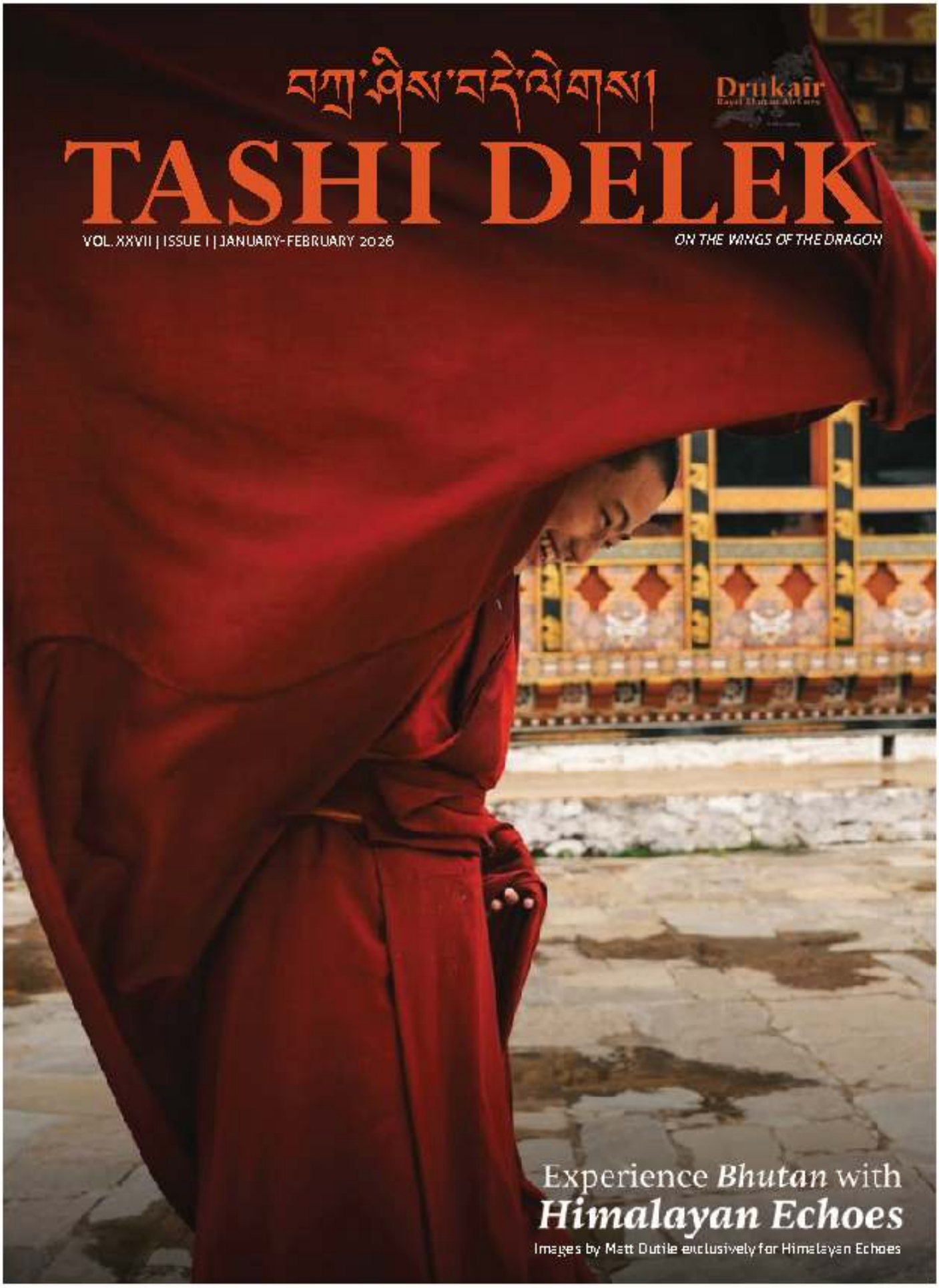
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TASHI DELEK

VOL. XXVII | ISSUE I | JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2026

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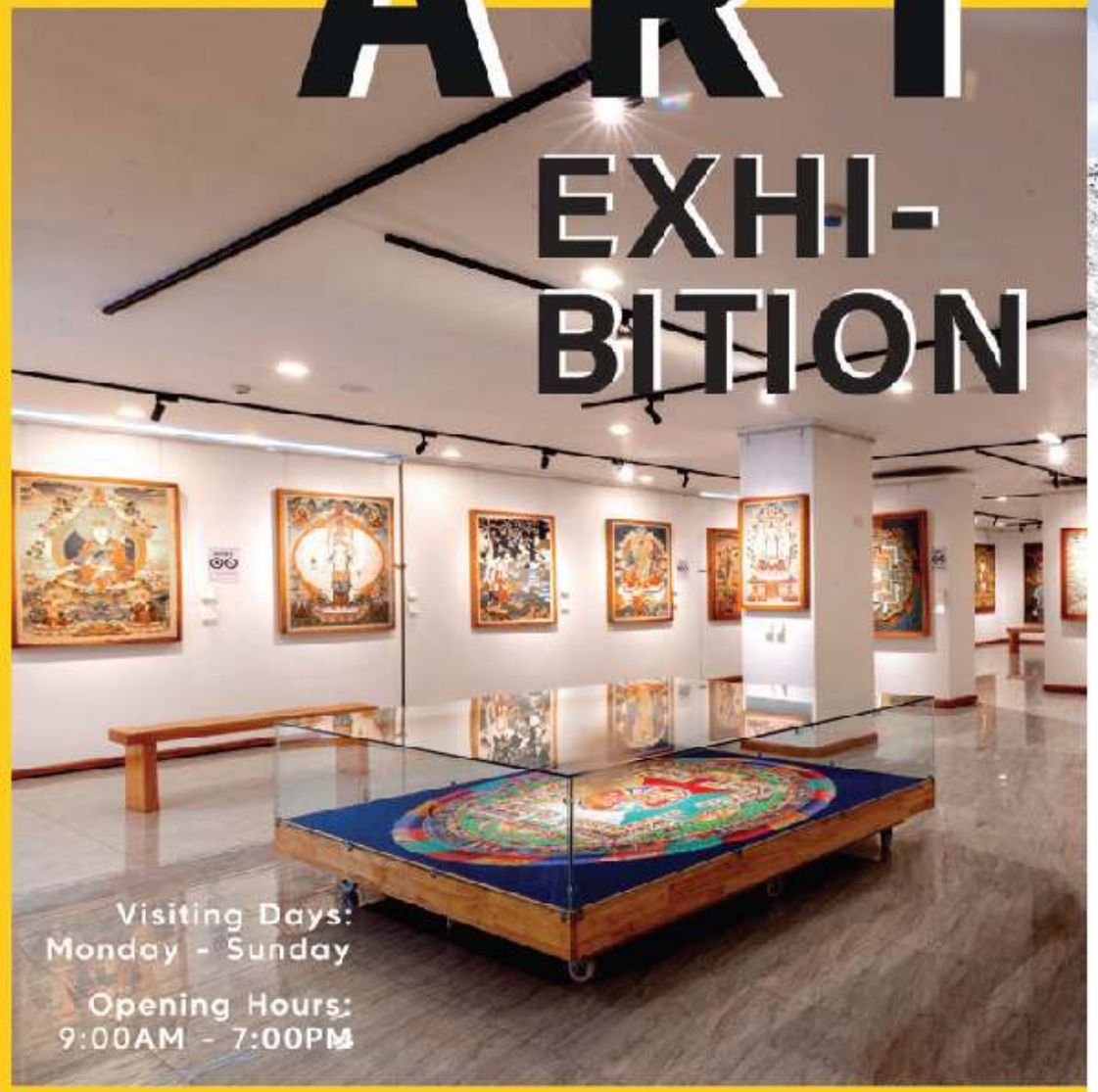
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DHI's 10X Roadmap sets a bold vision to grow tenfold by 2035, aligned with the Gelephu Mindfulness City and Bhutan's 21st Century Economic Roadmap. DHI is transitioning from an asset steward to a strategic architect of Bhutan's future economy, driven by three pillars: portfolio management, investments in five priority sectors, and an innovation strategy that strengthens R&D, advanced technology, and entrepreneurship through the Multichannel Innovation Fund (MCIF).

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Our Mission

To safeguard and enhance national wealth for all generations of Bhutanese through prudent investments.

Get in touch with us

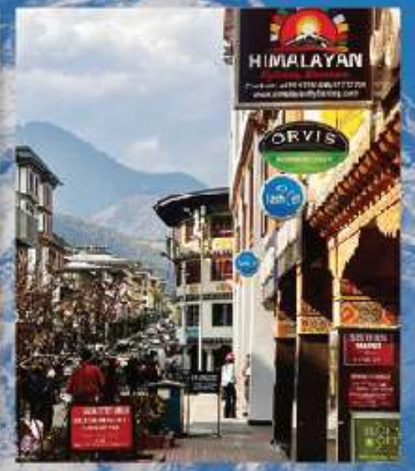
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INSIDE



Mindful Nation:
Going Slow in Bhutan 18

Best Coffee Shops in Thimphu 24

Bhutan_the source of happiness 26



Five Things I Love About Bhutan 30

From Transit Point to Destination:
The Rise of Phuentsholing 34

She Bhutan: The Reweven Self 38

Himalayan Echoes - Stories Within 42

Exposure 48

Jangsa Animal Saving Trust 58

Being Bhutanese 62

Diversions: Book review 64

Art review 67



Dear Passengers,



Tandi Wangchuk
Chief Executive Officer
Drukair Corporation Ltd.

As we welcome the New Year, I extend my warmest greetings to all our passengers. Thank you for choosing Drukair and for placing your trust in Bhutan's national flag carrier. Your continued support over the past year inspires us to strive for excellence in every aspect of our service.

The start of a new year brings renewed purpose, and 2026 marks another important chapter in Drukair's journey. We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to safety, reliability, and the distinctive Bhutanese hospitality that defines the Drukair experience. At the same time, we are advancing key services and digital upgrades to enhance convenience, strengthen connectivity, and deliver smoother travel experience across our network.

Reflecting on the year gone by, we are proud of several significant milestones. A proud milestone was the launch of our first international service from Gelephu International Airport, with twice-weekly flights on the Gelephu-Kolkata-Gelephu sector. This is more than route expansion; it symbolizes the opening of Bhutan's future gateway for mindful living, innovation, and sustainable development, aligned with the noble vision of His Majesty for the Gelephu Mindfulness City.

We also signed a new interline partnership with Thai Airways International, enabling seamless travel connectivity through a single ticket for journeys combining flights operated by the two airlines. Passengers can now enjoy check-in for both baggage and boarding via Suvarnabhumi Airport, reducing transit time and enhancing overall convenience. This partnership builds on our earlier interline agreement with Turkish Airlines, with additional interline arrangements with Air India and Emirates expected to be completed by the first quarter of 2026.

Our fleet also marked an important advancement with the induction of the Pilatus PC-24 aircraft. This versatile addition will support national priorities, including corporate travel aligned with the development of the Gelephu Mindfulness City, medical evacuation missions, commercial charters, and selected domestic operations.

Enhancing the customer journey remains a priority. Our partnership with Worldpay has strengthened our online booking and payment systems, introducing a faster checkout process, improved security through advanced fraud protection, reduced international payment declines, and real-time transaction processing for a more reliable booking experience worldwide. In parallel, our first global distribution agreement with Amadeus now makes Drukair's full inventory available on one of the world's leading travel technology platforms, significantly increasing our global visibility and strengthening Bhutan's international connectivity.

Looking ahead, our focus for 2026 remains firmly on safety, reliability, and exceptional service. From April 2026, we will introduce a third weekly frequency to Singapore and reintroduce twice-weekly Guwahati-Bangkok flights, further strengthening connectivity from Northeast India. We will also continue to offer flexible travel options to key regional hubs including Bangkok, Delhi, and Kathmandu.

Beyond aviation, Drukair is deeply committed to giving back to our community and we do so through what we do best, travel. Our flagship Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative, the Tongsa Penlop Inspire Program, made its much-anticipated return after the pandemic on 18 December 2025. Conceived by Yab Dasho Dhondup Gyaltshen in 2018, the program is designed to ignite young minds by providing fully sponsored journeys that expand their horizons, offering cultural immersion and educational experiences in Thailand for a week.

As Bhutan's national flag carrier, we take pride in nurturing the potential of our youth. Through these transformative experiences, we aim to inspire academic excellence, personal growth, and a lifelong curiosity about the world, preparing the next generation to contribute meaningfully to the future of Bhutan.

As Bhutan's national flag carrier, we are proud to support high-value, sustainable tourism and to serve as the gateway to our Kingdom's natural beauty, cultural richness, and warmth. As we step into 2026, we do so with optimism, strengthening our network, exploring new opportunities, and placing our passengers at the heart of everything we do.

On behalf of everyone at Drukair, I wish you a pleasant flight and a fulfilling year ahead. Thank you for flying with us, and we look forward to welcoming you onboard again soon.

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TASHI DELEK

Tashi Delek is an auspicious and versatile Bhutanese expression. It is a word or an expression encompassing a number of meanings such as wishing you well, good wishes, congratulations, may many good things come to you, cheers, and good luck.

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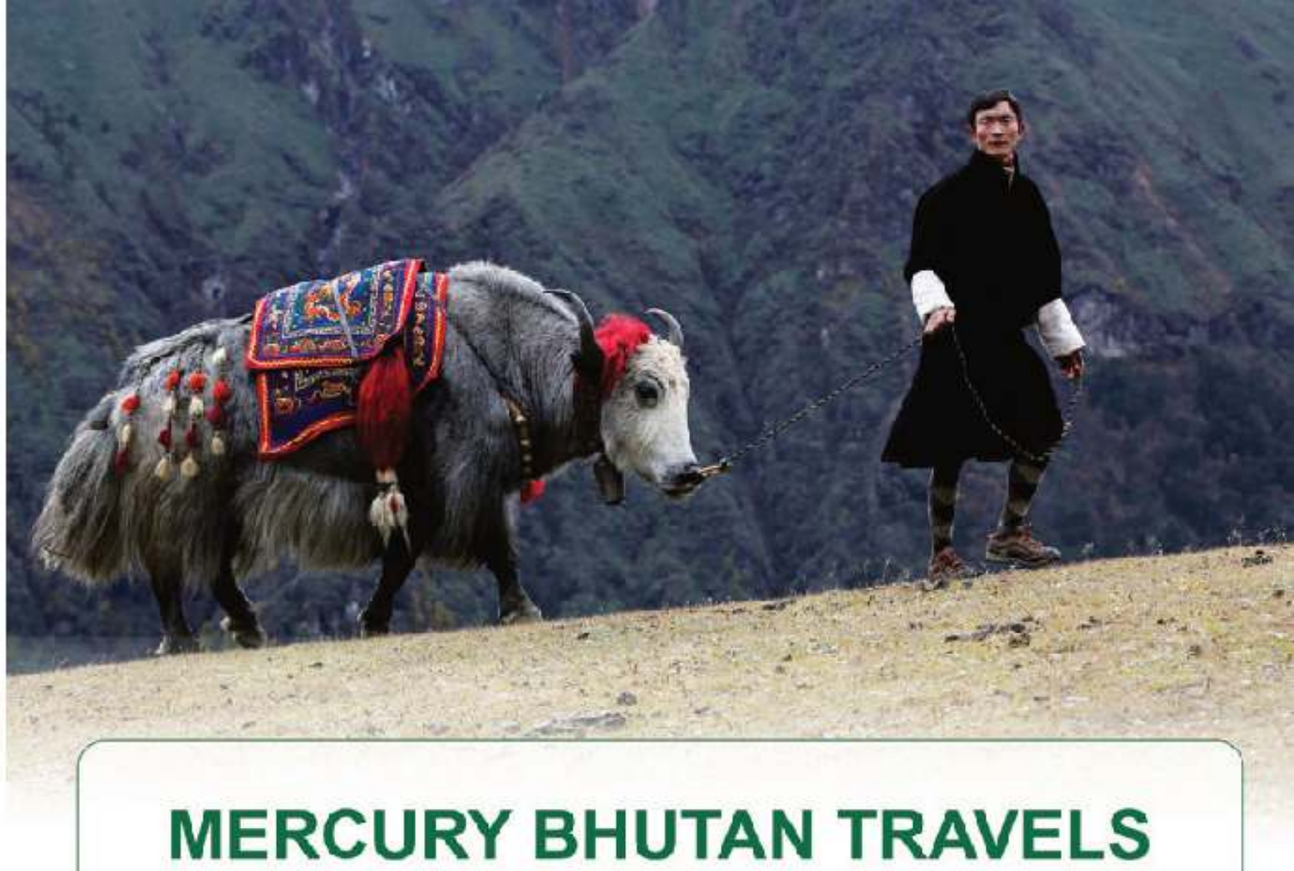
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TASHI DELEK

FACTS ABOUT BHUTAN





NATIONAL DRESS

Men wear the Gho, a knee-length robe that is tied at the waist by a traditional belt known as Kera. Women wear the Kira, a long, ankle-length dress accompanied by a light outer jacket known as a Tego with an inner layer known as a Wonju.



NATIONAL GAME

Archery was declared as the national game in 1971 when Bhutan became a member of the United Nations. Bhutan also maintains an Olympic archery team. Archery is played during public holidays in Bhutan and local festivals.



NATIONAL BIRD

The National Bird is the Raven (*Corvus corax*). The Raven adorns the Royal Crown. The raven represents the deity Gonpo Jarodongchen (raven headed Mahakala), one of the chief guardian deities of Bhutan.



NATIONAL TREE

The National Tree is the Cypress (*Cupressus torulosa*). Cypresses are found in abundance and one may notice large cypresses near temples and monasteries. This tree is found in temperate climate zone, between 1800 and 3500 meters.



NATIONAL ANIMAL

The National Animal is the Takin (*Budorcas taxicolor*) and is associated with religious history and mythology. It is a rare mammal with a thick neck and short muscular legs. It lives in groups and is found above 4000 meters on the north-western and far north eastern parts of the country.



CLIMATE SEASON

Bhutan has four seasons. Spring from March until April followed by Summer with occasional showers until late September. Autumn follows until late November, characterized by sunny days. Winter until March, with snowfall in regions above 3,000 meters.



NATIONAL FLAG

The National Flag is divided diagonally into two equal halves. The upper yellow half signifies the secular power and authority of the King while the lower saffron-orange symbolizes the practice of religion and the power of Buddhism, manifested in the tradition of Drukpa Kagyu. The dragon signifies the name and the purity of the country while the jewels in its claws stand for wealth and perfection of the country.



NATIONAL EMBLEM

The National Emblem of Bhutan is a circle that projects a double diamond thunderbolt placed above the lotus. There is a jewel on all sides with two dragons on vertical sides. The thunderbolts represent the harmony between secular and religious power while the lotus symbolizes purity. The jewel signifies the sovereign power while the two dragons (male and female) represent the name of the country Drukyul or the Land of the Dragon.



NATIONAL FLOWER

The National Flower is the Blue Poppy (*Meconopsis Gakyidiana*). It is a delicate purple or blue tinged with purple blossom with distinctly concave petals. This species grows at an elevation of 3700-4300 meters above sea level. *Gakyidiana* is an epithet based on the Dzongkha word for happiness, *gakyid*, to reflect Bhutan's important cultural aspiration of 'Gross National Happiness' and *diana* is nomenclature term for the flower.



NATIONAL AIRLINE

Drukair, the Royal Bhutan Airlines, is the National flag carrier of Bhutan. Drukair was founded on April 5, 1981 under the Royal Charter by His Majesty the Fourth King Jigme Singye Wangchuck. Drukair plays a vital role in promoting Bhutan as a tourist destination and plays an important role in connecting Bhutan to the world.



CARBON STATUS

Bhutan is the first carbon negative country in the world, absorbing six million tons of carbon every year. The Constitution of Bhutan places a high premium on conservation of its natural environment, mandating the country to maintain at least 60 percent of its land under forest cover for all times to come.



DEVELOPMENT PHILOSOPHY

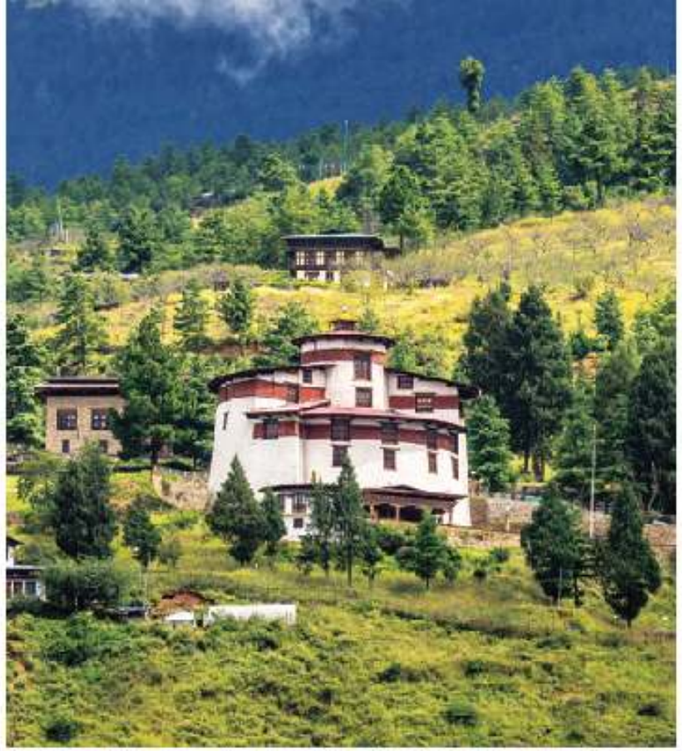
Promulgated by His Majesty the Fourth King His Majesty the Fourth King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, Gross National Happiness guides all development process in Bhutan. The central objective of GNH is to ensure a holistic and sustainable development by balancing the material and the non-material values.

Mindful Nation

Going Slow in Bhutan

A new movement is gaining ground across the world. Based on the need to *slow down*, it challenges the increasingly hectic, fast-paced and fractured nature of our world. It also questions narrow notions of progress based on rampant individualism, materialism, mass consumption, and 'fast' tourism.

Many cities in the West (and increasingly in the East) move at high speed, as people rush from one grinding activity to the next. Anthropologists and sociologists note that in search of insatiable wants and individual gain, community relations and cohesion tend to break down. This creates new kinds of stresses and strains on people and their communities. In response, more and more people are in search of travel experiences that reset their minds to a more peaceful state. However, places that follow a more relaxed pace and collective approach are not always easy to find.







The Ability to Exhale

This slow pace of life is what draws many travelers from around the world to the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan. One can immediately feel the shifting down in gears the moment enters the plane heading for Bhutan. As one flies into the country's air space, the mountains stretch endlessly far below. Covered in deep green forests, they are only interrupted now and then by stunning white capped snow peaks, and small villages and Buddhist lhakhangs (temples) that cling to its mountainsides and rest majestically in its valleys.

Landing at Paro International Airport signals a warm welcome into a country like no other. The airport terminals feature traditional Bhutanese architecture aesthetic and artwork featuring colorful cultural Buddhist symbols. Travelers are warmly greeted by officials dressed in traditional Bhutanese dress, in a small airport

that welcomes tens of thousands of visitors annually.

A blissful scene awaits tourists as they step outside, one that is enhanced by the high mountains that encircle Paro valley. White *khada's* (silk scarves) are presented as an auspicious sign of welcome to travelers. The mountain air is clean, crisp and fresh, free of any pollutants, and one immediately feels the need to breathe deeply. Finally, leaving the so-called rat race behind, even for a short period of time, one can finally exhale. The healing that comes from this small act is wonderous.

Off the Beaten Path

What makes Bhutan as a travel destination unique is the fact that for several centuries it remained isolated. It opened up to the rest of the world relatively recently. It is one of the last remaining Himalayan Kingdoms, with much of its impressive ancient architecture, Buddhist lhakhangs, dzongs (temple fortresses), and deep forests intact. It is not always possible to describe the feelings that are evoked by visiting Bhutan through mere facts, figures, or even photographs. It has an enduring power that can only be understood by being there in person, by experiencing the slow-paced nature of life. It is by experiencing first-hand its pristine forest-covered mountain landscapes, vast valleys, Buddhist monasteries, and meeting people from different corners of the country, that one gets a sense of its uniqueness in a fast-paced world.

Most of the mountainous country is covered by forest, with estimates indicating that over seventy percent is blanketed by trees. It is the world's first carbon negative country, as it absorbs more carbon emissions than it emits. High-altitude mountains surround most villages, towns, and Buddhist locales. There are many National Parks and Reserves throughout the country, which are home to many rare species of animals, flora and fauna, thereby earning many parts of the country the recognition of biodiversity hot spots.

This is a nation with no traffic lights. No commercial and advertising billboard signs. No fast food chains. No large shopping centers or malls. Bhutanese women and men take great pride in what sets their country apart. It is a place that holds certain cultural and moral values dear, such as the importance of community, helping others, and giving to others. These values are rooted deep in Buddhist philosophy, which is practiced by the majority of people in Bhutan.

Preservation of Culture

What also sets the country apart from many other locales in the world are the awe-inspiring well-preserved lhakhangs, dzongs, chortens (stupas), water wheels, traditional bridges, and prayer flags that are found everywhere across the country. They evoke an atmosphere of calm and peace, and a culture of contemplation.

For most Bhutanese, daily rituals entail prayer, meditation, and dedicating the merits of one's positive actions towards generating good karma. This good karma is extended not only to oneself in this life and future lives, but to one's family, friends, as well as to those who one does not always see eye to eye, and to all beings who suffer in the world.

What is most striking is the symbolism that one encounters in architecture, paintings, crafts and dress. The intricately woven fabric that makes up Bhutanese traditional dresses take months (sometimes years) to weave by hand. Each woven fabric, worn as kiras (worn by women) and ghos (worn by men) is different to the next. Traditionally, it is not fastened by buttons, zippers or velcro, but by handwoven belts of varying sizes. This is a true example of going slow.

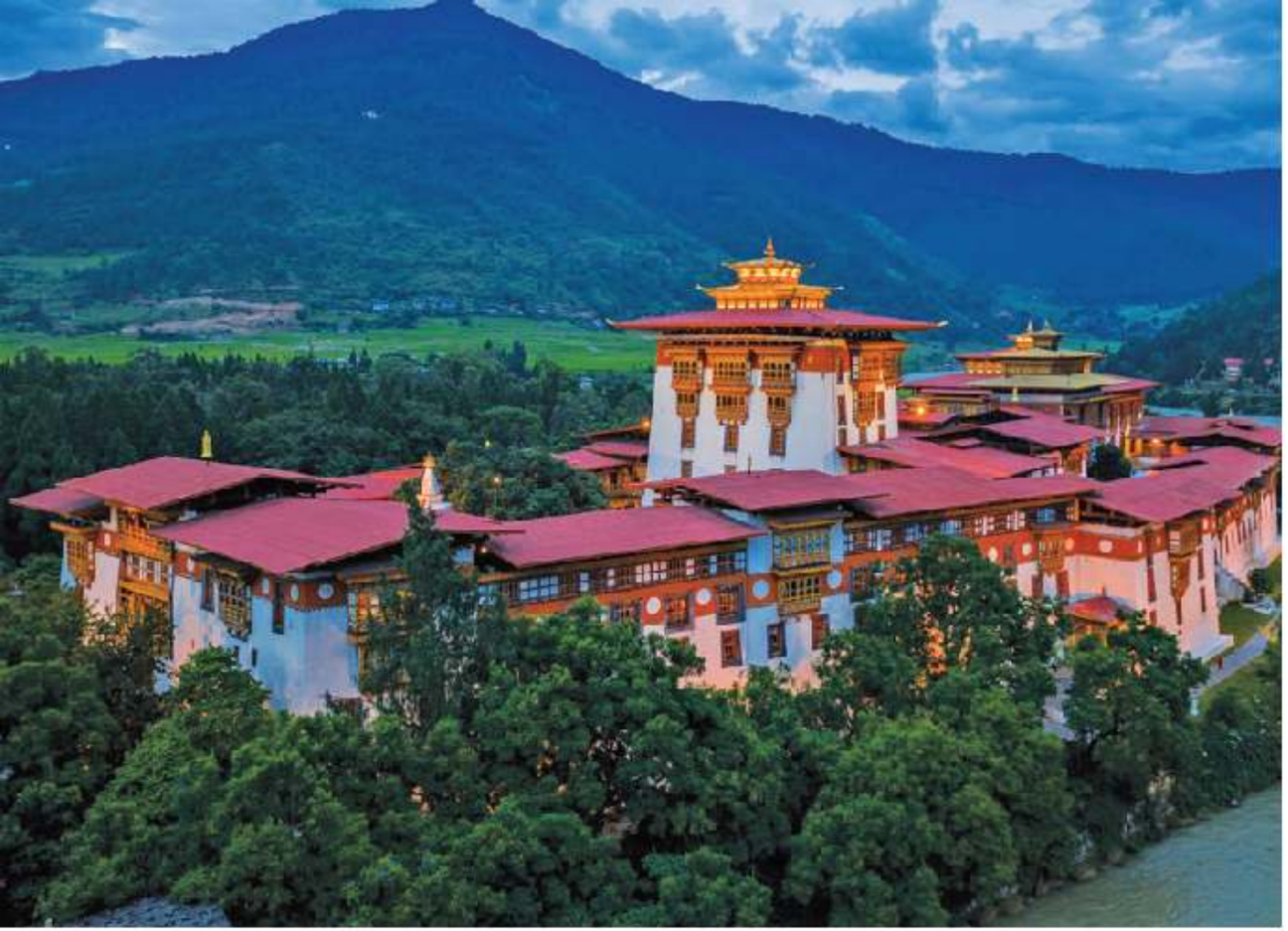
Importance of Community

Small restaurants, cafes and eateries (and even pubs and karaoke lounges) are found all over the country. As towns like Thimphu and Paro become more urbanized, such places become important in bringing people together. Often, meals are shared and eaten communally. This is as true for coffee and lunch breaks at workplaces, as it is for meals taken together during social get-togethers, events or gatherings. This is a time to relax, to swap stories, tease one another, and for laughter.

Perhaps the most lively of social gatherings take place during locally organized traditional archery or khuru (dart) matches. These events bring out playful competitiveness amongst Bhutanese friends, neighbors and family members, as teasing one another is a tactic often deployed to try to distract one's opponents from shooting accurately at their targets many meters away.







Such matches are often accompanied by outdoor picnics, and one can hear the song, laughter, and banter that such gatherings bring about from some distance away. This is a time for people to relax, have some fun, and catch up with one another. Sports, play, and laughter are centrally important for leading a happy life.

Holding True in the Midst of Change

This is not to say that Bhutan has not been impacted by modernity. As it interacts more actively but mindfully with the world, it has tended to do so on its own terms. Nonetheless, complex questions arise about the extent of its desire and limits of engagement with mass consumerism, as well as the dangers of rampant individualism and ecological exploitation.

Changes to society, culture, economy and the environment are noticeable over time. For the first time in the past two to three years, one can find small shops featuring branded clothing. Bhutanese women, men and youth especially love social media, on which they are active. As packaged ramen noodles, prepared frozen food, canned food, potato chips, candies and other packaged food become popular, especially amongst the youth, new issues emerge, such as negative impacts on health from new harmful eating habits. This also translates into increased waste and litter generated from packaging, which in turn negatively impacts the environment and other sentient beings.

The moral concept of Gross National Happiness (GNH) attempts to hold such changes in balance in a hectic fast-paced world. GNH simultaneously places importance on the preservation of culture, the conservation of the environment, good governance, and equitable and sustainable socio-economic development. Through national surveys carried out every five years, it tracks societal, cultural, and political-economic changes across the country. It is one of few countries in the world that tracks the wellbeing of its inhabitants.

Wellbeing cannot be achieved through shortcuts. It is about taking a long-term perspective, and paying attention to the importance of interdependence and interconnectedness of all things. While the West pursues development at high speed, Bhutan reminds us of the importance of taking things slowly and mindfully.

Towards Mindfully Slow Travel

To travel to the wonder of environmentally and culturally rich Bhutan is a unique experience. It allows travelers to experience a country that places central importance on the environment and culture, and its conservation and protection. The country is a rich haven for wildlife, birdlife and rich biodiversity, as well as spiritually rich Buddhist practices that promote harmony, balance, mindfulness and the importance of going slow. The majestic and auspicious mountains of Bhutan remain amazingly protected against the forces of modernity, as they should be. Foreign travelers too have a responsibility as travelers, pilgrims and tourists. We must tread carefully and gently, with great respect and compassion to the local environments, and its inhabitants, big and small, and its local cultural and spiritual practices steeped deep in philosophical meaning and mindfulness. These environmentally and culturally important sites are not just "tourist destinations" but are central ways of life for people and other sentient beings that inhabit these precious spaces. We are mere visitors passing by, but also have the potential of being transformed by our travels and taking and disseminating our learnings when we go back home, while being careful not to impact or harm such fragile locales we visit in turn. As the famous saying goes, take only memories, leave only footprints. Bhutan provides both the traveler an unprecedented experience in a pristine environmental and culturally rich spiritual setting where the pace of life is slow and mindful – a gentle yet powerful reminder that we are all interconnected with one another, to nature and this amazing planet we share with all other sentient beings.



DR RITU VERMA

An anthropologist, researcher, author and photographer, she has published extensively on GNH Bhutan, and beyond. She is a regular columnist in this magazine. Find her at rituvermapuri.wordpress.com, ucla.academia.edu/RituVerma and twitter.com/Rituvermapuri



Best Coffee Shops in Thimphu



CATE KELLY

She is a communication solicer and media consultant with formal training in anthropology focused on human interaction with technology and the environment. She has studied and worked across three continents and is a lifelong student, coffee addict, and book nerd.

In 2009, the first cafe opened in the center of Thimphu. Not even two decades later, coffee culture has infused one of the world's highest capital cities with aromatic arabica pour overs, smooth flat whites, and even coffee brewed from Bhutanese beans. Although Bhutan is known as a land of sweet milk tea and rich suja (butter tea), coffee is making a serious emergence and cultivating centers of connectivity outside the home. Whether you are on-the-go as a visitor or looking for somewhere to work remotely, explore these top coffee shops to visit in Thimphu!



1. Giku Na

A café on a rapid rise of popularity for both locals and foreigners alike, Giku Na opened in Spring 2025 above the National Memorial Chorten. The space was the previous childhood home of owner Kinzang, who now runs the café with his wife Carolyn. Serving up a variety of brunch and lunch dishes, from a stellar pad thai to harissa eggs on flatbread alongside smoothies and lattes, Giku Na is a great place to drink, work, and mingle. Equipped with wifi and fantastic baked goods, bring your laptop here for a few hours or stop by on the way to or from one of the many hiking routes surrounding Thimphu. Any variety of their cookies makes for a stellar mid-hike snack.

2. Royal Botanical Garden Café by Wildcloud

Hidden in Serbithang, this lesser known café is one of Thimphu's best kept secret spots. The Royal Botanical Garden Serbithang is the only botanical garden in the country, covering 32 acres and cared for by the National Biodiversity Center. Just outside the entry gate, to the right of the parking lot for the garden, lies the on-site café by Wildcloud. This wooden, airy space features a balcony jutting over the treetops, steeping your coffee in a valley view. Carrying pastries and desserts from the main Wildcloud café in Mothitang, the Botanical Garden Café is a perfect place to relax, read, and soak in the greenery. There is no in-house wifi , so come equipped with a hotspot if you want to do work here as well. It's a 25-minute drive from the center of town.





3. Brusnika Russian Cafe

These are the only piroshkis you'll find in Bhutan, beckoning alongside assorted cakes and fresh sourdough bread (you can take home by the loaf) at the Brusnika Russian Cafe in Lanjophaka. The dzong and valley views are a sight for sore eyes, and accompanied by a full food menu and in-house wifi , it's a top spot to work, eat, and get your coffee fix. The chocolate and carrot cake are particularly good, and healthy options from soup and salad to flatbreads make it a great choice after trying hearty Bhutanese datsi. On Sundays, a special long brunch, served up buffet style, is available for Nu 1200 per person.

4. Bhutanese Boulangerie

The best croissants in Thimphu are shaped by a Paris-trained pastry chef and come fresh out of the oven every morning. With a new location in the center of Thimphu near the traffic circle, the original Bhutanese Boulangerie was reopened in 2020 in the Tara Phendeyling Hotel in Olakha. Come for the classic croissant, pain au chocolat, pain au raisin, and a menu serving up american, bhutanese, and indian cuisine. Top it off with solid coffee options and this is a great breakfast or brunch spot- grab some extra croissants for the road if you can't make it to one of the mini boulangerie roadside locations on the Thimphu-Paro highway or on the way up to Dochula pass.





5. Mountain Café

The first coffee shop in Bhutan to also grow and roast their own coffee, Mountain Café is a local fixture that visitors can enjoy upon arrival at Paro International Airport. In 2021, the first Mountain Cafe opened in Paro Town Plaza, soon expanding with locations in Thimphu and Phuentsholing. Offering a robust menu of Indian, American, and Bhutanese cuisine alongside coffee brewed from the foothills of Bhutan, this is a great spot to meet, recoup after travel, or work? Café wifi seals the deal.

6. Ambient Café

Ambient Café is the famous aforementioned first cafe in Thimphu. A classic spot to date, expats, visitors, and locals alike converge on Ambient in the center of town for reliable coffee, wifi, and a full menu spanning breakfast and lunch, healthy juices, smoothies, and pastries. The vegan banana bread is a crowd favorite and you can pick up a baguette or sourdough loaf for the road. With a plethora of coffee and tea options, Ambient is the place to be if you need to run into someone- everyone knows everyone here! Opening early (for Bhutan standards) at 8 am and closing at 8 pm, this is the perfect spot to reboot and fuel up before hitting the road into Bhutan's culinary frontier of datsi, momos, and rich butter tea.




Paro Airport



Bhutan ... the source of happiness

This was our Platform 9 and three quarters moment!

You can imagine the excitement of young Harry Potter fans queuing up at London's Kings Cross station for the chance to be photographed next to the iconic sign.

Slightly older folk were similarly enthused at Kathmandu's Tribhuvan Airport as we awaited our departure, not to a mythical Hogwarts, but to the very real Land of the Thunder Dragon?

That's Bhutan to you and me, a place I'd once seen in a world atlas I'd received as a birthday gift aged eight and became immediately captivated with the idea of visiting. Almost 46 years later and I was finally getting the chance to visit this landlocked Himalayan Kingdom.

Sandwiched between two great world powers and draped in some of the finest scenery you'll see on planet Earth, Bhutan still had the legendary 'pull' of a location dreamed up by author J K Rowling.

Virtually none of my friends and family had heard of Bhutan and those that did knew next to nothing about the place other than its pioneering commitment to tackling climate change and trailblazing adoption of the idea of Gross National Happiness.

The fact that the departure to Paro International Airport was delayed by three hours due to bad weather mattered little to my cohort of passengers. The excitement was palpable as we spotted the arrival of the Drukair plane on to the tarmac in Nepal.

The sun had come out after 24 hours of solid rain and our adventure was about to begin.


Paro Valley


Chimmie and Tensing


Guide Yeshi with driver Choki


Karma works at Namgayling Cottages in Gangtey

Around 90 minutes later, with the tricky landing at Paro safely negotiated, it was time for that first 'wow' moment. It was the first of many as part of my nine-day visit!

In a world where so many international airports are 'much of a muchness' adorned with the latest luxury brand outlets and showcasing architectural creativity, Paro stood out as something quite unique. It took my breath away as I stepped off the plane. This was possibly the most awe struck I'd ever been when arriving somewhere new.

It almost bought a tear to the eye. How could somewhere so functional as an airport create such a dramatic impact?

Entering the building, I surveyed the 360 degrees that surrounded me of traditional Bhutanese architecture fused with colorful art and design. Even passport control and luggage reclaim were supremely unique experiences. Then it was out into the fresh Himalayan air to find my driver Tensing and guide Chimmie and away to the capital city of Thimphu.

There had been a lot of flooding as a result of the aforementioned weather but the drive gripped me as we wound our way through stunning vista after stunning vista. I was that eight-year-old boy again.

An hour or so later we arrived at the capital and I was safely despatched into my room at the City Hotel.

Very early the next morning I headed out to explore the empty streets of Thimphu. The exhilaration of this 'pinch me' moment could not be underestimated. Every sight, sound, and feeling was brand new as I slowly witnessed the capital of Bhutan waking up to a brand new day.

A few hours later and I was whisked off by Chimmie and my new driver Choki to visit a few of the landmarks and take in some of the views overlooking the city.

Everywhere we went I was greeted with smiles and laughter as I practised my 'kuzu tsangpo la' opening gambit to all who would listen, the laughter presumably a result of my mispronunciation!

Lunch at the Heritage House provided me with my first taste of Bhutanese cuisine. Chilies and cheese are two of my favourite foods and they blend perfectly to create the national dish of Ema Datshi!

Later that day I wandered down to the national Changlimithang stadium and yet another one of those 'wow' moments. I've visited hundreds of sporting stadia over the course of my life but none of them looked like this with a spectacular pavilion down the one side grabbing my gaze.

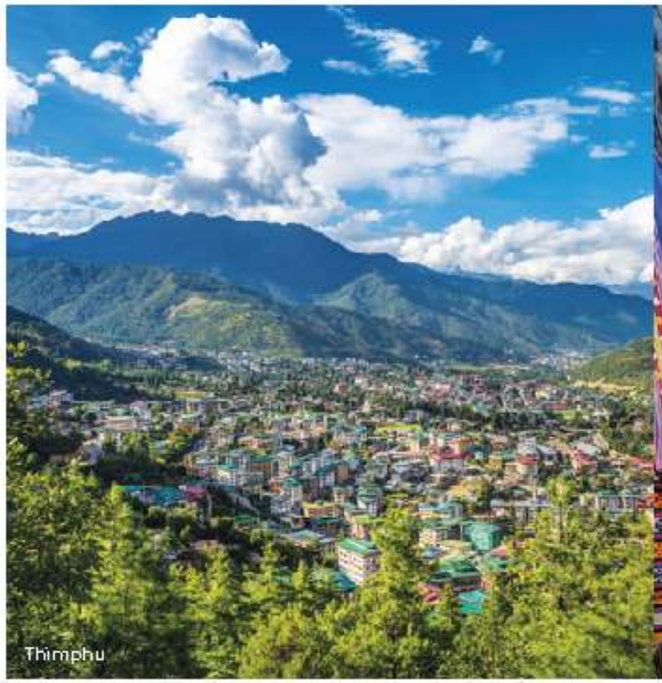
That was day one done and the next few days took us out of Thimphu and on the very long and winding (and switchbacking!) road to Wangduephodrang province and the mind-blowing spectacle that is the Tshechu Festival at Gangtey Monastery.

So much color, so much passion, so much symbolism and so much meaning. This was a full-on immersion into all things Buddhism in Bhutan and an incomparable, multi-sensory experience that almost defies description.

After two nights at the serene and welcoming Namgayling Cottages in the 'Switzerland of Bhutan', it was on to Trongsa and another drive through landscapes that similarly defy description and roads that defy gravity.

Chimmie had unfortunately been taken ill but Yeshi stepped into the breach to impart her considerable knowledge of the journey I was on. Choki remained the steadfast and reliable context with some very impressive driving!

The adventure continued with every second fully embraced for all it was worth. We returned west to Punakha, the former capital up until 1955, to take in the landmark dzong, some strenuous river rafting and the suspension bridge that straddles the Pho Chhu river.


Thimphu

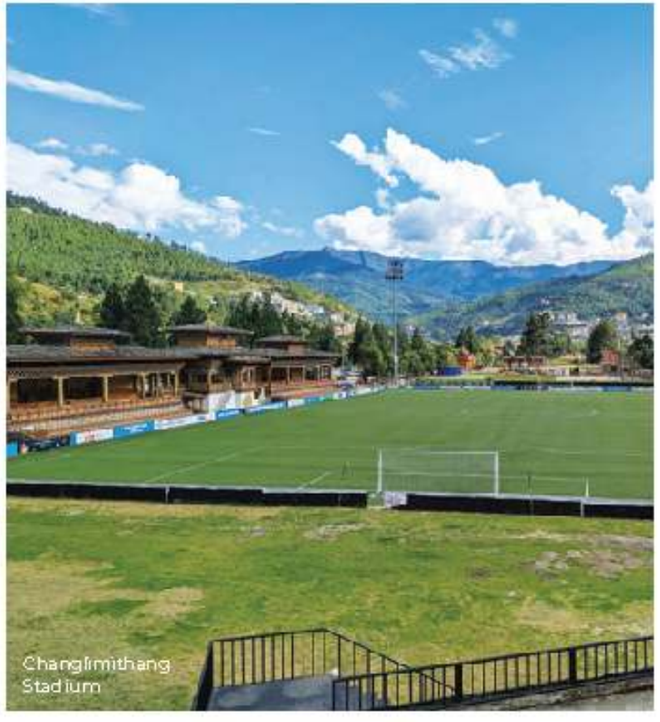

Tshechu at Gangtey Monastery, Wangdue


Trongsa Dzong


Rafting, Punakha Dzong


Buddha Dordenma, Kuenselphodrang


Ema Datshi


Changlimithang Stadium

The final few days were spent in and around Paro with the National Museum of Bhutan proving especially enlightening. It was here that I bumped into artist Phurba Namgay and wife Linda Leaming, an acclaimed American writer who has made Bhutan her home. Her book 'Married to Bhutan' is an absorbing read for anyone interested in life in this enchanting nation.

Before you know it, the time runs out and it was back to Paro airport for an onward flight to Thailand and ultimately home to Scotland. Nowhere does emotion quite like Bhutan and it was a reluctant farewell tempered with the distinct feeling that this would not be my only time in Bhutan. The landscapes, the people, the culture, and the religion take a grip on your soul like nowhere else and make you want to experience more.

One conversation left its mark on me. When I asked Karma, who works at the Namgayling Cottages in Gangtey, where she'd most likely to visit in the world, she immediately responded with a smile "I don't want to leave Bhutan. This is where I feel most happy!"

Having a wee taste of that Gross National Happiness rubs off on you?

Harry Potter and the Land of the Thunder Dragon has a certain ring to it, don't you think?



ROB WILKINSON

He has visited nearly half the world, but nowhere has shaped him like Bhutan. A journalist, editor and PR consultant based on Scotland's west coast, he brings global experience to his work in media and communications. He can be reached at www.gopromomarketing.com

FIVE THINGS I LOVE ABOUT BHUTAN

I came to Bhutan the first time 31 years ago and, like so many visitors, fell in love. I came back two more times, and then in 1997 the Royal Government was kind enough to let me come and teach English. I wasn't much of an English teacher, but I did learn quite a lot of Dzongkha. I also learned a lot about how to live the Bhutanese way. Over the years Bhutan has become so much a part of who I am and I love the Bhutanese way.

Here, are five things I love about Bhutan. Of course there are hundreds of other things, but this is a magazine, not a book, so I'll give you the top five I am thinking of just now.

1. Flying in to Paro

If you're reading this then you're most likely flying into Paro. Get ready? It is magnificent and Bhutanese pilots are some of the best in the world. You're perfectly safe.

Even after all these years I find flying in to Paro jaw dropping, frightening, improbable, hilarious, and awe-inspiring. Coming in to Paro, the plane starts to dip down out of the clouds and into the valley, and depending on which approach it takes, you get to see an awful lot of the landscape close up. If you come in at the other end of the valley from the airport, Taktsang is eye level, and you can just about see the veins on the leaves of the nearby trees, as one of the pilots used to say. Farmers working the paddy will look up and wave, and the beautiful white farm houses perched on knolls, or sitting in the middle of rice fields, make it look like you've crossed into some alternate, magical universe, Narnia-style. Gazing at the majestic mountains, half covered in mist, the tallest, most remote mountains in the world, make it seem like it would be perfectly normal to see a dragon or two peeking out from the clouds. Flying into Paro is magical. It really sets the tone for a visit here.





2. Trekking in Haa

I've done quite a few treks during my time in Bhutan, but my favorite is a trek that begins in the Haa Valley and takes you on ancient yak herder trails, through pine forests, and rhododendron forests, and up above the tree line, where you can see blue sheep, marmots, yaks, and all kinds of alpine flowers. The last day of the five-day trek you're walking along a ridge toward Chele La Pass, and you can see both Paro and Haa Valleys to your left and right, respectively. The views are fantastic, like nothing you've ever seen before. It feels like you're closer to heaven than to earth. I can't get enough of walking in Bhutan, and this trek is fairly easy, and full of jaw dropping beauty.

There are so many places in Bhutan I love, so many breathtaking scenes, and temples, mountains, flora, and fauna. But so many times I think I'd love to be on that Haa trek again.

3. The Bhutanese people

What can I say? Before I came to Bhutan for the first time in 1994, I'd already become friends with some wonderful Bhutanese people in New York. They are the reason I visited Bhutan in the first place. I liked them so much; I wanted to see their country. There's an innate friendliness about the Bhutanese, and they have an ease of living that I don't find with many other people in the world. I like to say the Bhutanese are some of the few people in the world who aren't mad at anybody. I feel this so strongly when I leave Bhutan and travel elsewhere. If you'll allow me further generalizations, I think it's partially the Buddhism that permeates the country as well as the DNA of the





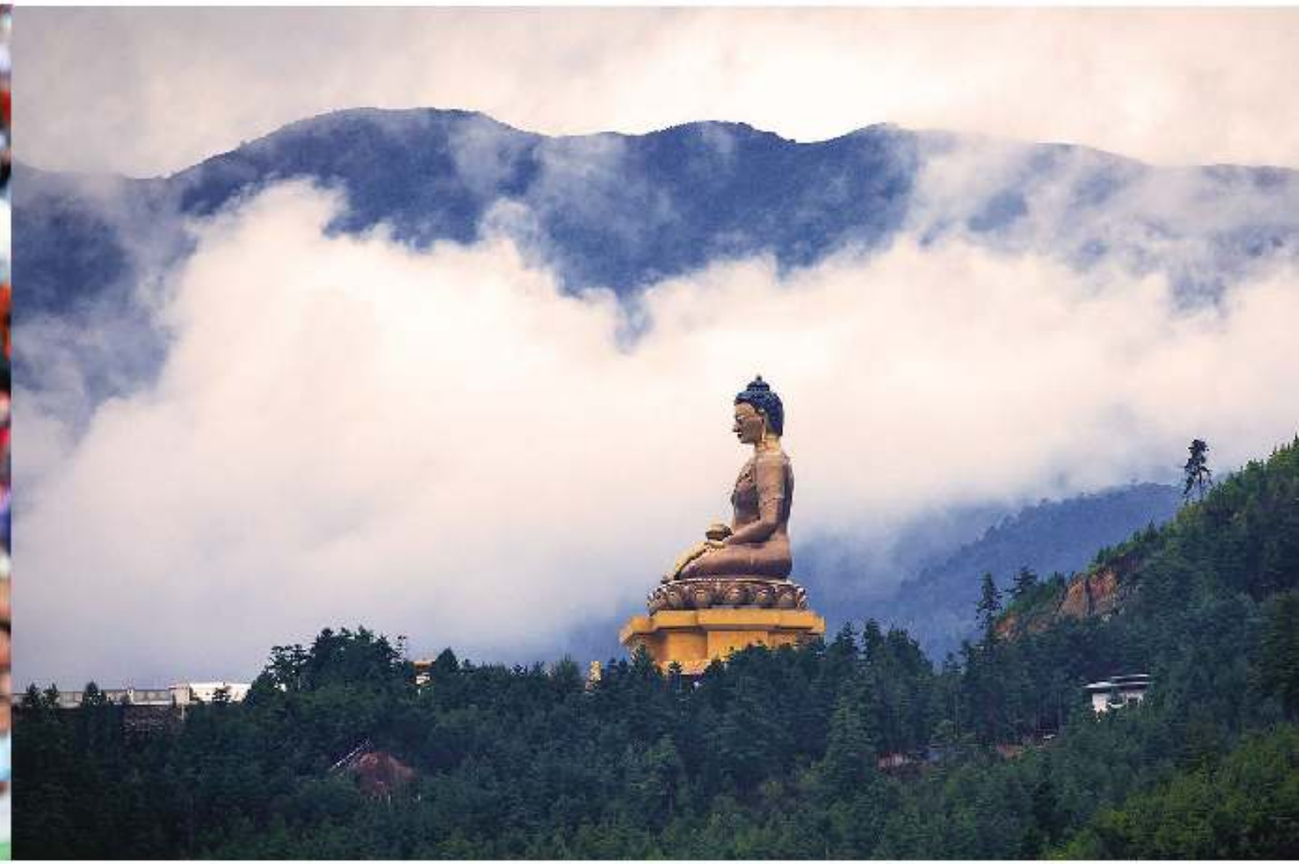












Bhutanese that make them kind and caring, and some of the most generous people I've ever met. I like Bhutanese people so much I married one. Phurba Namgay is a lovely man, a thangka painter.

Also, Bhutanese are very funny, and they enjoy very raucous humor. In short, my kind of people. And if you think I'm talking mainly about the men of Bhutan, think again. I don't know anybody else in the world as funny as my Bhutanese women friends. They will flat out tell it like it is.

4. Wearing the national dress

There's something wonderful about wearing a kira. On the surface, it's just a long, beautifully woven length of fabric, perfectly folded and tucked. But when you put one on, you feel yourself standing a little taller, moving with a kind of grounded elegance you didn't know you had. Bhutanese women do this naturally, of course. Wearing a kira is like stepping into a centuries-old conversation about beauty, modesty, and identity. The best part of wearing a kira is it makes you slow down. You can't rush yourself into one the way you might with jeans and a T-shirt. You wrap, you fold, you pin, you breathe. It's a small, mindful ritual that connects you to Bhutanese culture in a very physical way. And once you're dressed, something shifts. You're not just wearing a garment; you're inhabiting a tradition, and taking part in a nation.

Bhutanese textiles are wildly intricate and colorful and have a way of making even the grayest day feel bright. People definitely smile at me more when I wear kira. And many times my friends often take it upon themselves to adjust my hem or tuck an errant piece of textile, fix my wonky pinning, and generally fuss over me in the most affectionate way. Kira is practical too. It keeps you warm in winter, cool in summer, and dignified in all circumstances. It has enough structure to make you feel put together, but enough looseness to let you eat without fear. And when you sit, you feel wrapped rather than confined, which is a nice metaphor for Bhutanese culture itself.

5. The way I feel in Bhutan

I love the way I feel in Bhutan. To say I'm happy in Bhutan is true, but it doesn't quite say all of how I feel here. Being in Bhutan is so relaxing. And by default I have to walk around quite a lot because I don't like to drive in Thimphu as it's getting too congested. And truthfully, you can easily walk from one end of Thimphu to the other without a vehicle; it isn't very big. Walking in Bhutan gets my endorphins going, and I feel great. I love walking to Sangaygang, the hill above Thimphu to the northwest, and looking out over the valley toward the Big Buddha and Semtokha. I've done it for so many years that I can close my eyes anywhere I am in the world and I see that scene. If I want "violent exercise" I don't take the road, but I go up the path that cuts straight up the side of the hill. It's a real work out. Walking in Bhutan, everything seems right with the world.

The most wonderful thing about being here is that any little thing I do, any interactions I have with people, are for the most part positive and uplifting. Here, it's easier to be kind. And being here for so many years has made it possible for my Bhutanese friends to teach me quite a lot about how to be generous. I like myself in Bhutan. And this makes me very happy.



LINDA LEAMING

She is the author of the best sellers MARRIED TO BHUTAN and A FIELD GUIDE TO HAPPINESS. Her third book about Bhutan, NO RIGHT ANGLES, is forthcoming. She lives in Thimphu with her husband, Phurba Namgay, a painter.

FROM TRANSIT POINT TO DESTINATION

THE RISE OF PHUENTSHOLING



A flash, and it's gone — that about sums up my past connections with Phuentsholing. I'd step off the bus, head straight to the Indian border check post, and jostle for a seat in a shared auto to New Hasimara station. On other occasions, I'd arrive late, crash for the night, and leave at first light. Siliguri, with its cool cafés and urban buzz, was always my preferred stop on the way to the wider world.

Phuentsholing, by contrast, offered little reason to linger — just another indistinct, forgettable border town where you arrive, complete exit formalities, and move on.

When planning the trip from Samdrup Jongkhar to Thimphu, I found myself weighing the options: a direct thirteen-hour bus ride — sometimes stretching to fifteen during the monsoon — or breaking the journey with a stopover in Phuentsholing. Scrolling through the Druk Ride app, I hovered over the choices. A long, uninterrupted haul or a more manageable split across two days? I eventually tap on a front seat to Phuentsholing. Just one night, I figure. I'll head to Thimphu after breakfast the next morning.

The bus pulls out of Samdrup Jongkhar right on time at 6 am. After a simple immigration check, we're on our way. The bright morning light soon gives way to heavy monsoon skies. Rain lashes the windows; lightning splits the horizon. As we pass through waterlogged roads, I feel a quiet sympathy for those huddled under tarpaulin roofs or squeezing into dry areas of open-sided autorickshaws – at least it is not cold.

We halt in Bongaigaon — a name that always causes me to pause before I attempt to pronounce it. While others rush into the hotel restaurant, I stay behind with my packed lunch, finding instead a modest chai stand. The thick, spiced tea perfectly complements my simple meal. I sit back, content, watching the steady stream of passersby.

An old woman approaches, her face lined with weariness, arms full of vegetables. She singles me out, trying to sell spinach and a green leaf I can't identify – something that looks more like a seasoning herb than anything substantial. I have no need for vegetables, but in my best Hindi, I offer her a chai (tea). She hesitates, then points to a packet of processed juice. I buy it for her, appeasing my conscience for refusing the greens.

She doesn't smile, but as she takes her first sip gives a tired nod of acknowledgment. I wonder about her life — does she have a family? Is she alone? How did she end up here? I'll never know. Perhaps we share some fleeting karmic thread from a past life that brought us together for this brief moment.

A sudden car honk breaks my musings. Hands wave at me from a passing vehicle — a strange, unexpected gesture. Then I notice the Bhutanese number plate: Thimphu registration. I can't make out the faces, but the waves stir something warm and familiar in me. A quiet comfort, here on an unremarkable road in an unremarkable town.

The bus driver ushers me in, and soon we're on the move again. The clouds have cleared, and sunlight streams through the windows, filling the cabin with warmth. I drift off. Sleep comes in waves until I'm jolted awake by potholes and blaring horns – Jaigaon.

We roll through Bhutan Gate. Colourful and traditional, its painted facade marking the transition from one world to another. A polite immigration officer boards the bus and begins calling names from the registration list. I hear a muddled version of mine. I raise my hand, while replying, "Ji, sir." I see him smile in the mirror. Bags are unloaded, and I head towards the comfortable Bhutan Hotel, where the owner has kindly offered me a room for the night.

After a long journey, coffee is always my first priority. I head to a small cosy-looking café I'd once noticed when passing through the town. These small indie cafés tucked away in backstreets give towns a charm and character, which is part getaway, part community hub. The coffee is good, the service warm. At a nearby table, a family strikes up a conversation. From their tone, I sense they know me from Thimphu, though I can't place their faces. Bhutan always feels like one big family.

It's been over a decade since I last took a proper look around the town, and revived by caffeine, I decide to explore. Some things feel familiar, but much has changed. The streets are neatly paved, and the town glows with new neon signs, proudly showcasing cool cafés and tempting restaurants. The area around the Zangtopelri temple and its surrounding garden has been pedestrianized, creating a pleasant plaza for evening strolls.

From what I recall, the temple was built in the 1990s by the musician who composed the tune for Bhutan's national anthem. Today, it stands at the heart of the town — not just a place for spiritual practice and relaxation, but a symbol of Phuentsholing itself.

A group of Indian tourists crowd the temple paths. Though the shrine is closed, they remain undeterred, joining locals in spinning the prayer wheels that line the perimeter. They're likely just following local custom — doing a "tourist thing" rather than engaging in deliberate spiritual practice. Yet their actions are not without significance; they set in motion causes that will bear fruit in time.

How is this possible? It's because all phenomena exist



interdependently, with everything arising from connecting causes. A papaya seed, given the right conditions, becomes a papaya tree. Grains of rice give rise to a field of rice. In the same way, Dharmic seeds planted in the mindstream through encounters with sacred symbolism – knowingly or not – will ripen into Dharmic fruit when the conditions align.

This truth is illustrated by the well-known story of a wild boar and a stupa. Long ago, a boar fleeing a dog happened to run around a stupa. Though the act was entirely accidental, it generated merit and left a Dharma imprint on its mindstream. In a future life, the boar was reborn as a human, encountered the Buddha, heard the teachings, and ultimately attained realization.

Ritual symbols operate according to the same principle. In truth, all of human life is shaped by symbols and imagination: a flag, a brand logo, an erotic image, even a simple emoji can stir deep emotions.

Vajrayāna Buddhism works skillfully with this very dynamic. Through visualizing ourselves as deities or simply encountering sacred imagery, our perception begins to shift, loosening the habitual, rigid ways we see ourselves





and the world. Even without conceptual understanding, they leave subtle imprints on the mindstream, as happened with the boar who had a chance encounter with the stupa, preparing the ground for future realization.

I spot a promising-looking restaurant overlooking the back of the temple complex and decide to check it out. The interior reflects the new Phuentsholing — chic and contemporary, yet blended with touches of tradition. As befits a town on the Indian border, Indian cuisine is a specialty. I settle in and enjoy a rich, flavourful paneer dish while admiring the now-illuminated temple.

When I go to pay, the owner recognizes me from Thimphu and waves off the bill. I'm touched by this unexpected generosity.

Back on the street, I decide to explore lower Phuentsholing. Like the area around the temple, the streets here are clean, well-lit, and inviting. One storefront overflows with vibrant flowering plants that spill onto the pavement.

A little further on, I come across a café where white dominates the décor, instantly reminiscent of minimalist cafés in Japan. The cuisine? Unsurprisingly perhaps – sushi. The owner catches me peering through the window and warmly invites me in. I politely decline, explaining I've just eaten, but promise to stop by on a future visit.

It's getting late, and the long journey from Samdrup Jongkhar is beginning to catch up with me. Before calling it a night, I take one last stroll through town. I'm genuinely impressed. Phuentsholing. The long-overlooked border town has shed its drab, utilitarian past. The duckling has traded its grey plumage for something far more attractive.

It now feels like a real town with its own character and rhythm — not just a Bhutanized version of its Indian counterpart across the gate. In addition to serving as a business hub, Phuentsholing has become a popular winter retreat for Thimphu residents seeking respite from the cold.

And now, it's shaping up to be a worthy destination for tourists as well. While it may lack the traditional and sacred charm of Jakar or Trashiyangtse, it offers something different — a distinct flavour born from a rich fusion of Bhutanese architecture and Indian energy. I look forward to my next visit.



SHENPHEN ZANGPO

He was born in Swansea, UK but spent more than 28 years practicing and studying Buddhism in Taiwan and Japan, and around 15 years working with substance abuse in Bhutan, teaching meditation and organizing drug outreach programmes. Currently, he is engaged in activities that present the traditional wisdom of the Dharma to the youth of Bhutan in a modern and relevant way.

She Bhutan

The Rewoven Self - A Journey of Fracture, Repair & Return

Collections created for Bhutan Fashion Week 2025

Designer: ***Gaymit Sada Lepcha***

Profile of Designer

From a young age, I was drawn to clothes and style , how an outfit could shape identity, reflect mood, and tell a story. While preparing for a career in finance after completing my MBA, life had a different plan. When the expected opportunities didn't materialize, a new path began to open.

That turning point became the start of She Bhutan, a space where creativity, culture, and purpose intersect. The early years were filled with learning, experimentation, and perseverance, shaping both my design philosophy and the identity of the brand itself.

Alongside building She Bhutan, I worked in styling and costume design for film, TV, and theatre. These experiences taught me how clothing communicates emotion, character, story, and transformation. Today, my designs are born from that same intention: pieces that feel personal, meaningful, and deeply connected to the journey of the wearer.

About the Brand

Founded in 2013, She Bhutan celebrates women through contemporary design rooted in Bhutanese textile and heritage. The brand became a pioneer in reintroducing yathra in modern silhouettes, transforming traditional woven textiles into contemporary jackets that speak to identity and empowerment.

Every piece is created with purpose, combining storytelling and modern expression. She Bhutan is for the woman who carries strength, embraces growth, and celebrates her own evolving story.

About the Collection

Theme: She - The Rewoven Self

Inspiration: Kintsugi

She – The Rewoven Self draws inspiration from kintsugi, the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery with gold, where fractures become part of the beauty and strength of the object. This collection marks the relaunch of She Bhutan and my own comeback after the pandemic, transforming challenges into a narrative of healing, growth, and courage.

Each piece tells a story of resilience and renewal , a reflection of personal journeys of overcoming setbacks and returning stronger. It is also a tribute to all women who have faced fractures in life yet found the strength to rise again.

Unfolding in three acts, the collection traces a woman's journey from fracture, to repair, to return, blending tradition with modernity, heritage with reinvention.





The Story in Three Acts

Act I – The Fracture

"You are allowed to fall apart."

Act One, The Fracture, represents the moment when life tests us, when we feel fragile, and when the cracks appear in our journeys. This act reflects the fracture in She Bhutan's story, my journey as a designer, and countless journeys of women who have experienced breaking points.

The jackets feature white and green stripes, inspired by kintsugi. These stripes symbolize the fracture itself, lines of vulnerability and truth. They mark the pause, the first acknowledgment of fragility, and the courage it takes to face the moment of breaking.

Throughout the collection, white remains a binding element, appearing as motifs, stripes, or running stitches. In Act 1, it is most visible as the fracture; in later acts, it subtly ties together repair, resilience, and return.

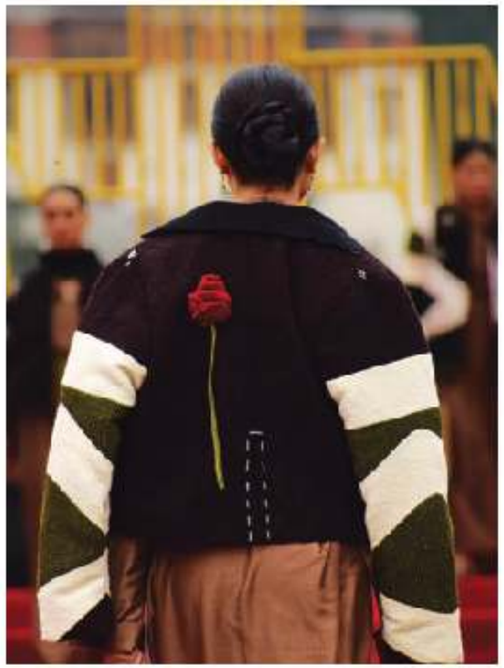
Color Palette: White and Green

Jacket Names: Fragile, Shatter, Scars, Trace









Act 2 – The Repair

"You are allowed to begin again."

Act Two is The Repair, the stage where healing begins. It embodies growth, resilience, and hope. The jackets carry minimal white running stitches, subtle and almost invisible, representing the earliest stage of mending , careful, deliberate, and tender.

This act introduces patchwork jackets, reflecting how we piece ourselves together: not perfectly, not quickly, but truthfully. A unique Shinglo motif (Tree of Life) was created exclusively for Act 2. It symbolizes grounding, growth, and the roots that keep us steady during healing. Like a patch that reinforces weakened fabric, the Tree of Life anchors the wearer, reminding us that even after breaking, we can rise and rebuild.

On the back of the first two jackets (Patch and Mend), rose buds and larger roses symbolize fragile hope. Even in the middle of repair, when we are tender and vulnerable, there is always the quiet promise of blooming. These details highlight the emotional truth of healing: it takes time, courage, and creates its own kind of beauty.

Jacket Names: Patch, Mend, Heal, Hold

Act 3 – The Rewoven Self

"You are allowed. You are meant to return."

Act Three celebrates The Rewoven Self, where every fracture, every repair, and every story of struggle becomes part of a stronger, unified whole. Here, we honor the power of return , the courage to emerge fully, woven anew, resilient and unbreakable.

Color Palette: Red, Black, and White
Red: the fire within, courage, strength, and energy of return
Black: grounding, representing the depth of challenges walked through
White: the binding light, echoing kintsugi , purity and clarity holding the self together

Each jacket features the signature red running stitch, representing the lifeline , the pulse of resilience that traces every rise, fall, and rise again. The red stitch ties together the story of surviving, healing, and returning with renewed purpose.

Act 3 features She Bhutan's most renowned jacket silhouettes, now lengthened, refined, and crafted to embody strength. The handwoven yathra takes full prominence here, bold, textured, and present in every piece.

Jacket Names: The Comeback, Bloom, Glow, Shine, Reclaimed





Craftsmanship & Dedication

Every piece in this collection is woven, stitched, and finished with intention. The yathra is made by community-based weavers in Bumthang over more than six months, reflecting skill, patience, and care. Special thanks to Druk Yathra for listening to every detail and helping bring the handwoven yathra to life.

Every jacket, every stitch, and every motif is a tribute to women who fall, rise, and hold themselves together with strength. Special mention to the dedicated seamstresses who tirelessly worked to ensure every detail speaks of care and craftsmanship.

Closing Note

She – The Rewoven Self is more than clothing. It is a reflection of real lives, real challenges, and real strength. It honors:

The courage to fall
The patience to repair
The joy that comes from returning to oneself
Stronger, grounded, and beautifully rewoven.

With Gratitude

This collection was made possible through the support of:

- Department of Media, Creative Industry & Intellectual Property
- The Royal Textile Academy
- Government of India – Economic Stimulus Plan

We are deeply grateful to all the hands that shaped this vision and helped bring this creative story to life.

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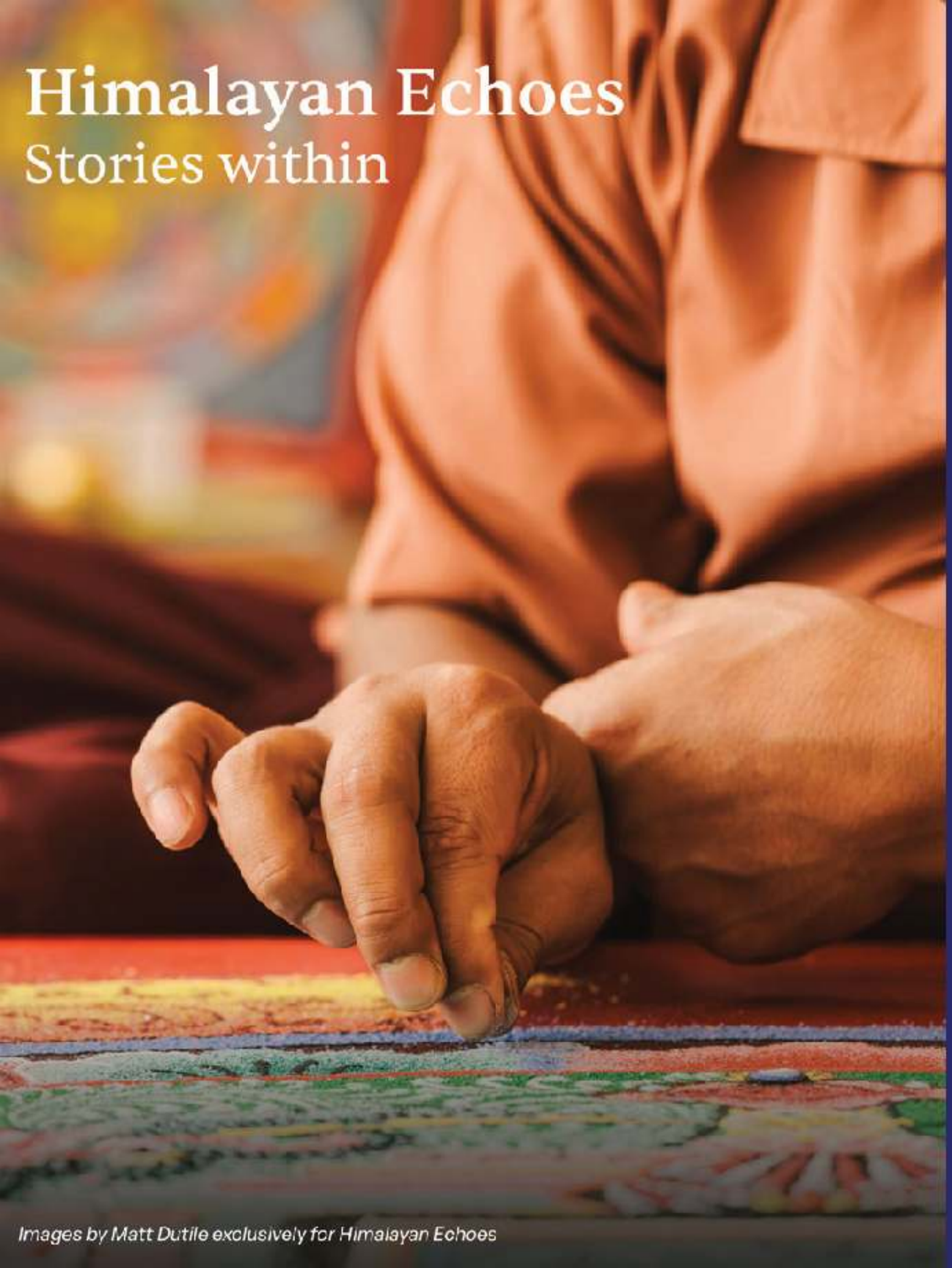
@SHEBHUTANOFFICIALPAGE



GAYMIT SADA LEPCHA

A self-taught designer, Gaymit established She Bhutan in 2015. With an MBA in finance, she had imagined a corporate career, but when the expected opportunities didn't appear, it became the beginning of She Bhutan. A stylist and costume designer in film, TV, and theatre, she creates contemporary designs with her specialty in handwoven yathra, pioneering contemporary yathra jackets in Bhutan.

Himalayan Echoes
Stories within



Images by Matt Dutile exclusively for Himalayan Echoes

Himalayan Echoes creates journeys that go far beyond sightseeing. We open doors to sacred landscapes, ancient monasteries, and rare encounters with the guardians of rituals, crafts, and ways of life that have endured for centuries.

Our experiences are designed for meaning: sharing stories over butter tea, hearing monks chant at first light, or following forest trails known only to locals. Every detail is thoughtfully arranged — seamless, exclusive, immersive, and low-impact.

This is travel that transforms, leaving you with more than memories; it leaves you with your own story woven into the Himalayas.



Crafting unforgettable journeys into the heart of the Himalayas

Join us in writing your Himalayan journey
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HIMALAYAN ECHOES

Himalayan Echoes is a licensed tour operator with the Department of Tourism Bhutan

Guardians of the Himalayas

Our guests start their day at the monastery, as the deep, resonant call of the dungchen horn fills the air — low, steady, and ancient. Through Himalayan Echoes' close relationships with monastic musicians and temple guardians, these performances—normally reserved for ritual ceremonies—become intimate personal encounters. Guests feel the vibration in their chests, a sound that is closer to breath than music. Accompanied by chanting and traditional instruments, the moment becomes a glimpse into centuries of spiritual sound — a story within sound itself. Many say they can still feel it long after the last note fades.

Images by Matt Dutile exclusively for Himalayan Echoes



Images by Matt Dutile exclusively for Himalayan Echoes

Step into a sunlit studio where brushes rest beside pigments made from earth, flowers and stone. Here, art is not simply taught; it's shared. Through Himalayan Echoes' close relationships with Bhutanese thangka painters and textile artists, our guests learn from masters who have spent years studying sacred imagery, from guardian deities to symbolic motifs. As colour builds and forms emerge, guests begin to understand that every line holds lineage, every symbol a hidden story within the canvas. This is not a souvenir — it's an invitation into the rhythm of an artist's life.

Join us in writing your Himalayan journey
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Images by Matt Dutile exclusively for Himalayan Echoes

Travel inward, guided by the wisdom of the mountains

Plan your next journey of restoration, renewal, or inner transformation in Bhutan—where the pace slows, clarity expands, and wellbeing is woven into the very DNA of the country. Himalayan Echoes curates deeply meaningful wellness experiences for travellers seeking stillness, balance, and reconnection in the world's last great sanctuary of mindful living.

Whether you stay in a village homestay or a five-star luxury retreat, we design every journey to help you discover your own wellness path—through meditation, time with monks, temple visits, hiking, forest bathing, or spending time with rural families whose way of life inspires and transforms.

Bhutan, once known as the Land of Medicinal Herbs, is a destination where wellness is not a trend but a tradition. Hot stone baths, Sowa Rigpa healing practices, herbal therapies, and ancient Himalayan wisdom all come together to create a rare, restorative environment found nowhere else on earth.



Himalayan Echoes offers unparalleled access to unique experiences, sacred sites, and master healers where wellbeing unfolds naturally and intuitively. From seamless planning to transformative experiences, we craft encounters that feel intimate, intentional, and deeply rejuvenating.

If you're ready to travel with purpose—and return changed—your wellness journey begins in Bhutan. Let's create a path that restores, uplifts, and realigns you from within.

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HIMALAYAN ECHOES

exposure

Photo credit – Kristina Vackova



PELDEN DORJI

He runs Bhutan Rides – a local tour company that organizes world-class mountain-biking and motorcycling tours in Bhutan. Please write to www.bhutanrides.com to curate your next riding adventure in Bhutan.

Riding with the Wheels of the Wind

I'd often make the treacherous bus journey from Thimphu to Trongsa to spend the long winter school holidays with my late grandfather. He was a gifted storyteller and he'd take me down the rabbit hole of enchantment with stories of his travels when he was young man, of ancient folklores filled with magic and superstition. A seed was sown early on – a wanderlust for adventures beyond the horizon.

I was particularly enthralled by how the powerful local deity Ap Muksen would impregnate beautiful women and father children who'd grow up to become 'ng-yagoes' – men of superhuman strength and ability. One such character was Garp Lungi Khorlo – translated as the 'Wheel of the Wind', and was blessed with an extraordinary ability to run great distances in his official capacity as the messenger of the Trongsa Penlop. Legend has it that he could run from







Trongsa to Punakha and return before nightfall. On one such errands, he was bewitched by the infamous Nyala Duem – and unfortunately met an untimely death. My grandfather said many a travelling lothario had succumbed to the seductive beauty of the infamous evil demon.

On the way back from the village, I'd often gaze out looking at the mountains on the other side of the gorge, wondering about the obsolete ancient trail that once connected the Shar and Mangde valleys on either side of the Pelela pass. The trail that practically built the modern state of Bhutan.

After nearly 25 years it was time to put that yearning to rest. Inspired by Garp, and my desire to create a world-class mountain-biking tour in Bhutan, my seminal friend Sonam Tenzin and I set out to ride the trail that Garp Lungi Khorlo ran. Such explorative rides are often treacherously unpredictable, and you need a comrade who wouldn't flinch at the face of adversity. In Sonam, I've a found an unbreakable spirit who'd take any despair in his stride even if it meant riding through the lair of Nyala Duem in the dark!

















We started riding early from Samtengang, gradually climbing over the ridge for about three hours. On cresting the first ridge, the trail opened into some beautiful meadows with breathtaking views of towering peaks in a distance. From here the trail plummeted down into the woods on a precipitous sliver of moss-covered single-track to Razawog village where we had the good fortune of coming across village folk taking a break from the day's work to have a picnic lunch by a creek. Seeing two exhausted bikers, they offered us tea and lunch, and in that partaking, I realized the thread that bind us as a community is a shared responsibility to help each other, infused with a fair dose of light-hearted banter and good food. The women grumbled that there aren't enough men in the village, and begged for us to stay, but the days of night-hunting are a thing of the past, and we had to crank on to our destination – my village Tangsibji.

After crossing the Dangchu river, we followed the river upstream riding on a stretch of disused trail that lurched up the mountain's flank on a long perilous climb to Nobding. At this point, the high Pelela pass loomed before us putting a serious damper on our spirits, but we found new life in our legs nourished by the delicious village meal, and the wheels on the



bike kept turning perhaps aided by the spirit of Garp Lungi Khorlo. At 4 pm, Sonam and I stood atop the pass exhausted and laughed at our foibles for having ridden almost 90% of the climbs, teetering constantly on the thin line between joy and despair.

As any mountain biker would agree, a prospect of a long downhill would make us smile like a Cheshire cat, so we opened our shocks and pointed our handlebars downwards into the nomadic villages of Longtey and Longmey where herders were rounding up their cattle for the night. With so much history and folklore attached to the trail, it felt like our mountain bikes were time-travel machines that thrust us back into medieval Bhutan. Stories came to life and historical figures palpable in every neck of the woods. As dusk fell, we stubbornly continued riding in the dark and made it to Rukupji village but decided to abandon the ride as if by premonition from the 'Wheel of the Wind' to steer clear from the perils of Nyala Duem.

Although a part of me longed to witness the legendary beauty of the evil spirit, we had to bypass Chendepji village and continue to Tangsibji to retire for the night. The little boy had returned to his village on a mountain-bike.











Compassion in Action

Jangsa Animal Saving Trust



The morning air in Sorbithang carries the familiar rhythm of devotion — a blend of barks, soft hoofbeats, and the careful footsteps of caretakers beginning their day. Mist lifts slowly from the surrounding hills as the first rays of sunlight touch the shelter's corrugated roofs. Here, adjacent to the Royal Thimphu College, stands a place that breathes compassion: Jangsa Animal Saving Trust.

This is not just an animal shelter. It is a refuge, a field hospital, a classroom, and a quiet spiritual reminder of what it means to care for life in all its forms.

MY COMPASS FOR COMPASSION

My journey with Jangsa began long before I ever set foot in its Thimphu shelter. It started in my childhood, when my father — a Dzongkha teacher and one of the kindest people I know — would stop to feed hungry dogs on our evening walks. "Every being deserves kindness," he would say. "Even if they can't thank you for it."

Those words became a compass for my life. I've been taking care of sick, injured, and hungry animals for as long as I can remember. When I first volunteered at Jangsa as a college student many years ago, I immediately felt at home. Every visit since has strengthened my connection with the animals I meet — each encounter teaching me something about patience, trust, and care.

Some of those encounters have stayed with me more closely, especially the animals I took home so I could help them heal more fully. My own dog, Courage, for example, was rescued from the streets of Paro and has been with me for almost eight years now. And just recently, another little soul, Zamine — which means "girl" in *tshangla* language — came into my life. She was brought to the Thimphu shelter all the way from Gelephu, unable to walk, her hind legs completely paralyzed. With daily massages, gentle exercises, and the support of a makeshift carrier cloth, she is now slowly regaining her strength and her ability to walk. When I'm away, my mother looks after her, and together we celebrate every small sign of progress.

Zamine's resilience is my daily reminder that compassion is not about perfection; it's about persistence.

THE HEART OF JANGSA

Jangsa Animal Saving Trust was founded in 2000 by Lama Kunzang Dorjee Rinpoche, under the guiding principle Saving Lives, Living Compassion. What began as a small group performing Tsethar — the Buddhist practice of liberating animals from slaughter — has since grown into one of Bhutan's most respected civil society organizations, recognized with the National Order of Merit (Gold) from His Majesty The King.

Today, Jangsa operates across eleven Dzongkhags in Bhutan and in Kalimpong, India. Its shelters range from the rescue and treatment center in Thimphu to sanctuaries in Lhuntse, Trashigang, Tsirang, Bumthang, and beyond. Some animals are victims of road accidents or abandoned pets; others were rescued from slaughterhouses across the border. Jangsa now cares for over 3,000 animals — dogs, bulls, pigs, goats, yaks, horses, and fish.

Yet behind every number is a heartbeat — and a story.

STORIES OF RESCUE AND RESILIENCE

What stays constant at Jangsa is the quiet, steady work of caring for animals in need — each day bringing its own moments of challenge and hope.

There was the young bull rescued from a truck bound for slaughter in Assam. When he arrived at the Tsirang sanctuary, his legs trembled from exhaustion, his eyes dull with fear. Today, he grazes freely in a green pasture with others like him, each of them bearing a bright red thread around their necks — a symbol of their release, their Tsethar.

Then the dog that was found by the roadside near Babesa, her back broken after being struck by a car. For weeks she lay motionless, tended by Jangsa's clinic team, until she began to move her head, then her front paws. Now she wobbles around the Sorbithang compound, tail wagging as if reminding everyone that life's smallest victories matter most.

These are just two of countless stories of compassion in action.

UNSUNG HEROES OF COMPASSION

Behind these stories of rescues and recoveries are quiet heroes — the volunteers and caretakers who show up every single day. Tshering Dorji, one of Jangsa's longest-serving staff members, often says, "We may not have much, but the animals don't care about what you wear or how much you earn. They care about whether you show up."

There are about twenty salaried caretakers across Jangsa's shelters and hundreds of volunteers nationwide. Many are young Bhutanese — students, nurses, monks — who dedicate weekends to cleaning, feeding, or simply sitting beside an injured animal that needs comfort. Local biker clubs also show up regularly with food supplies and lend a helping hand with some of the heavier tasks that need to be done.

The shelter in Sorbithang alone receives more than 1,000 rescue calls each year. Some days are heartbreaking: car accidents, abandoned pets, or a sudden influx of sick animals during outbreaks of contagious diseases like distemper. Other days are pure joy — an adoption, a recovery, a wagging tail after months of stillness.

It's not grand gestures that sustain Jangsa, but





















thousands of small acts of care: a bowl of food, a gentle touch, a moment of patience. Together, they form a quiet movement of compassion — one that transforms not only the lives of animals, but also those who choose to care for them.

COMPASSION WITHOUT ILLUSION: BHUTAN'S PARADOX OF PROGRESS

Bhutan is often described as the "Last Shangri-La", a nation guided by Gross National Happiness. It's true that our policies place wellbeing above wealth, and our spiritual roots run deep. But like anywhere in the modern world, we face tensions between tradition and change.

Many Bhutanese still eat meat, even though almost all of it is imported. And today, the country is debating whether to establish slaughterhouses within our borders — a proposal that has stirred both practical and moral reflection. As Lama Kunzang often reminds us, when killing becomes easier, feeling compassion becomes harder. He believes that such measures would erode the compassionate essence that defines Bhutan as a Dharma Kingdom.

Yet compassion in Bhutan has never been an abstraction. It lives in small, daily acts — villagers feeding stray dogs after prayers, monks rescuing insects from butter lamps, families releasing fish during festivals. But modernization has also brought contradictions: imported meat in every market, stray animals multiplying as towns expand, and a generation influenced by lifestyles where compassion is often symbolic rather than lived.

That is why organizations like Jangsa matter so deeply. They remind us that compassion is not something we inherit automatically from our culture — it is something we must practice, renew, and protect. In Lama Kunzang Dorjee Rinpoche's words, "The greatest refuge is compassion. Saving animals is not only saving them — it is saving ourselves from indifference."

COMPASSION THROUGH POSSIBILITY

As Jangsa continues its rescue work, another dimension of compassion is taking shape — one that begins earlier, by preventing suffering rather than responding to it. At the Pema Yoedling Monastery in Gelephu, under Lama Kunzang's leadership, monks have adopted a fully vegan kitchen, the first of its kind in Bhutan. The monastery now produces tofu and tempeh, also offering these plant-based alternatives to the local community.

This initiative is about more than food. It reflects a growing awareness that compassion can guide not only how we care for animals, but also the choices we make each day. By making plant-based options accessible and inviting, the program encourages people to join this shift in a gentle, practical way — proving that meaningful change rarely requires pressure, only possibility.

A CALL FOR MINDFUL PROGRESS

As Bhutan moves forward with modernization, we face the same question every generation must ask: What kind of progress do we want? If our success comes at the cost of our compassion, then it is not true progress.

Lama Kunzang has often shared that Bhutan can show the world that development and compassion can grow together. It's not about pretending that everyone must be vegetarian overnight, or that compassion belongs only to monasteries and NGOs. It's about recognizing that every policy, every plate of food, every act of kindness — large or small — shapes the moral landscape of our nation.

For Lama Kunzang and the Jangsa family, every act of rescue and every life spared is part of a larger vision — to help Bhutan remain a true Dharma Nation. A land where compassion is not only a belief but a living practice, woven into our daily choices and national policies alike.

Projects like the Gelephu Mindfulness City offer a profound opportunity. Imagine a modern Bhutan that leads not only in happiness but in compassion-driven innovation — where plant-based industries thrive, where humane education is part of school curricula, and where every community has space for both people and animals to coexist peacefully.

IN THE END

When I return home after volunteering, Zamino is always waiting — her tail twitching, eyes bright with expectation. Some days she can almost stand without support and walk a bit on her own. On others, I still carry her in the sling to let her feel the ground beneath her paws. Her life may be limited by her legs, but not by her spirit. She reminds me, daily, that compassion is a muscle — it grows with use.

And perhaps that is the ultimate teaching of Jangsa: that saving animals is not charity, but continuity — the continuation of our humanity, our culture, and our collective wish for happiness that includes all beings.

As my father told me long ago, "Every act of kindness lights a path, even if we never see where it leads."

At Jangsa, I see that light moving from one being to another — in healed animals, in dedicated hands, and in choices made with compassion.

Together, these small lights illuminate something that deepens Bhutan's vision of well-being — a compassion that extends beyond people to every being who shares our world. A natural companion to Gross National Happiness: Gross Animal Happiness.


RTC and Biker Club volunteers


Yangchen and her father at Jangsa

CARRY COMPASSION HOME — BECOME A DONOR

Every act of kindness helps keep Bhutan's spirit of compassion alive.

At Jangsa Animal Saving Trust, kindness takes form in rescue, healing, and the hope of a new beginning.

If your journey through Bhutan has touched your heart, you can help carry this forward — by supporting Jangsa's mission of compassion in action.

Call/WhatsApp
Sonam Norzin (+975 17643532) or Kaysang Chophel (+975 17989550). **Email:** jangsamember@gmail.com

Connect with Jangsa: jangsaanimalsavingtrust
jangsaanimalsavingtrust, jangsaanimalsaving.org



YOGA YANGCHEN

She is a yoga and meditation teacher, yoga therapist in training, sound healer, animal rights advocate, and content creator. Her passion in life is improving the well-being of all sentient beings, people and animals alike. Based in Thimphu, she works on changing mindsets through her well-being practice.

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Bureaucratic Bazaar



It cannot be argued that while countries and people may be different, office culture is the same everywhere. Every sterile, cubicle jungle has its usual archetypes; the office drunk who gets plastered as soon as they punch out at 5 pm, the hard worker who takes on more than they should but clearly can't say no because they have a deep need to please, the one who seems to have the most experience yet still does not know what they're doing, the one who confuses everyone because nobody knows what they do, and of course, the boss, el capitan, who takes sick delight in piling work up to the eyes on others but acts surprised when their colleagues are burnt out and unable to deliver on deadlines. The person who refuses to take risks but is more than happy to claim the credit and says "it was a team effort" while the hard worker is passed out in the corner somewhere with smoke billowing from their ears.

Not my boss though, I swear, my boss is a gem!

On my road to career world domination, it's the same as a supervillain taking over the world just with forced fun office retreats every six months, I have spent a significant amount of time in offices and had the chance to immerse myself in office politics. From the hushed gossip of inter-department romances (I really should stop eavesdropping) to some of the mind-numbing meetings where, purely for the sake of empty "feedback," somebody always says "you might want to use a comma instead of a period in that section of your presentation." I have also found that you can tell which departments, sectors or agencies get along or don't get along with each other from just observing the office lingo. For example, if two departments get along well then their official documents usually say things like "in collaboration with" or "in partnership with", but if they don't get along then it's "in association with" or "in relation with", but the most dreaded is the "affiliated with" — that's when you know they hate each other's bureaucratic guts, even during their lunch break! I joke of course, mostly.

Bhutanese office culture does have its own unique flavour, it's mostly the smell of doma (betel nut) that hits you as you walk in, but somewhere in that odor is the scent of mountain magic. Bhutanese offices are not just soulless sanitized prisons of forced productivity, okay, maybe some are, but on some days the space erupts from a soundscape of keyboard clackery to that of some Asian flea market, complete with the aggressive hawking. I love this aspect of our work culture. One minute you're trying to finish a report when somebody proceeds to reach under their table, bring out a heavy burlap sack and with a shrill call of "kewa ga go ni charo tshu?" (who wants to buy some potatoes?) the office is transformed into a vegetable bazaar.

It's not just vegetables though, some days you get fruits, other days it's baked goods, some even bring in clothes. I once managed to buy a kilo of avocados, three boxes of strawberries and two pairs of football socks - I don't even play football - a colleague had brought in a gunny bag full of sports apparel and I partook. Sometimes if you're lucky and the stars are aligned, you can do your entire week's worth of ration shopping from the comfort of your ergonomic desk and chair, which reminds me I need to get a chair with better back support, I am sure somebody in the office will be selling a few.

Not going to lie, these sudden impromptu marketplaces in the workplace can be disruptive but not by much. The heart of this flourishing, festive flea market in our facilities is not in what is being sold but why. Most of the time, colleagues and office mates are turning their workstations into mini markets to help their family or relatives out. Sometimes a cousin will send you a sack full of potatoes to sell while other times it's a cousin who is closing down their retail store and needs to get rid of stock. All of this is to help their family or friends, even the buying is a way to help - do you think I actually need football socks? I still don't know what an offside is, but I bought the socks to help my colleague so that they could in turn help their family out. It is a chain of compassion brought about through conscientious consumerism. Although sometimes it does get to be a bit much, I don't know how many more times I have it in me to buy unnecessary sports apparel, or maybe I could keep buying them, store them and when I retire, start a sporting apparel store; I'll even design it like an office and sell some of my cousin's cabbages if he runs low on cash.

Bhutanese work culture is not the most efficient and it does take ages to get anything done but it is human at its core. It is a space where over the weekly slog you can find something every day that brightens your day. You find intentional kindness in the spreadsheets and much like a bazaar, it is loud and chaotic and yet comforting. While I may have gripes due to my unhealthy need for perfection, I would not trade this for anything.

Now, who wants a brand-new pair of football socks?



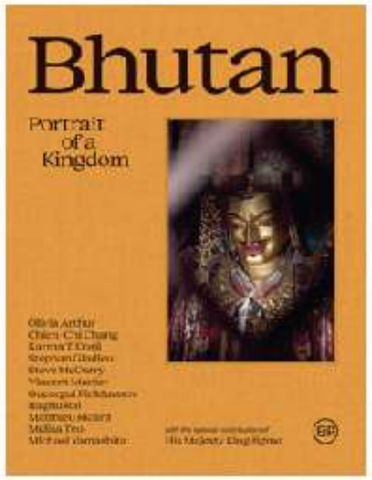
KINLEY PHYNTSO

He is a freelance writer who enjoys comedy, music and comedic music. Currently racked with existential dread, he also likes long walks and talking people's ears off.

Bhutan

Portrait of a Kingdom

With the exclusive contributions of **His Majesty King Jigme, Steve McCurry, Michael Yamashita, Matthieu Ricard** and **Vincent Munier**



10 world-renowned photographers.
3 acclaimed writers.
1 timeless Himalayan kingdom.

Bhutan: Portrait of a Kingdom **is the result of an extraordinary project undertaken under the Royal patronage of Her Majesty Queen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck. Over the course of a year, ten internationally recognized photographers travelled across Bhutan, each during a different season, to capture the country's landscapes, traditions, and spirit through their unique lenses. The book features exclusive photographs by His Majesty The King. Accompanying the photographs are texts by Pico Iyer, Matthieu Ricard, and Dasho Kinley Dorji. Together, these contributions offer an intimate and timeless portrait of a kingdom where heritage, nature, and harmony are deeply intertwined.**



On November 13, 2025, Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen launched Bhutan: Portrait of a Kingdom, a stunning photography book that celebrates the beauty, spirit, and heritage of Bhutan. The book is dedicated as a tribute to His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo, Jigme Singye Wangchuck, commemorating His Majesty's 70th Birth Anniversary. Her Majesty described the book as a heartfelt offering created with love, capturing the country through both the lens and the heart.

The English edition is now available worldwide through major online retailers and at select bookstores such as Asia Books in Thailand and Kinokuniya locations across Asia, the UK, US, and Australia. The French edition launched in Paris this December, followed by a series of launches throughout Southeast Asia in early 2026. A photographic exhibition featuring select images from the book will open in Paris in spring 2026.



This book began with a simple wish: to share Bhutan with the world, to open a window onto its mountains and valleys, its people and rituals, its hopes and joys. But along the way, it became something more: a gift for Bhutanese ourselves, to see our home through new eyes. It allows us to witness our familiar world reflected back through the gaze of others, and in doing so, to rediscover what we often overlook.

Her Majesty the Queen of Bhutan,
Jetsun Pema Wangchuck

Authors

The texts were written by French essayist and photographer Matthieu Ricard, British writer Pico Iyer, and Dasho Kinley Dorji.

Photographers

- Olivia Arthur
- Chien-Chi Chang
- Karma T. Dorji
- Stéphan Gladieu
- Vincent Munier
- Steve McCurry
- Matthieu Ricard
- Raghu Rai
- Melisa Teo
- Michael Yamashita
- Gueorgui Pinkhassov

With the special contribution of His Majesty The King.

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Weight: 2.8kg
Languages: ENG and FR editions

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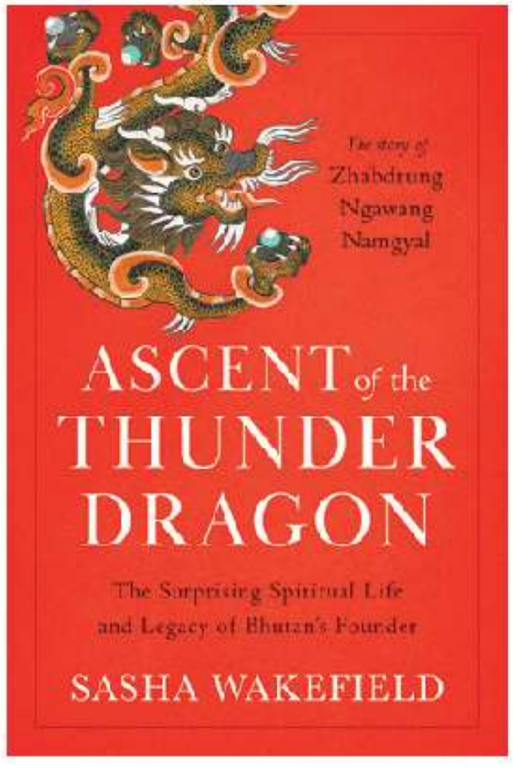
Ascent of the Thunder Dragon



The Author
Sasha Wakefield

The Surprising Spiritual Life and Legacy of Bhutan's Founder: The Story of Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal.

More than just history, the book is a journey into the heart of Bhutanese identity, spirituality, and culture.



Ascent of the Thunder Dragon, Sasha Wakefield's debut book, is a captivating spiritual biography and part memoir that moves between the 17th and 21st centuries and includes a foreword by His Eminence Samten Dorji Rinpoche of the Central Monastic Body. It traces Bhutan's formation through the extraordinary life of Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal—a visionary Buddhist leader and highly realised spiritual master on the verge of enlightenment—who unified the country's once-fragmented valleys. Wakefield skilfully brings to life his achievements, from establishing political authority to shaping the spiritual and cultural identity that continues to define Bhutan today.

Blending meticulous historical research with personal reflection, Wakefield immerses readers in Bhutan's majestic landscapes, sacred monasteries, and enduring traditions. The narrative captures both the immense challenges Zhabdrung faced and the visionary leadership that enabled him to create a nation grounded in devotion, resilience, and unity. Interwoven with these historical accounts are Wakefield's own experiences in Bhutan, giving the book an intimate, memoir-like quality.

Wakefield also unpacks essential Buddhist ideas—reincarnation, karma, bodhisattvas, buddhas, and enlightenment—making them accessible to newcomers while showing why Zhabdrung's achievements remain so revered. More than just history, the book is a journey into the heart of Bhutanese identity, spirituality, and culture. Wakefield provides a nuanced portrait of Zhabdrung as both a historical figure and a deeply spiritual presence, illuminating his lasting influence on the country's people and landscapes. Richly detailed and evocative, *Ascent of the Thunder Dragon* offers travellers, history enthusiasts, and spiritual seekers alike a chance to experience Bhutan's founding and the enduring legacy of its extraordinary leader.

Ascent of the Thunder Dragon will be released on 13 January 2026. It is published by Shambhala Publications and distributed worldwide through Penguin Random House and will be available online or in any good bookstore. A South Asian edition will be produced by Penguin Random House India and should reach bookstores in Bhutan shortly after the international release.

For more information, visit www.sasha-wakefield.com

The Great Fourth

Artist
PHURBA THINLEY SHERPA

Artwork Title: Size: 3X4ft
Medium: Pen, Charcoal & Pencil





About Phurba Thinley Sherpa

Along with his artist friends, he initiated a weekend art program for children of Thimphu, an effort that eventually led to the founding of VAST Bhutan in 1998. As a co-founder of VAST Bhutan, he has dedicated himself to nurturing artistic expression within the community.

With a particular interest in pen, pencil and charcoal drawings, his keen eye for detail and heart to bring life to his expressions brought exquisite works displaying mastery over light and mood colors. His art transcends mere visual representation, embodying a deep understanding and profound dedication to capturing emotion and atmosphere.

This artwork was created in celebration of the 70th Birth Anniversary of His Majesty the Fourth King, Jigme Singye Wangchuck, as a heartfelt offering. It was showcased during the '108 Offerings' exhibition at VAST Bhutan, held from 29 November to 29 December 2025.

This review is brought to you by VAST Bhutan, a registered civil society organization. VAST Bhutan over 27 years of existence has helped nurture several young artists and supported their endeavors.
For purchase of original Bhutanese contemporary artworks contact: Ms. Sonam Deki mobile number: +975 77752813

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About the Airline

Drukair Corporation Limited, the national flag carrier of Bhutan, was established in 1981. Operating from its hub at Paro International Airport, Drukair serves 10 international destinations across South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East, including India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Thailand, Singapore, and the United Arab Emirates.

In addition to its international routes, Drukair services three domestic destinations within Bhutan. The airline also operates twice-weekly flights from Gelephu International Airport to Kolkata and offers helicopter services to extend its connectivity beyond fixed-wing operations.

Our Fleet

Business Class: 20 Seats Economy Class:120 Seats	**1** Airbus A320neo	
Business Class: 16 Seats Economy Class: 102 Seats	**3** Airbus A319	
Business Class: 8 Seats Economy Class: 32 Seats	**1** ATR 42-600	
8-seater twin-engine	**1** Pilatus PC-24	
1 Pilot and 6 Passengers, or 2 Pilots and 5 Passengers	**3** Airbus H130	



Domestic Route Map

——— Operational



International Route Map

——— Operational

····· Seasonal

Connecting Gelephu-Kolkata, Nonstop





DAY	FLT NO	SECTOR	DEP	ARR
MONDAY	KB210	PARO-GELEPHU	1100	1140
		GELEPHU-KOLKATA	1210	1310
	KB211	KOLKATA-GELEPHU	1350	1520
		GELEPHU-PARO	1550	1630
FRIDAY	KB210	PARO-GELEPHU	1100	1140
		GELEPHU-KOLKATA	1210	1310
	KB211	KOLKATA-GELEPHU	1350	1520
		GELEPHU-PARO	1550	1630

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Starting **April, 2026**

DAY	FLT NO	SECTOR	DEP	ARR
TUESDAY	KB540	PARO-GUWAHATI	0830	0855
		GUWAHATI-SINGAPORE	0935	1625
WEDNESDAY	KB540	PARO-GUWAHATI	0750	0815
		GUWAHATI-SINGAPORE	0855	1555
SATURDAY	KB540	PARO-GUWAHATI	1130	1155
		GUWAHATI-SINGAPORE	1230	1930

Paro-Guwahati-Singapore (Tue, Wed & Sat)

SINGAPORE

Drukair
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DAY	FLT NO	SECTOR	DEP	ARR
WEDNESDAY	KB541	SINGAPORE-GUWAHATI	0600	0810
		GUWAHATI-PARO	0850	1015
THURSDAY	KB541	SINGAPORE-GUWAHATI	1230	1440
		GUWAHATI-PARO	1520	1645
SUNDAY	KB541	SINGAPORE-GUWAHATI	1230	1440
		GUWAHATI-PARO	1520	1645

Singapore-Guwahati-Paro (Wed, Thur & Sun)

Reconnecting Guwahati with

DAY	FLT NO	SECTOR	DEP	ARR
THURSDAY & SUNDAY	KB140	PARO-GUWAHATI	1150	1215
		GUWAHATI-BANGKOK	1255	1725

BANGKOK

Starting **April, 2026**

DAY	FLT NO	SECTOR	DEP	ARR
MONDAY & FRIDAY	KB141	BANGKOK-GUWAHATI	0700	0830
		GUWAHATI-PARO	0910	1035

Guwahati-Bangkok (Thur & Sun) **Bangkok-Guwahati** (Mon & Fri)

IN THE PRESS

Drukair and Thai Airways sign Interline Agreement to enhance connectivity



Drukair and Thai Airways International Public Company Limited (THAI) have signed an Interline Agreement to enhance travel convenience and strengthen network connectivity between the two national carriers.

The signing ceremony took place in Paro, Bhutan represented by Tandi Wangchuk, CEO of Drukair, and Chai Eamsiri, CEO of Thai Airways, alongside Ujjwal Deep Dahal, CEO of Druk Holding and Investments, and members of the Drukair Board of Directors. This collaboration marks an important milestone in expanding seamless travel options between Bhutan and destinations across Thai Airways' global network. Through this partnership, passengers will benefit from through check-in for both passengers and baggage to their final destination, convenient connections via Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport, and competitive interline fares all on a single ticket.

The agreement opens up convenient one-stop connections for passengers traveling between Bhutan and destinations across Northern Asia, Australia, and domestic points in Thailand, further promoting tourism and business travel between the two nations.

Together, Drukair and Thai Airways continue to expand opportunities for travelers by making journeys between Bhutan and the world more accessible, efficient, and enjoyable.

Drukair welcomes new Pilatus PC-24 to its fleet, strengthening Bhutan's aviation capacity



Drukair marked a significant milestone with the arrival of its new Pilatus PC-24 at Paro International Airport on November 27, further enhancing the national airline's fleet and strengthening Bhutan's aviation capability. The Pilatus PC-24 is an eight-seater Swiss-manufactured light jet renowned for its versatility and its ability to operate on short and unpaved runways, making it exceptionally well-suited to Bhutan's unique terrain.

The aircraft is expected to support a wide range of national priorities, including niche corporate travel for the Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC) enhanced emergency response operations, and mission-specific travel services.

Upon landing, the aircraft was received with a traditional chipdrel ceremony. The reception was graced by the Hon'ble Prime Minister and attended by senior representatives from the Royal Government of Bhutan, the GMC, Druk Holding and Investments, Drukair Management and Heads of Paro International Airport.

The induction of the PC-24 underscores Drukair's continued commitment to strengthening national aviation capacity and contributing to Bhutan's broader development goals.

Drukair partners with Worldpay to enhance online payment experience



Drukair has signed a strategic agreement with Worldpay to introduce a new global payment gateway, aimed at improving the online booking experience for passengers.

The agreement was signed between Drukair, represented by Tandi Wangchuk, CEO of Drukair and Worldpay, represented by Linus Goh, Business Development Director, to implement a cutting-edge global payment gateway solution.

This upgrade will deliver a faster and smoother checkout experience, enhanced security through advanced fraud protection, fewer international payment declines, real-time payment processing, and a more reliable booking experience for passengers worldwide.The new Worldpay-enabled payment system will be rolling out soon across Drukair's online booking platforms.

Drukair operates its first International flight from Gelephu International Airport



The first international flight from Gelephu International Airport marked a historic milestone, officially launching the Gelephu–Kolkata–Gelephu route and establishing Gelephu as Bhutan's newest international gateway. The inaugural ceremony was attended by the Prime Minister, senior government officials, representatives from the Indian Embassy, GMC, Druk Holding and Investments, Department of Tourism, Drukair management and Department of Air Transport.

Traditional Marchang and Zhudrey Phuensum rites preceded ribbon and cake-cutting ceremonies.

On arrival at Kolkata's Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport, the flight received a water cannon salute. The new route enhances regional connectivity, supporting tourism, trade, logistics and investment.

Drukair welcomes new General Manager for Finance and Corporate Service Division



Drukair warmly welcomed our new General Manager for Finance and Corporate Service Division, Nima Wangchuk, who officially took over office.

The event began with a Lhabsa Thruesel for auspicious blessings, followed by the Marchang Ceremony and Zhudrel Phuensum Tshogpa, symbolizing prosperity, harmony, and new beginnings.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to Nima Wangchuk as he embarks on this new chapter with Drukair. With his leadership and experience, we are confident that Drukair will continue to soar to even greater heights.

May this new beginning bring continued growth, unity, and success to the Drukair family.

Drukair sign Lease Agreement with SMBC Aviation Capital for new Airbus A320neo



Drukair signed the lease agreement with SMBC Aviation Capital for the induction of a brand-new Airbus A320neo aircraft, scheduled for delivery in February 2027.

The ceremonial signing was held on November 7, 2025, attended by the Chief Commercial Officer of SMBC Aviation Capital and senior officials from both organizations.

This milestone follows the Letter of Intent signed on May 10, 2025, and builds on the initial engagement with SMBC that began in May 2024.

The new A320neo forms a key part of Drukair's Strategic Plan, supporting fleet modernization, operational efficiency, and sustainability.

Discover Bhutan Roadshow



Drukair Holidays, in collaboration with the Department of Tourism, Changi Airport Group, and Chariot Travels Pvt Ltd, Drukair Holidays' GSA in Singapore, successfully concluded a three-day Discover Bhutan Roadshow in Indonesia, covering Surabaya, Jakarta, and Medan. The roadshow provided travel partners and stakeholders with an immersive glimpse into Bhutan's unique culture, natural beauty, and travel experiences, while also showcasing Drukair's services, including its curated Drukair Holidays packages. The event fostered meaningful connections with key industry partners and further strengthened Bhutan's presence in the Indonesian market.

Celebrating partnerships & excellence



Drukair hosted a special Agents' Dinner to honor the dedication and achievements of our valued travel partners. The evening was filled with meaningful conversations, award recognitions, and a shared commitment to promoting Bhutan as a premier destination.

Drukair expressed its heartfelt gratitude to the agents, the Department of Tourism, the Association of Bhutanese Tour Operators, and the Guide Association of Bhutan for their unwavering support.

Together, we continue to strengthen connections, expand our reach, and create new opportunities for growth.

TONGSA PENLOP *INSPIRE* PROGRAM

Powered by **Drukair**

The Sky's the Limit: Drukair's Tongsa Penlop Inspire Program Returns to Inspire Young Minds.

After a five-year hiatus, Drukair is proud to announce the much-anticipated resumption of its Tongsa Penlop Inspire Program (TPIP) this year. This flagship initiative, part of Drukair's Corporate Social Responsibility, is set to continue its profound mission: to provide underprivileged students in Bhutan with truly once-in-a-lifetime learning experiences.

A Vision for Future Generations

Envisioned by Yab Dasho Dhondup Gyaltshen and initially launched in 2018, the TPIP is designed to transcend tracitional classroom learning. It offers selected students fully sponsored excursions to diverse Drukair destinations, opening their eyes to a world beyond their immediate surroundings through travel, cultural immersion, and educational adventures. As Bhutan's national flag carrier, Drukair is committed to giving back to the community, and this program serves as a powerful tool to inspire academic and personal growth among the youth.

Journeys of Discovery: The Impact So Far

Since its inception, the program has created lasting memories and inspired remarkable personal growth among its participants. The inaugural edition in 2018 took 44 underprivileged students including four with special needs on an unforgettable educational journey to Bangkok, Thailand. This was followed in 2019 by another group who embarked on a six day learning tour to the same destination. Each journey has been thoughtfully designed to expand students' worldviews and ignite their curiosity for learning and exploration. The program continues to grow, welcoming more participants and embracing a more diverse group of students from various schools and backgrounds across Bhutan.

Join Us in Inspiring Future Generations

The Tongsa Penlop Inspire Program thrives on community spirit, and Drukair extends a heartfelt invitation for individuals to become a vital part of this transformative endeavor. Your contribution can play a pivotal role in shaping the lives of less privileged students, fostering a brighter future for them.

To amplify your generosity, Drukair is committed to matching every contribution on a one-to-one basis, effectively doubling the impact of your support. We believe that by working together, we can create "ripples of positive change that will resonate through generations".

For further details on how you can help or to make a contribution, please contact us at:

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Transit Procedure at Suvarnabhumi Airport, Bangkok

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Drukair to International Flights

1. After landing at the Bangkok Airport, follow the signs **"Transfer Desk"** or **"Connecting Flights"** displayed throughout the terminal.
2. Proceed to the Security Check.
3. Locate your Airline Transit Counter:
   Proceed to **Floor 3,** where all the Transfer Desks are located.
   **Generally the transit counter opens 3 hours before your departure time.*
4. Check-in at the Transit Counter.
5. Proceed to Your Boarding Gate.
   **Please note that the Boarding Gate assignments may change occasionally, so always reconfirm your gate by checking the Flight Information Display Screen.*

International Flights Connecting Drukair

1. After landing at the Bangkok Airport, follow the signs **"Transfer Desk"** or **"Connecting Flights"**.
2. Proceed to the Security Check.
3. Locate the Drukair Transit Counter:
   Proceed to **Floor 3, Transfer Desk 2, West Side,** where the Drukair transit counter is located.
   **Generally the transit counter opens 3 hours before your departure time.*
4. Check-in at the Drukair Transit Counter.
5. Proceed to Your Boarding Gate.
   **Please note that the Boarding Gate assignments may change occasionally, so always reconfirm your gate by checking the Flight Information Display Screen.*

For Drukair-specific assistance: bkkstation@drukair.com.bt
For airport-related information: suvarnabhumi.airportthai.co.th

Passenger Transfer Guidelines in Dubai Airport

1. **Follow "Connections" Signs:**
   After you disembark, look for signs marked "**Connections**" to guide you towards the transfer area.
2. **Proceed to Transfer Security:**
   Go through the security check located just before the "**Connections**" counters.
3. **Visit the "Marhaba" Counters:**
   Once the passenger has cleared security, proceed directly to the **"Marhaba"** counters. The Marhaba team will guide you through the transfer process and direct you to the "**Connections**" counter. At the **Connections** counter, you'll receive your onward boarding pass.
4. **Relax and Enjoy Amenities:**
   If your layover is longer than 4 hours, you can relax in the departure area and return to the "**Connections**" counters once your onward airline begins check-in, which is usually 3-4 hours before departure.
5. **Boarding:**
   Arrive at your boarding gate at least 1 hour before departure.

Please note: No additional charges apply for this service.

Additional Information

Transfers Not Available:
Passengers will not be able to transfer on the following airlines:

- British Airways
- Poboda
- Flyadeal
- Ureter Airlines
- Wizz Air

Terminal Information:
Drukair operates from Terminal 1.
If your onward flight departs from a different terminal, an inter-terminal transfer will be required.
Passengers are advised to avoid short layovers to allow enough time for inter terminal transfers.

Contact Us:
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Email: singapore@drukair.com.bt

CSA

Druk Logistics Pte Ltd.
60 Albert Street, # 12-05,
OG Albert Complex, Singapore 189969.
Tel: +65 56238188
Email: info@druksargo.com

GSA - Cargo & PSA

Chariot Travels Pte Ltd.
101 Kitchener Road-03-38, Jalan Besar Plaza,
Singapore 208511.
Tel: +65 84941625, 6388-883 / +65-906 3070 /
90042659
Email: drukair@chariot.com.sg / singaporecargo@
drukair.com.bt

JAPAN

TOKYO (GSA - Passenger)

White Bear Family Co. Ltd.
UMAX Bld.3F 6-21-3 Shimbashi Minato-Ku
Tokyo Japan.
Email: tokyo@drukair.com.bt

CHINA

SHANGHAI (GSA - Passenger)

WorldAir Travel Co. Ltd.
Floor 3, Building E. No. 998, Shenbin South Road
Minhang District, Shanghai.
Tel: +8613501919559
Email: shanghai@drukair.com.bt

KUNMING (CSA)

KUZU Co., Ltd.
Kunming 650000, People's East Road, Yi Hao Mall,
220575
Tel: 0086-15687077352; +86 (0871) 6720 7653
Email: haiyagang@myish.com
Website: www.myish.co

HONGKONG

HONG KONG (GSA - Passenger)

Megacap S. A. Ltd
9F Chung Nam building,
1 Lockhart Road, Hong Kong.
Tel: +852 3575 6822
Email: hongkong@drukair.com.bt

U.S.A

Florida (GSA - Passenger)

AirlinePros International Inc
9F Chung Nam building,
6303 Blue Lagoon Drive, Suite 400,
Miami, Florida 33126, USA
Tel: +877 958 1077
E mail: florida@drukair.com.bt

ISRAEL

Tel Aviv-Yafo (GSA - Passenger)

TAL Aviation Israel
2 Ben Gurion Road, Ramat Gan
5257338, Israel
Tel: +972-3-795-2111
Email: israel@drukair.com.bt

AUSTRALIA

Sydney (GSA - Passenger)

Aviation Online Pty Ltd.
Suite 14b, Level 1, 123 Clarence St. Sydney, NSW 2000, Australia
Tel: 1300 781 747
Email: sydney@drukair.com.bt

| GSA - General Sales Agent | PSA - Passenger Sales Agent | CSA - Cargo Sales Agent

DRUKAIR OFFICES

INDIA (GSA - Passenger)

AHMEDABAD

Global Aviation Services Pvt. Ltd.
Umashanker Joshi Marg, Off C.G.Road, Nr. Girish Cold
Drink Crossroads, Ahmedabad - 380006.
Phone: +91-079-4021-5516
Email: ahmedabad@drukair.com.bt /
ahmedabadcargo@drukair.com.bt

BENGALURU

Global Aviation Services Pvt. Ltd.
C-4/5,Devatha Plaza, Residency Road ,Bangalore -
560025
Phone: +91 9916503000
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MUMBAI

Global Aviation Services Pvt. Ltd.
No. 1&2, Ground Floor,111, Fil Court,Maharshi Karve
Road,Churchgate,Mumbai - 400020
Phone: +91 22 6621 3825
Email: mumbai@drukair.com.bt /
mumbaicargo@drukair.com.bt

COCHIN

Global Aviation Services Pvt. Ltd.
2A, 2nd Floor, K.G.Oxford Business Centre,Sreekar-
dath Road , Ravipuram, Kochi, 682016
Phone: 0484- 2368233
Email: cochin@drukair.com.bt /
cochincargo@drukair.com.bt

HYDERABAD

Global Aviation Services Pvt. Ltd.
5-5-58/A/203, 2nd Floor, Gupta Estate, Basheer
Bagh, Hyderabad-4
Phone: +9140-23240055
Email: hydrabad@drukair.com.bt /
hydrabadcargo@drukair.com.bt

CHENNAI

Global Aviation Services Pvt. Ltd.
CITI TOWER , 4TH FLOOR,No. 117 , Sir Thyagaraya
Road , T.Nagar , Chennai - 600017
Phone: +91 98840 68072
Email: chennai@drukair.com.bt /
chennaicargo@drukair.com.bt

PUNE

Global Aviation Services Pvt. Ltd.
3, Hermes Kunj, 4B Margadas Road,Pune - 411001
Phone: 020 41052264
Email: pune@drukair.com.bt

KUWAIT

KUWAIT CITY (GSA - Passenger)

Caesars Intl Travel Co. W.L.L.
18th Floor, Aljawhara Tower,
Ali Al-Salem Street, Safat-13056,
PB 26229
Tel: +965 22272040
Email: kuwait@drukair.com.bt

KUWAIT CITY (PSA)

Alrashed International Travel Co. W.L.L
Office No. 8/9, Al Salam Tower, Mezzanine Floor;
Fahad Al Salem St., Safiwa; P.O. Box: 242;
Tel: +965 22072707
E mail: drukair@alrashed.travel
Website: www.alrashed.travel

UNITED KINGDOM

LONDON (GSA - Passenger)

Flight Directors Scheduled Services Limited
Suite 9a, Garwick House, Peeks Brook Lane,
Horley, Surrey, RH6 9ST, United Kingdom.
Tel: +44 1293 874913
Email: london@drukair.com.bt

SOUTH KOREA

SEOUL (GSA - Passenger)

Pacific Air International
3F., E-PLAZA Bldg., 25 Sejong-daero 4-gil,
Jung-gu, Seoul, 04527, Republic of Korea.
Tel: +82 2 317 8830
Email: seoul@drukair.com.bt

SEOUL (CSA)

Pacific Air International
3F., E-PLAZA Bldg., 25 Sejong-daero 4-gil, Jung-gu,
Seoul, 04527, Republic of Korea.
Tel: +82 2 317 3822
E mail: downtown@paagrp.co.kr

GERMANY

FRANKFURT (GSA - Passenger)

TAL Aviation Germany UG
Hanauer Landstr. 138, 60314, Frankfurt,
Tel: +49-69-21099200
Email: frankfurt@drukair.com.bt
Website: www.talaviation.com

MALAYSIA

KUALA LUMPUR (GSA - Passenger)

Asia Travel Cafe Sdn Bhd
No 9, Tingkat 1, Jalan Tengkat Tong Shin, Bukit Bin-
tang, 50200 Kuala Lumpur.
Tel: +60 122396287
Email: kualalumpur@drukair.com.bt

SRI LANKA

COLOMBO (GSA - Passenger)

Acorn Aviation Pvt. Ltd.
Hemas Building, 99/1 Sir Ranit Fareet Mawatha
Colombo-1, Sri Lanka.
Tel: +94 11 4721554
E mail: colombo@drukair.com.bt

VIETNAM

Ho Chi Minh City (GSA- Passenger)

Hong Ngoc Ha Joint Stock Company
15-17 Ngo Thoi Nhiem, Ward 06, District 3
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.
Tel: 028 38 366 318
Email: vietnam@druksir.com.bt

FRANCE

PARIS (GSA - Passenger)

TAL Aviation France
5, rue de Castiglione, Paris, France.
Tel: +33 1 76 36 12 56
Email: paris@drukair.com.bt
Website: www.talaviation.com

enquiry@drukair.com.bt >> for general enquiry (During weekdays - Working Hrs. 9AM-5PM BST)
reservation@drukair.com.bt >> for ticket booking and date change before 4 days of departure (Within Bhutan only)
wearelistening@drukair.com.bt >> for any complains and feedback. (During weekdays - Working Hrs. 9AM-5PM BST)
happiness@drukair.com.bt >> for queries related to HappinessMiles Program
card_refund@drukair.com.bt >> for any assistance related to ticket purchased from website (During weekdays - Working Hrs. 9AM-5PM BST)

INFO & TIPS

DRUKAIR FLIGHT TIMING

As Bhutan's National Flag carrier operating in and out of Paro, Drukair requests every passenger to refer Conditions of Carriage and the foot note on ticket itinerary. Due to operational challenges out of Paro International Airport in Bhutan that is severely dependent on weather conditions, Drukair makes every effort to maintain the schedule integrity. However due to circumstances beyond our control, schedule timings are subject to change without prior notice. Therefore, we request travelers to check with Drukair offices or its agents for the latest information.

RESERVATION

For any travel requirements, please contact reservation@drukair.com.bt or call our toll free number 1300 (in-country) / +975 8276430 (International) / WhatsApp number +975 17131300 for any assistance required.

International airlines, tour promoters and travel agents abroad are invited to communicate their reservation requirements with the space control of Drukair.

RECONFIRMATION

Request all passengers to reconfirm their reservations 72 hours prior to departure. For passengers in Bhutan, reconfirmation can be either done at any Drukair offices or you can contact reservation@drukair.com.bt or call Drukair's toll free no. 1300 / WhatsApp number +975 17131300 during office hours 07:00 - 21:00 (GMT+6).

VALIDITY

Tickets issued against full fare are valid for a period of one year from the date of travel, except as otherwise specified in the ticket conditions.

CHANGE IN FARE AND TAXES

Fares and taxes are subject to change without notice. In the event of a passenger commencing journey after a revised tariff becomes effective, the differences between the fare paid and the fare applicable will be collected from the passenger before embarkation.

REFUND AND CANCELLATION

Refund of ticket can be made at the issuing office. For the conditions of refund and cancellation, please check with any Drukair Office.

BAGGAGE

A checked baggage allowance of 40kg in business class and 30kg in economy on international flights and 20kg for economy and 30kg for business class for domestic flights is permissible. An infant under two years of age is not entitled to baggage allowance.

HAND BAGGAGE

For security reasons and your own safety, passengers are allowed to carry only one piece of hand baggage. The total of its three dimensions must not exceed 100 cm, and the weight must not exceed 5 kg in Economy Class and 7 kg in Business Class.

SECURITY

All passengers and their baggage are subject to check before boarding a flight. Transit passengers are therefore requested to remain on board at transit stations as otherwise, they will be again subject to security checks.

According to the Security Regulations, passengers are advised:

Not to accept any baggage/packet from unknown person. Not to leave baggage unobserved at anytime especially within airport area. Unattended baggage may be removed by the Airport Security Staff as object of suspicion.

If passengers are carrying any arms or explosive substance, it must be declared before check-in.
Concealment is an offense under Aircrafts Act & Rules.

To remove battery/dry cells from radio, transistor sets, two-in-one and other such electrical/electronic items and hand them over to the airline staff before security check or carry them in registered baggage.

CUSTOMS: TOURIST ALLOWANCE

A tourist is allowed to bring any quantity of tobacco products. However, it must be declared at the customs. The import of tobacco products is subjected to 100% Customs Duty.

A tourist shall be allowed to import temporarily free customs duty for his/her personal effects and articles required for the visit, provided that the items imported are for personal use only. A tourist is allowed to bring in one liter of alcohol.

All information mentioned above are based on those valid at the time of print and are, therefore, subject to change. For further information, contact any Drukair Office or its agents in your area or visit our website: *www.drukair.com.bt*

VISA REQUIREMENTS TO ENTER BHUTAN

Visitors of all nationalities, except those from India, require a visa before entering Bhutan. For all visitors, except those from Bangladesh and the Maldives, this visa must be applied for and approved in advance of travel. Visitors from Bangladesh and the Maldives also require a visa, but this can be applied for and approved either in advance of travel or upon arrival in Bhutan.

Visitors from India are able to apply for a permit but are required to hold an Indian passport or an Indian voter ID card. For Indian nationals under the age of 18, a passport or a birth certificate can be used to enter and they must be accompanied by a legal guardian. Nationals from Switzerland and Thailand holding diplomatic or government-official passports are eligible for a visa at their port of entry.

Before travelling, visitors from India, Bangladesh and the Maldives can apply for a permit (Indian nationals) or visa (Bangladeshi or Maldivian nationals) online. You may also apply at the point of entry, but please be aware that there may be a long wait depending on the number of applicants at the time. We recommend arranging your permit/visa beforehand.

Note to all passengers: All passengers are advised to check their travel document validity. For passengers traveling with their passport, validity of their passport should not be less than six months from the date of departure from Bhutan. Drukair will not be liable and will refuse check in of those passengers whose passport does not meet the validity requirement.

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTION

For safety, passengers are required to fasten seat belts during take off and landing. However, they are advised to keep the seat belts fastened during the entire flight.

Smoking and chewing "doma" (areca nut and betel leaf) in the aircraft are strictly prohibited.

SPECIAL LOUNGES

Executive/Business Class passengers, including counter upgrades/ FFP entitlements as per FFP policy document can avail the comfort of our special lounges. They offer a buffet service, internet access points and washroom facilities.

TRAVEL TIPS

Transit time should not exceed 24 hours to connect on your onward carrier and to avoid any misconnections. Please note that unfortunately we are unable to offer advice or guidance on frequently changing restrictions in individual countries, therefore all passengers are advised to check related government websites for further travel advice.

As per the notice circulated by Thai Immigration Office to all airlines, visa on arrival for passengers holding one-way or open ticket will not be extended. Therefore, such passengers are advised to obtain necessary visa prior from the concerned diplomatic representations abroad to avoid being inconvenienced and deported. All transit passengers are requested to observe the following procedures pertaining to transit check-in.
Passengers can check-in on Drukair flights on transit at Bangkok without having to go through immigrations. The process is as follows:

Outbound Flights - Out of Paro
To kindly inform the check-in counter at Paro on details of the onward flight
Baggage will then be tagged as transit showing final destination of the passenger on the onward carrier
At the transit check-in at Bangkok passengers are requested to present their baggage tag to the transit desk
The boarding pass is issued on the onward carrier and the baggage transferred
For any special assistance required for groups on transit you may please email enquiry@drukair.com.bt

MEALS & REFRESHMENTS

Drukair offers multi-cuisine menu on board. Bangkok Airways Catering, Paro Catering, Taj Group and SATS provide most of our in-flight catering.
Meals are served after a flight is airborne for reasonable duration. The timings are:

Breakfast:	0730 - 1030
Lunch:	1030 - 1430
Dinner:	1830 - 2130

On one-hour sector flight, snacks are served. Refreshment and drinks are served throughout the duration of the flight.

For detailed carrier's general condition of carriage for passenger & baggage, visit
drukair.com.bt/terms-and-conditions/conditions-of-carriage/

Customs Information

CUSTOMS DECLARATION

Passengers entering Bhutan have to pass through the customs checks. All passengers carrying baggage in excess of allowable limit (which is goods worth US $1000), or, dutiable goods, or, restricted items, must make declaration in the prescribed form.
Should the passengers fail to make the declaration in whole, or, file incomplete declaration, as against the mandate of Section 96, Ch. 13 of the Customs Act of Bhutan, 2017 (CAB), it shall lead to invocation of Section 143 & 146, Ch. 19 of the CAB.
Note: Baggage or goods in commercial nature shall not be considered as free baggage allowance even if the value of the goods is less than US$ 1000 or equivalent Ngultrum.

FREE BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE FOR AIR PASSENGERS

Personal effects up to the assessed value of US$ 1,000 or equivalent
in Ngultrum subject to the ceiling prescribed below:

(a) Alcohol/Spirits – 2 bottles, each bottle not larger than one liter
(b) Perfume: 1 bottle, not larger than 2 ounces
(c) Gold (including jewellery) – 50 grams
(d) Silver (including jewellery) – 1 kilogram
(e) Clothing items: Maximum of 10 pieces each of type of clothing whether stitched or unstitched
(f) Other household or personal goods including electronics and bedding shall be limited to one piece each.
(g) Items of gifts and presents shall be included in the above free allowance.

Note: Baggage or goods in commercial nature shall not be considered as free baggage allowance even if the value of the goods is less than US$ 1000 or equivalent Ngultrum.

FREE BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE FOR FOREIGN TOURIST

(a) Used personal effects and articles reasonably required for the visit provided items imported are for personal use and shall be re-exported upon leaving Bhutan.
(b) Import free of Customs duty, articles up to Ngultrum 10,000/- or equivalent, for personal use or as gifts and travel souvenirs if carried on the person or in the accompanied baggage, including spirit of not more than two liters and perfume of not more than 100 ml.
(c) High value articles and sports items as approved and imported in reasonable quantities shall be considered under temporary admission considering that the articles or items are re-exported on leaving Bhutan.

LIST OF RESTRICTED GOODS:

i. Arms and Ammunitions
ii. Gold and Silver in excess of free baggage allowance
iii. Explosives and explosives devices
iv. Medicinal products including narcotics and psychotropic substance for medical use
v. Other narcotics and psychotropic substances and precursor
vi. Animal and their parts and products including food
vii. Plants, their parts (seeds/fruits/flowers/shoots/roots/ tissues) and products
viii. Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and their products
ix. Industrial and toxic wastes and residues
x. Wireless and remote sensing telecommunication and broadcasting equipment
xi. Scraps
xii. Used or second hand goods, vehicles, machinery and equipment
xiii. Chemical and Fertilizers
xiv. Plastic packing materials
xv. Valuable cultural properties
xvi. Ozone Depleting substances
xvii. Intellectual property rights
xviii. Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS)/Drones

Note: A tourist can bring US$10,000 or equivalent without declaring. If the amount exceeds US$10,000, it must be declared at the customs.

LIST OF PROHIBITED GOODS:

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

i. Narcotics and psychotropic drugs and substances
ii. Pornographic materials
iii. Animals and plants classified as endangered species and their parts and products

Department of Revenue and Customs
Ministry of Finance

wangyel studio

you can relax
while we build your brand



Crafting Brands, Building Legacies since 2010.
Wangyel Studio is a Premier Branding Agency
based in the Happy Kingdom of Bhutan.

Key Information



Trekking in Bhutan

Bhutan's breathtaking landscapes and diverse terrains make it a paradise for trekking enthusiasts. From challenging high-altitude treks to scenic and moderate trails, there are various trekking options to explore the natural beauty and cultural heritage of Bhutan. Here are some popular trekking routes to consider:

Druk Path Trek: This trek is a great introduction to Bhutan's natural and cultural wonders. It takes you from Paro to Thimphu, passing through stunning alpine meadows, rhododendron forests, and serene mountain lakes. Along the way, you can also visit ancient monasteries and enjoy panoramic views of the Himalayas.

Jomolhari Trek: Considered one of the most beautiful treks in Bhutan, the Jomolhari Trek offers a challenging yet rewarding experience. It takes you to the base camp of Mount Jomolhari, the second highest peak in Bhutan. The trail passes through remote villages, pristine valleys, and high mountain passes, offering stunning views of snow-capped peaks.

Snowman Trek: For experienced trekkers seeking an ultimate adventure, the Snowman Trek is an epic journey that traverses through Bhutan's remote and untouched wilderness. It is one of the most challenging treks in the world, taking about 27 days to complete. The trail leads through high mountain passes, pristine lakes, and remote villages, showcasing Bhutan's pristine beauty.

Trans Bhutan Trail Trek: The Trans Bhutan Trail is a 403km route, spanning from Haa in the West of Bhutan to Trashigang in the East. It is considered one of the world's greatest walks and one of the best hiking routes in Asia. The trail traverses through remote villages, ancient monasteries, terraced fields, dense forests, and pristine alpine meadows, providing a comprehensive glimpse into the country's natural beauty and cultural heritage.

Bumthang Cultural Trek: This trek combines nature and culture, taking you through the beautiful Bumthang Valley, known as the cultural heartland of Bhutan. You can visit ancient temples, monasteries, and remote villages, while enjoying the scenic landscapes of green valleys, pristine forests, and farmlands.

Dagala Thousand Lakes Trek: Offering breathtaking views of high mountain passes and numerous glacial lakes, the Dagala Thousand Lakes Trek is a moderate trek suitable for all fitness levels. The trek takes you through alpine meadows, yak herders' camps, and serene lakes, providing ample opportunities for photography and nature exploration.

Before embarking on any trek in Bhutan, it is essential to obtain the necessary permits and hire a licensed guide. The best time for trekking in Bhutan is during spring (March to May) and autumn (September to November) seasons when the weather is favorable and the landscapes are at their most vibrant.

Other Treks in Bhutan

- Bumdra Trek
- Bumthang Owl Trek
- Gangtey Trek
- Laya Gasa Trek
- Merak Sakteng Trek
- Nabji Korphu Trek
- Rodung La Trek
- Samtengang Winter Trek
- Soi Yaktsa Trek
- Salt Route Trek
- Sinchula Trek

Average Temperature

Month	Figures in Centigrade	Paro	Thimphu	Punakha	Wangdue	Trongsa	Bumthang	Mongar	Trashigang	Gelephu
JAN	MAX	6.5	7	16.1	17.0	13.0	10.8	11.7	20.6	24
	MIN	-3.8	-2.6	4.2	4.7	-0.2	-1.1	8.2	10.5	13
FEB	MAX	17.5	12.3	19.6	14.0	17.6	14.0	11.9	21.7	27
	MIN	1.1	0.6	7.7	7.8	0.6	-1.2	8.3	11.1	13
MAR	MAX	12.7	14.6	21.12	22.8	16.7	14.2	20.0	24.8	32
	MIN	0.6	7.9	9.2	10.6	3.3	7.1	11.6	13.3	22
APR	MAX	17.6	20.0	26.6	26.2	20.1	18.7	2.8	28.3	32
	MIN	4.6	7.1	11.2	12.9	6.6	7.9	14.0	17.0	23
MAY	MAX	23.3	22.3	27.2	28.1	21.0	21.3	23.1	30.0	31
	MIN	10.6	13.1	16.2	17.7	11.6	9.7	17.3	20.6	23
JUN	MAX	23.6	24.0	31.2	29.2	22.2	22.3	24.1	30.7	31
	MIN	12.1	13.2	16.1	20.1	13.6	9.7	16.1	22.6	26
JUL	MAX	24.8	18.9	32.0	18.6	23.3	12.1	16.1	30.3	31
	MIN	12.9	17.3	21.6	16.2	17.7	10.9	13.8	23.1	26
AUG	MAX	23.3	23.0	31.3	22.1	23.8	23.0	23.6	30.2	32
	MIN	12.7	13.8	19.8	20.0	13.0	12.7	18.6	22.7	26
SEP	MAX	23.6	23.1	29.8	27.3	22.6	21.6	24.7	30.0	31
	MIN	11.7	13.0	20.6	19.1	16.2	12.1	15.3	23.0	23
OCT	MAX	18.7	21.9	27.8	26.1	21.8	19.1	22.7	28.1	30
	MIN	7.3	12.6	18.8	16.7	11.7	7.9	13.8	17.7	22
NOV	MAX	17.9	17.9	22.3	22.6	19.8	16.1	19.9	24.1	28
	MIN	1.3	3.0	13.0	9.6	6.6	-0.3	11.7	13.6	17
DEC	MAX	11.2	12.7	13.0	19.1	18.2	12.3	11.7	23.0	23
	MIN	-1.7	-2.1	7.6	6.3	2.3	-2.3	4.1	11.6	13

Driving Time Between Various Places in Bhutan (For tourists)

FROM	TO	DISTANCE (KM)	DRIVING TIME (APPROX)
Thimphu	Paro	65.3	1 hr
Thimphu	Phuentsholing	166.2	4 hrs
Phuentsholing	Bagdora	154.7	4 hrs
Thimphu	Wangdiphodrang	70	3 hrs
Thimphu	Punakha	77	3 hrs
Punakha	Wangdiphodrang	13	45 min
Wangdiphodrang	Trongsa	129	4 hrs 30 min
Trongsa	Bumthang	68	2 hrs
Bumthang	Mongar	193	7 hrs
Mongar	Lhuentse	75	3 hrs
Mongar	Trashigang	91	3 hrs 30 min
Trashigang	Chorten Kora	51	2 hrs
Trashigang	Samdrup Jongkhar	180	7 hrs
Samdrup Jongkhar	Guwahati	110	3 hrs
Samdrup Jongkhar	Phuentsholing	600	10 hrs
Thimphu	Gelephu	203	6 hrs 30 min
Phuentsholing	Gelephu	196.6	4 hrs 45 min

Festival Dates for 2025

FESTIVAL NAME	FESTIVAL LOCATION	FESTIVAL DATE
Punakha Drubchen	Punakha	Mar 6 - 8
Punakha Tshechu	Punakha	Mar 9 - 11
Bhutan International Marathon	Annual Event, Gasa-Punakha	Mar 6
Gomphukora	Trashigang	Apr 5 - 7
Talo Tshechu	Talo, Punakha	Apr 5 - 7
Gasa Tshechu	Gasa	Apr 5 - 7
Zhemgang Tshechu	Zhemgang	Apr 5 - 7
Haa Spring Festival	Haa	Apr 7 - 9
Paro Tshechu	Paro	Apr 8 - 12
Chorten Kora	Trashiyangtse	Mar 14 and Mar 29
Rhododendron festival	Lampelri Botanical Garden, Dochula	April 22 - 24
Jhe Yakchoe	Ura, Bumthang	May 9 - 13
Kurjey Tshechu	Choekor, Bumthang	Jun 5
Mushroom Festival	Genekha, Thimphu	Aug 15 - 16
Tour of the Dragon Bicycle Race	Bumthang-Thimphu	Sept 6
Thimphu Drubchen	Thimphu	Sep 28
Paro Dromchoe	Paro	Sep 28
Wangdue Tshechu	Wangdiphodrang	Sep 30 - Oct 2
Thimphu Tshechu	Thimphu	Oct 2 - 6
Tamshing Phala Choedde	Tamshing, Bumthang	Oct 2 - 6
Gangtey Tshechu	Gangtey, Phobjikha Valley	Oct 5 - 7
Jhomolhari Mountain Festival	Dangochorang (Jhomolhari Base Camp)	Oct 14 - 15
Royal Highland festival	Laya, Gasa	Oct 23 - 24
Chorten Tshechu	Chorten	Oct 29 - 31
Jakar Tshechu	Choekor, Bumthang	Oct 29 - 31
Dechenphu Tshechu	Thimphu	Oct 31
Jambay Lhakhang Drup	Choekor, Bumthang	Nov 5 - 8
Black Necked Crane Fest.	Phobjikha Valley	Nov 11
Mongar Tshechu	Mongar	Nov 28 - 30
Trashigang Tshechu	Trashigang	Nov 29 - Dec 1
Pemagatshel Tshechu	Pema Gatshel	Oct 29 - Nov 1
Rangtse Nye Festival	Haa	Dec 1 - 2
Druk Wangyel Tshechu	Dochula	Dec 13
Trongsa Tshechu	Trongsa	Dec 27 - 31
Lhuentse Tshechu	Lhuentse	Dec 27 - 31

National Holidays 2025

2 Jan	Winter Solstice (Nyilo)
30 Jan	Traditional Day of Offering
21-23 Feb	Birth Anniversary of His Majesty the King
28 Feb-1 Mar	Losar New Year
2 May	Birth Anniversary of Third Druk Gyalpo
7 May	Zhabdung Kuchoe
11 Jun	Lord Buddha's Parinirvana
5 Jul	Birth Anniversary of Guru Rinpoche
28 Jul	First Sermon of Lord Buddha
23 Sep	Blessed Rainy Day
28 Sep	Thimphu Drupchen Dromchoe
2-6 Oct	Thimphu Tshechu
2 Oct	Dashain Festival
1 Nov	Coronation of His Majesty the King
11 Nov	Birth Anniversary of Fourth Druk Gyalpo
11 Nov	Descending Day of Lord Buddha
17 Dec	National Day

Negative list on movement of tourist within Bhutan

Prohibited Areas

Place	Dzongkhag
Chelela	Paro
Changju	Samtse
Singye Dzong	Lhuentse
Tsorong	Trashiyangtse
Tsokang	Lhuentse
Singyecy	Trashiyangtse
Tsenkhar	Bumthang
Beyond Haa Damthang	Haa

Restricted Areas

Place	Dzongkhag
Gunitsawa	Paro
Soi	Thimphu
Kratang	Bumthang
Lingzhi	Thimphu
Beyond Bumdeling	Trashiyangtse

Note: However, tourist will be allowed to visit restricted areas identified as trekking route by the Department of Tourism (accompanied by trekking guide.



Basic Dzongkha

INTRODUCTIONS



Greetings and well wishes
Kuzuzangpola
What is your name?
(for elders or with respect)
Nagi Tshen Ga Chi Mo?
What is your name?
(for friends)
Chhoeygi Ming Ga Chi Mo?
My name is
Ngagi Ming.....Bin
Where are you from?
Chhoeyga le lay no?
How old are you?
Kay Lo gadem chi Ya si?

Good bye: *Log Jay Gay.*
(Meaning we will meet again)

TRAVEL TALK



Where does this road lead to?
Lam di ga thay jow no?
Is it far?
Tha ring sa in-na?
Here : *Na/ Naka*
There : *Pha/ Phaka*
Where? : *Ga Tey?*

Which? : *Gadee?*
In front of : *Dongkha*
Next to : *Bolakha*
Behind : *Japkha*

SHOPPING CONVERSATION



What time does it open?
Chulsho gadem chi lu go phiu no?

What time does it close?
Chulsho gadem chi lu go dam no?

What is this? : *Ani ga chi no?*
How much is it? : *Diku gadem chi no?*
That's too much : *Gong bom nay*



Waiter? : *Wai Chhara?*
(literally meaning friend)
Waitress : *Wai Bumo?*
(literally meaning girl)
Please Have/ Eat : *Zhey*
Water : *Chhu*
Hot Water : *Chhu Tshe*
Milk Tea : *Na Ja*
Butter Tea : *Su Ja*
Get me : *...Nang*



TELEPHONE TETE-A TETE

Hello : *Kuzoozangpo La*
Who is speaking : *Ga Sung Mo La?*
I'm....Speaking : *Nga ....Zhu Do La*
Yes, Yes : *Ong, Ong*
Yes in Affirmative : *Bin Bin La*
Roger/ Signing off : *Las La. Laso La*

It was tasty

Zhim bay (While making a gesture of moving one's forefinger in front of the cheek)



No more, thanks

Me Zhu (while making a gesture of moving one's hand in front of the mouth)



Thank you
Kandrinchhey

EMERGENCY ESSENTIALS

I'm ill : *Nga nau nay*

Where is the hospital?
Menkhang ga key in na?

Where is the toilet?
Chhapsa ga key in-na?



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