

DRUK PATH TREK

The Druk Path is perfect for those who do not want a long or very high altitude trek. The time on either end of the trek is also about right to make the best use of your time in Bhutan.

It starts close to Paro (next to the National Museum) and finishes by descending into Thimphu. Scheduled as an easy 6 days (the 6th day is about 2 hrs), it can be done in 5 days if you wish.

This horseshoe shaped route is long enough to know you've been on a trek, it has fantastic views over both Paro and Thimphu and immerses you deep in Bhutan countryside. The altitude deserves respect although not high enough to get too concerned about for the average trekker.

It is fair to say that Day 1 is probably the most difficult as it is the first day of trekking and has by far the most gain in altitude (about 1000m). That said, taken at a slow pace (your Guide will ensure that you do), it should present no problem. This leg should take no more than about 5 hrs.

The ascent is eased by the sheer beauty of the countryside; up through rural farmland and juniper forest. Bhutan is heavily forested and refreshingly there are no deforestation works going on; just nature at work.

Your first night stop is close to Jele Dzong (2500m), which will immediately demonstrate how isolated and exposed some of the mountain Monasteries can be. The roof is held down by iron cables. Your campsite is slightly down from this so don't worry about the wind!

Once up at this altitude, the trekking is easy; not flat but all things are relative! The route then moves on to Jimilchulakha (2800m) for an overnight stop before a longer day 3 to Jimilang Tsho (3000m), where you will be camped along side the sacred lake.

This lake, due to its altitude, can often be frozen even in spring months but is also a good source of trout. You may need a fishing permit so ask your Guide.

Along the route, there are some dense rhododendron forest areas, which when in bloom (Apr/May) are fantastic to see.

Day 4 is at Simkotra Tsho (3500m) before beginning a decent at the end of Day 5 down to Phajoding (3600m). Another impressive mountain monastery is located here and more impressive views of Thimphu. You could push on and finish the trek today but it will make for a long day, long descent, which may take its toll on a few knees.

Day 6 is a very easy, short descent to the pick up point and a short drive into Thimphu, possibly via the Radio Tower or Takin Reserve to see the National Animal.

Sightseeing. There is enough time on either end of the trek to see the many places on offer. The Tigers Nest, the Paro and Thimphu Dzongs, Thimphu itself (the High Street isn't that big!), the Takin Reserve, the National Museum (Paro) and National Library (Thimphu) to name but a few. Whilst they are in the itinerary on certain days, your Guide will lay the plan once in country in accordance with your wishes.

Trip Profile

Trip length: 13 - 16 days

Nights in Bhutan: 9

Nights on trek: 4/5

Max altitude: 4050m

Grade of trek: Moderate

For costs and dates, see page 2

For full details on getting to Bhutan, you are strongly advised to visit the 'Getting to Bhutan' webpage on the Travel and Trek website.



The Druk Path Trek - Daily Itinerary

This generic itinerary can be done at any time during the trekking season. Your time in Bhutan can be extended if required.

Days	Bhutan Nights	Event	Remarks
1		Depart London	
2		Arrive Kathmandu Transfer to hotel (25 mins). Evening free to explore Thamel	Travel and Trek is associated with three specific hotels, all perfectly placed in the heart of the buzzing Thamel district of the City. Arrangements can be made, including private transfers or you are free to make your own arrangements. 5* hotels can also be arranged. Why not dine in one of the many unique and exciting restaurants all within minutes of your hotel
3		Free day to explore Kathmandu Evening free	Advice can be provided on where to go and what to see and costs. You can cut this day completely and choose to fly straight to Bhutan.
4	1	Transfer to Kathmandu international airport for your flight to Bhutan Met by Travel and Trek Guide at the airport Transfer to hotel in Paro, potentially sightsee Paro, which will include the imposing Rinpung Dzong, a huge Monastery that overlooks Paro and is typical of Bhutan.	Superb Airbus flight with Druk Air, which will fly straight past Everest, Lhotse, Makalu and Kanchenjunga (4 of the biggest mountains in the world). Ensure that you sit on the left side of the aircraft! Your Bhutanese guide will escort you throughout your time in Bhutan
5	2	For the next 5/6 days you will trek in some beautiful, wild and remote countryside. There are superb views of both Paro and Thimphu. You will trek up through lovely dwarf rhododendron forests and Juniper trees and also pass a few remote monasteries that are still actively used.	You will stay in good quality tents throughout. Mule/pony and possibly Yak support to carry supplies. On arrival in Thimphu, you can relax and experience the town's life and dine in one of the best restaurants available.
6	3		
7	4		
8	5		
9	6		
10	7		
11	8	Trekking route: Paro – Jele Dzong – Jangchulakha – Jimilang Tsho – Simkota – Phajoding – Thimphu	
11	8	Thimphu. Time to relax and see the capital. There is more than enough sights in Thimphu to keep you busy including the impressive Thimphu Dzong. If you have had enough of monasteries, try the shops!	Rest day
12	9	Thimphu – Paro. See more of Bhutan as you drive from Thimphu to Paro (approx 60 mins), arriving late morning, which will allow you to walk up to the fantastic Tigers Nest Monastery , a sight not to be missed.	The Tigers Nest is built 900m up a cliff!
13		Paro - Kathmandu, Say goodbye to your guide as you board your return flight to Kathmandu. You will be met by transport and transferred to the hotel. Remainder of the day at leisure	
14		Day for either rest or further exploration. Kathmandu is a great place to chill out in the plethora of cafes or shop 'till you drop along the seemingly endless supply of shops. For relaxation, spa facilities are available within the hotel.	This day also acts as a spare in case of bad weather in Bhutan which may prevent the aircraft from leaving
15		Day at leisure, morning or early evening departure	Morning flights should arrive in London same day, evening flights the following morning.
16		Arrival in London	

Notes:

Day 3 can be taken out of this itinerary

Should you cut one day out of the trekking itinerary, you will have an additional day in Thimphu (there is no change to the costing).

Dates: See website for specific dates but this trek can be run at any time during the trekking seasons for any number of people.

Cost: \$2279, broken down as:

9 nights in Bhutan	\$1800 (assuming that there are a min of 3 in the group)
Return Druk Air flights, economy (KTM – PARO)	\$449 (current price)
Tourist Visa and Tourist Development fee	\$30 (\$20 visa, \$10 Development)

Travel and Trek can assist you with accommodation and airport pick ups in Kathmandu and Delhi.

Possibly the best known trek in Bhutan but still you will see very few trekkers there. A good easy/moderate trek in my view. If you have a self confessed 'fit' group and wish to cut the time down, it can be done! Please call to discuss

Summary of Inclusion and Exclusions:

Included:

- International return airfare into Bhutan from Kathmandu
- All hotel accommodation (good standard), regardless of how many nights on a twin share basis*
- All ground transport (from pick up at the airport to return to airport)
- All meals
- Mineral water (bottled) when out and about (ie not in hotels). Boiled water on trek.
- The services of your Bhutanese Guide, full time.
- All staff and pack ponies for the trek (if applicable)
- All accommodation for the trek (tents)
- Fees to monuments, monasteries, etc...
- Tourist visa fee

Not included:

- International flights from UK to the access city
- Accommodation/food/transport in your chosen access city. Travel and Trek will gladly organise your transit through Kathmandu and/or Delhi
- Local trek staff gratuities

* If you request sole occupation of a room, \$15 per night in Bhutan. If you are a sole traveller and do not request it and you are allocated a room on your own, there will be no charge.

For full details on getting to Bhutan, flight routes and Bhutan's pricing policy, please visit the 'Getting to Bhutan' webpage on the Travel and Trek website (the information is downloadable).

CONTACT DETAILS

The Bungalow, 42 Hough Road, Barkston, GRANTHAM NG32 2NS
Phone/Fax: 01400 250770, Mobile: 07725 943108
E-mail: terrycrosby@travelandtrek.com