paddle raft for the non-kayakers here. The run ends floating past the Punakha Dzong at the confluence with the Mo Chu. This will be our last night in Punakha.

Day 9: Oct 29, Tuesday

An early morning start begins the drive to Thimphu, the Capitol. This leg of the journey takes us over the stunning pass at Dochu La at 10,302 feet. If we have clear skies, there are views of the snowcapped Himalayan range that separates Bhutan from Tibet. We lunch and sightsee in Thimphu. Lodging in Thimphu (approx 7600 ft.).

Day 10: Oct 30, Wednesday

There is an optional, pre-breakfast visit to the Buddha Dordenma statue, one of the largest sitting Buddhas in the world. Here, we enjoy sunrise over Thimphu valley and the city before returning to the hotel. After breakfast we can sightsee, wander and shop until lunch. There are many sightseeing/walking options like a visit to the Takin Preserve (national animal of Bhutan, found only in the Himalaya) and the textile museum. Lodging Thimphu

Day 11: Oct 31, Thursday

We travel up the Paro Valley stopping at sites of interest, including the Temple of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. "Brilliant Moon" was one of the most significant Buddhist teachers of this century. Rinpoche was born in Tibet. In exile from the Chinese invasion, Rinpoche was welcomed into Bhutan by the Queen mother, who became his student. The Dalai Lama is Rinpoche's most famous student. Known as a scholar, poet, teacher, Rinpoche headed the Nyingma school of Tibetan Buddhism until his death in 1991 at age 81. Lodging Paro (approx 7800 ft.).

Day 12: Nov 1, Friday

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 Rinpoche, 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 Dzong.

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 2, Saturday

After breakfast, and depending on the timing of your departure flight, we'll tour some more then say our goodbyes before leaving the Land of the Thunder Dragon!