

# Bhutan Adventure: The Trans Bhutan Trail

Pre-departure information for your tour



## Passport, visa & entry requirements

- In order to enter India and Bhutan, U.S. and Canadian citizens need a valid passport with an expiration date extending at least six months beyond the date of return.
- We recommend having at least two blank passport pages for entry stamps.
- U.S. and Canadian passport holders must obtain a visa in advance in order to enter India. You may choose to apply directly to the [Indian consulate](#) for an E-Visa or use a visa provider, such as our partner company, [VisaCentral](#). Obtaining an Indian visa will be an additional cost.
- If you're not a U.S. or Canadian citizen, you must contact the Indian consulate for specific entry requirements.
- A Bhutanese visa will be provided upon arrival for all travelers. You must provide Go Ahead Tours with your full passport details. Please submit a photocopy or scan of your passport no later than 45 days prior to departure.
- You can see the most up-to-date entry requirements for the destination(s) you'll visit on tour by going to [goaheadtours.com/entry-requirements](https://goaheadtours.com/entry-requirements) and searching for the code BHU.

## Tour pacing & mobility

- You will walk/hike for at least 3 hours daily, across uneven terrain and along unpaved trails that are mostly downhill, but with some steep hills and inclines.
- Travelers should be healthy enough to participate in all included walks without assistance.
- You should feel comfortable managing your own luggage at times.
- Go Ahead Tours and the Tour Director who accompanies your group are unable to provide special, individual mobility assistance to travelers on tour. The responsibility of the Tour Director is to ensure the group as a whole enjoys a relaxing and informative journey. He or she cannot be relied upon to provide ongoing, individualized assistance to any one traveler.
- If you have any mobility concerns or physical restrictions, please contact our Customer

Experience Team.

## Tour Director

- You will have a different Tour Director in each country on this tour.

## Walks & hikes on this tour

- *Gangtey Nature Trail – 2.5 miles / 1.5 hours.* A moderate hike starting at roughly 9,514 feet and gently descends through Phobjikha Valley along a dirt trail.
- *Yotongla to Geytsa – 5.8 miles / 3.5 hours.* A moderate hike starting at 11,237 feet and descending along a dirt trail through a forest and wide open valley to 9,485 feet.
- *Three Temples – 1.5 miles / 2 hours.* *Mebar Tsho Hike – 2.8 miles / 2 hours.* An easy, mostly flat walk starting at 9,186 feet through the valley ending at 8,901 feet.
- *Sew Dranga to Punakha – 4.5 miles / 2.5 hours.* A moderate hike starting at 5,709 feet that runs along a dirt trail descending with some uneven terrain to 4,003 feet into Punakha Valley.
- *Tiger's Nest – 4 miles / 5 hours.* A long and difficult climb starting at 8,530 feet through a forest and reaching a high of 10,335 feet before returning back to 8,530 feet.

## Transportation & arrival information

- Round-trip flights booked through Go Ahead Tours arrive in and depart from Delhi, India. A representative from Go Ahead Tours will meet you at the airport and take you to your hotel. Please remain in the arrival lounge, as the representative might be escorting one of your fellow travelers to the bus at the time of your arrival.
- Transfers to and from the airport at your destination are included for travelers who have purchased their flights through Go Ahead Tours. Travelers who purchase their own flights may request airport transfers with Go Ahead Tours for an additional cost.
- A round-trip flight between Delhi and Paro is included in the price of your tour.
- All other included transportation on this tour is by private motor coach.

## Baggage allowance

- Please note that our travelers are limited to one checked bag and one carry-on bag per person due to storage limitations on motor coaches and other transfers, which may include train connections or flights.
- Contact your airline(s) for baggage size and weight restrictions for your flights, which may include on-tour flights in addition to your round-trip flights to and from tour. Please note that your included on-tour flights may have more restrictive baggage limits.
- Some airlines may impose additional charges if you choose to check any baggage or exceed baggage size and weight restrictions. Be advised that you are responsible for any baggage fees incurred on all flights.
- Please note that the flights included on the tour extension may have baggage restrictions as low as 33 pounds for checked bags and 15 pounds for carry-on bags. You will be responsible for any costs associated with overweight baggage.
- Make sure to label your baggage and keep valuables, medication, and documents in your carry-on bag.

## Clothing & packing tips

- Bhutan's weather can vary greatly depending on the region and altitude you are located in. In the Punakha area you'll find a sub-tropical climate with mild winters. Paro, Thimphu, and the Bumthang region have a much harsher climate with hot, humid summers and cold winters with the occasional snow flurry.
- Loose-fitting, layered clothing that can accommodate varying temperatures will be most comfortable for hiking. Quick-dry material is best for hot days outside and warmer layers may be needed for chilly evenings and early mornings. Additionally, you may wish to pack a hiking style jacket, thermal base layer, gloves, and hat for higher-altitude locations.
- A sturdy pair of walking shoes or sneakers is recommended for sightseeing. Hiking boots are highly recommended, especially in the rainy season, as the terrain can be tough and muddy.

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- Sunscreen, a brimmed hat, and insect repellent are recommended for outdoor activities.
- You may bring collapsible trekking/walking poles to offer you additional support and comfort along the Trail.
- Binoculars are handy for a closer look at local wildlife and scenery.
- On long hiking days, it is recommended that you bring a daypack to carry along medicine, sunscreen, water, and any valuables like cash and your passport.
- It is preferable not to visit temples or other religious sites with bare legs and shoulders (and entrance may be denied on this basis).

## Health

- At least 60 days prior to departure, check with your doctor or healthcare provider for the latest updates and entry requirements, or visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).
- Local governments may require proof of a yellow fever vaccination (often referred to as a yellow card) or a statement of medical exemption from the vaccine. This is only required of travelers arriving from a country with a risk of yellow fever virus transmission. (Please note: This does not include the U.S. or Canada.) Visit [cdc.gov/yellowfever](https://www.cdc.gov/yellowfever) for more information.
- Please be aware that you will be traveling at altitudes as high as 11,000 feet above sea level. These high altitudes can sometimes cause breathing difficulties for travelers who have heart problems or respiratory ailments. If you suffer from any of these conditions, please speak to your doctor regarding any potential health risks.
- Even healthy travelers may sometimes experience altitude sickness, a temporary condition featuring symptoms such as headache, fatigue, nausea, and light-headedness. Until your body acclimates to the higher altitudes, we suggest that you drink plenty of fluids and limit your intake of caffeine and alcohol.
- Be sure to take proper care for sun exposure, as the sun can be more intense at higher altitudes.
- Drink bottled water only. Refrain from

ingesting tap water, including when brushing your teeth.

- Avoid eating fresh fruits and vegetables unless they're cooked or washed in clean water and peeled.
- Public restrooms in India can be quite bare. We suggest carrying bathroom tissue and hand sanitizer with you.
- If you have medication that you take daily, be sure you have enough for each day of the tour and any possible delays encountered.
- If you have dietary restrictions and/or food allergies, please notify Go Ahead Tours at least 30 days prior to your departure by logging in to your account and updating your traveler info. To update this information closer to your departure date, please call our Customer Experience Team.
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## Cuisine

- Bhutanese cuisine is characterized by its spiciness, and chilis are an essential part of nearly every dish. Rice is central to most Bhutanese meals and is typically accompanied by one or two side dishes consisting of meat or vegetables. Pork, beef, and chicken are the most typical meats, and spinach, pumpkins, turnips, radishes, and tomatoes are among the most common vegetables. Depending on which part of Bhutan you find yourself in, you might also find dishes made or served with grains such as buckwheat or barley.
- In the northern regions of India, you'll encounter a great deal of flavorful meat dishes, as well as kebabs and biryanis. In tandoor cooking, probably the most popular cuisine in this region, vegetables, paneer (Indian cheese), or meat is marinated in spiced yogurt and cooked over coals. As many Indians are vegetarians, meat-free options abound. Meals are usually served with rice or bread, such as unleavened roti or deep-fried puri. Many of your included meals will be buffet style, which will allow you to try a variety of new dishes.

## Electricity & air-conditioning

- India and Bhutan operate on 230 volts and use type D, F, and G plugs with two small, round pins and one larger round pin.
- We recommend packing a universal adapter, as well as a voltage converter if you plan on using your own hairdryer or other device without a built-in converter.
- The strength of the air-conditioning in hotels in Asia is often not as strong or as cool as what one might be used to in the U.S. or Canada. When air-conditioning is available, it is usually regulated seasonally and controlled centrally by the hotel.
- Your hotels may provide hairdryers, irons, and other small appliances. However, these amenities cannot be guaranteed.

## Connectivity

- Wi-Fi is available in most hotels, though some charges may apply.
- There is no Wi-Fi on any of the motor coaches.
- Please contact your mobile service provider for information on roaming charges.

## Time zones

- Bhutan is 10 hours ahead and India is 10.5 hours ahead of Eastern Time (ET), and do not observe Daylight Saving Time.
- When it's noon in New York, it's 10pm in Bhutan and 10:30pm in Delhi from November through March, and 9pm in Bhutan and 9:30pm in Delhi from April through October.

## Currency

- You will use the Indian rupee in India and Bhutanese Ngultrum in Bhutan.
- Better rates of exchange are usually available overseas, though you can look into ordering some rupees from your local bank or a foreign currency exchange retailer, such as Travelex, before you arrive. Ngultrum are very difficult to obtain outside of Bhutan, but you will have the chance to obtain some in Paro and Thimphu either through currency exchange or from an ATM. Please note that exchanging larger denomination bills come with a higher exchange rate than lower

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denomination bills.

- Travelers may carry up to 25,000 Indian rupees into the country when entering through an airport. Travelers may bring up to 25,000 Indian rupees out of India unless continuing on to Bhutan or Nepal.
- If you wish, you can also obtain rupees through a currency exchange booth at the airport upon your arrival in India. Keep receipt of your exchange.
- Cash is the preferred method of payment across India and Bhutan. Some larger vendors may accept international debit and credit cards, such as MasterCard and Visa, though it is uncommon and a minimum payment is generally required. You should not rely on using your credit card for purchases while on tour.
- Inform your bank and credit card company of your travel plans so that they won't confuse your international purchases for fraudulent charges.

## Tipping

- At the conclusion of your tour, it's customary to offer your Tour Director and driver a gratuity in local currency. Please keep current exchange rates in mind.
- We recommend tipping the equivalent of \$8USD to \$10USD per person per day for your Tour Director and the equivalent of \$3USD per person per day for your driver.
- If applicable, we also recommend the equivalent of \$2USD per local guide.
- Tips can only be paid in cash.

International travel is, by its very nature, unpredictable. We must therefore reserve the right to change this itinerary, without advance notice, to meet with local conditions at the time of travel. We appreciate your understanding. Please refer to our website for Terms & Conditions, dates, and prices.