

Hiking Bhutan: The Last Shangri-La

October 23 - 31 2025 • 9 Days • \$4890

Bangkok ~ Crossroads of Culture & Culinary Delights Optional Pre-tour

October 19 - 23, 2025 • 5 Days • \$1490

Taj Mahal Pearl of India Optional Extension

October 31 - November 6, 2025 • 7 Days • \$2990

TOUR STATUS

This tour is now full and a wait list has been started in the case of cancellations. Click on the Contact Us button to the right if you would like to add your name to the waitlist.

INTRODUCTION

Due to its unique approach to measuring progress through **Gross National Happiness** (GNH) rather than Gross Domestic Product (GDP), **Bhutan** is often cited as one of the happiest countries in the world. Explore with us the ancient allure of Bhutan, where timeless traditions blend seamlessly with breathtaking natural beauty. Nestled in the heart of the **Himalayas**, Bhutan offers travelers a unique journey into a land of untouched landscapes and vibrant culture.

Our itinerary is immersed in **Bhutanese culture, food, and the natural Himalayan setting of the country**. The national religion is **Buddhism**, and this belief system permeates daily life, most prominently displayed in a wide array of impressive architecture.

Bhutan is a Himalayan country, and we will be hiking at higher than normal altitudes. A highlight of the tour is a 5-hour roundtrip hike to emblematic **Taktshang Monastery**, also called Tiger's Nest, visited by all Bhutanese at least once in their lifetime.

Because limited flight routes to Bhutan pass through **Bangkok, Thailand**, an optional pre-tour is offered from **Bangkok** in the ancient kingdom of Siam before we catch our flight to **Paro, Bhutan**.

The extension in **India** has been offered by WAI several times, starting in 2012. Incomparable **Taj Mahal** is the centerpiece, but **Rajasthan**, the region to the west where we spend most of our time is rightly considered the most colorful corner of a supremely colorful country. Never have we seen such flamboyant clothing! And the hospitality of the small town of **Deogarh** is our favorite spot in India.

NOTE regarding flights: As mentioned above, few options are available to access the

Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan. Coming from North America, Bangkok, Thailand offers the most convenient option. We have therefore booked a flight from Bangkok to Paro, Bhutan with our in-country partner which is not included in the tour price. Travelers who participate in the optional India Extension need only a one-way flight into Bhutan and will return home out of Udaipur, India. Their flight connecting Bhutan with the start of the extension in Delhi, India is included in the price of the India Extension. Travelers participating in Bhutan only will have a return flight from Paro to Bangkok, where these travelers will catch their transpacific flight to North America.

Cost of the Bangkok-Paro-Bangkok return flight is \$1059 and includes airport to hotel transfers in Thailand and Bhutan.

Cost of the Bangkok-Paro one-way flight is \$575 and includes airport to hotel transfers in Thailand and Bhutan.

[Contact Us](#)

[Tour Type: Classic Curated, High Adventure](#)

Trip Details

- [Bhutan](#)
- [Bangkok pre-tour](#)
- [India Extension](#)
- [Reviews](#)

Hiking Bhutan: The Last Shangri-La

Including:

- Incoming and outgoing airport to hotel transfers
- All land travel by minibus as outlined
- Superior tourist-class (3 or 4 star) hotel accommodations
- 27 meals: 3 meals a day are included as listed (BLD). One lunch is a picnic in a remote location.
- 8 walks as listed
- Walking fees for those collecting IVV walking credit (if IVV approved)
- WAI guide service throughout (2 guides)
- Cultural & historical expertise of national guide throughout
- All tipping for local guides, coach drivers, and group meals
- Pricing is based on double occupancy. A limited number of single rooms are available for a supplement of \$790. We also provide a roommate matching service.

Activities/Visits to:

- Memorial Chorten - Thimphu
- Wangditse Monastery - Thimphu
- Changangkha Lhakhang - Thimphu
- Textile Museum - Thimphu

- Folk Heritage Museum - Thimphu
- Trashichhoe Dzong - Thimphu
- Thinleygang Lhakhang - Thinleygang
- Tangjey Lhakhang - Tangjey Village
- Black Neck Crane Information Centre - Phobjikha Valley
- Gangtey Gumpa - Gangtey
- Chimi Lhakhang - Punakha
- Khamsum Yuelley Namgyal Chorten - Punakha
- Punakha Dzong - Punakha
- Bhutanese Farmhouse - Punakha
- Paro Ta Dzong, National Museum of the Kingdom - Paro
- Rinpung Dzong - Paro
- Bhutanese cultural program - Paro
- Taktshang Monastery - Paro Valley
- Kyichu Lhakhang - Paro Valley

Bangkok ~ Crossroads of Culture & Culinary Delights Optional Pre-tour

Including:

- All land travel by motorcoach as outlined
- Superior tourist-class hotel accommodations in Bangkok
- 4 meals: 4 breakfasts are included as listed (B)
- 2 walks as listed
- Walking fees for those collecting IVV walking credit (if IVV approved)
- WAI guide service throughout (2 guides)
- Cultural & historical expertise of local guide throughout
- All tipping for local guides, coach drivers, and group meals
- Pricing is based on double occupancy. A limited number of single rooms are available for a supplement of \$225. We also provide a roommate matching service for those interested.

Activities/Visits to:

- Grand Palace - Bangkok
- Wat Pho - Bangkok
- Wat Arun - Bangkok
- Flower Market - Bangkok
- Maeklong Train Market - Samut Songkhram
- Damnoen Saduak Floating Markets - Ratchaburi
- Palm Sugar Home Visit - Bang Khonthi
- Wat Phra Si Sanphet - Ayutthaya
- Wat Mahathat - Ayutthaya
- Wat Ratchaburana - Ayutthaya
- More cultural wows than we can list!

Optional Excursions:

- Manohra Dinner Cruise on the Chao Praya River in Bangkok – Day 2
- Bangkok by Night Tuk Tuk Tour + Dinner – Day 3

Taj Mahal Pearl of India Optional Extension

Including:

- Flight from Paro, Bhutan to Delhi, India
- Incoming and outgoing airport to hotel transfers
- All land travel by motorcoach as outlined
- Superior tourist-class or better hotel accommodations
- 16 meals: all breakfasts, 3 lunches, and 6 dinners are included as listed (BLD)
- 5 walks as listed
- Walking fees for those collecting IVV walking credit (if IVV approved)
- WAI guide service throughout (2 guides)
- Cultural & historical expertise of national guide throughout
- All tipping for local guides, coach drivers, and group meals
- Pricing is based on double occupancy. A limited number of single rooms are available for a supplement of \$290. We also provide a roommate matching service.

Activities/Visits to:

- Agra Fort in Agra
- Taj Mahal in Agra
- Jantar Mantar astronomical park in Jaipur
- Amber Fort outside Jaipur
- Special lunch at hidden resort after Jaipur Countryside Walk
- Special dinner with local family in Jaipur
- Boat ride on Pichola Lake in Udaipur
- City Palace in Udaipur
- Tea/coffee in home of Deogarh maharajah
- More cultural wows than we can list!

“Thank you for traveling to exotic places and making it so easy for a Westerner to feel comfortable and safe... Scott and Russ are an awesome team—felt very welcome and well taken care of.”

– Valerie; Seattle, WA

“I love the history and culture offered on your tours. The exposure to local food is also a real plus.”

– Sharon; Anacortes, WA

"I like the mix of city, country, and national parks and learning about the history, culture, plants/wildlife, and political situations in the places we visit. Also appreciate opportunities to mix with local people."

- Shirley; Tacoma, WA

"WAI is incredibly accommodating to all its customers' needs and its knowledgeable capable guides are above average in leading and conducting tours."

- Bliss; Tacoma, WA

"India...was a kaleidoscope to the eyes, whether beautiful, horrifying, colorful, or dusty. Perry (national guide) was not only informative, and a "walker" but he was also personable. One of the best guides I've had in a foreign country so vast & historical. He really knew his country. It was a wonderfully fascinating trip and I thank you (Dan) & Scott for seeing us through it."

- Carol; Fairborn, OH

Overview / Trip Details

- [Tour Details](#)

- [360.260.9393](#)
- [Email Us](#)

Itinerary

Click on each day for more details. (BLD) refers to meals included - Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner.

Hiking Bhutan: the Last Shangri-La

[DAY 1~October 23: Arrive Paro, Bhutan, continue to Thimphu \(LD\)](#)

Thimphu elevation: 7,217'

Walk #1: Thimphu Orientation Walk, 3 km, rated 2B (starting elevation: 7,217')

The flight to Paro on a clear day is one of the most spectacular of all mountain flights. Whether you fly from Kathmandu along the Himalayan range or from India over the

foothills, the journey offers mesmerizing views and a thrilling descent into the kingdom.

On arrival in Paro, you will be greeted by a representative of WAI. After lunch, we drive about 90 minutes to Thimphu for a 2-night stay.

Thimphu is capital of Bhutan and its center of government, religion and commerce. It is a unique city with an unusual mixture of modern development alongside ancient traditions. Though not a typical capital city, Thimphu is a lively place, representative of its country. Home to civil servants, expatriates and monks, Thimphu also maintains a strong national character in its architectural style.

After checking into our hotel, a leisurely walk around Thimphu's main street and market area serves as a relaxed introduction to the town's atmosphere, key landmarks, and local culture. A highlight of the walk is **Memorial Chorten**, the stupa (a Buddhist monument for meditation and prayer) built in the memory of Bhutan's third King, His Late Majesty, King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk, who is popularly regarded as Father of modern Bhutan.



Memorial Chorten - Thimphu

[DAY 2~October 24: Activities from Thimphu \(BLD\)](#)

Thimphu elevation: 7,217'

Walk #2: Wangditse to Sangaygang Viewpoint Hike - 7 km, rated 2B (starting elevation: 8,809')

Our day begins with a drive to the Sangaygang Viewpoint. Situated at an elevation of 8,800

feet, the viewpoint offers a stunning panoramic view of Thimphu Valley. It also serves as the start point for an otherworldly two-hour round-trip walk along the Sangayang-Wangditse loop.

The trail meanders through a sea of colorful prayer flags while providing breathtaking vistas of the valley. Along the way, we pass apple orchards and traditional farmhouses, then descend gradually through forests of oak, blue pine, and rhododendron, leading you to the **Wangditse Monastery**.

Established in 1750 by the attendants of Bhutan's eight Desis, Wangditse Monastery was renovated in 2001. Inside the chapel, we find statues of guardian deities central to the Buddhist religion.

We continue the hike with magnificent views to the north, including a glimpse of Samteling Palace, residence of Bhutan's Fourth King. The trail concludes back at the Sangayang Viewpoint.

After a fun local lunch, we return to Thimphu to visit some of city's main highlights including:

Changangkha Lhakhang: a fortress-like temple and monastic school perched on a ridge above Thimphu, south of Motithang. The temple was established in the 12th century on a site chosen by Lama Phajo Drugom Shigpo, who came from Tibet.

Textile Museum: worth a visit to experience the living national art of weaving. Exhibitions introduce the major weaving techniques, styles of local dress, and textiles made by women and men.



National Textile Museum in Thimphu

Folk Heritage Museum: dedicated to connecting visitors with the rich Bhutanese Folk heritage and rural history through exhibits, demonstrations, educational programs and documentation of Bhutanese rural life.

We conclude a busy day with a visit to **Trashichhoe Dzong**, “fortress of the glorious religion”, both a Buddhist monastery and fortress as well as the head of Bhutan’s civil government.

[DAY 3~October 25: Thimphu - Phobjikha Valley, Bhutan \(BLD\)](#)

Phobjikha Valley: elevation: 9,514’

Walk #3: Jigme Dorji Wangchuck National Park Hike - 2.5 km, rated 3B (starting elevation: 10,171’)

After breakfast, we embark on a high-altitude drive through Dochula Pass (10,105’). At the summit, we disembark to take in the view and admire the chorten (stupa), mani wall (worship site), and prayer flags which decorate the highest point on the road.

If skies are clear, the following peaks can be seen from this pass:

- Masagang (23,484’),
- Tsendagang (22,835’),
- Terigang (23,163’),
- Jejegangphugang (23,484’),

- Kangphugang (23,524'),
- Zongphugang (23,163), a table mountain that dominates the isolated region of - Lunana, and finally
- Gangkar Puensum, at 24,596' the highest peak in Bhutan and the highest unclimbed mountain on the planet!



Memorial Chortens at Dochula Pass

The hike of the day descends from Dochula Pass and offers an easy (except for the elevation) downhill hike through pristine, little visited Bhutanese nature. We are walking in Jigme Dorji Wangchuck National Park surrounded by a diverse array of rhododendron trees, magnolia, oak, and birch trees.

From walk's end, we continue by bus to Thinleygang to explore **Thinleygang Lhakhang** (temple). This temple serves as the overnight stop for the central monastic body during their two-day journey from the summer residence in Thimphu to the winter residence in Punakha.

Lunch is offered at a wayside restaurant before the last leg of our journey into adjoining Gangtey and Phobjikha Valleys, considered one of the most beautiful spots in Bhutan. The surprise of finding such a spacious, flat, treeless valley after the hard climb through dense forests leaves the impression of endless space, a rare sensation in Bhutan, where valleys are typically narrow and tightly hemmed in by the Himalayas.

A few miles south from Gangtey, Phobjikha Valley sits on the periphery of the Black Mountain National Park and is graced by two beautiful meandering rivers, Nakay Chhu

(Chhu Naap-black water) and Gay Chhu (Chhu Karp-white water).

Here we find the village of Phobjikha, our home for the next two nights and the wintering grounds of black necked cranes that migrate from arid plains in the north, attracted by the milder climate in this relatively lower setting.

[DAY 4~October 26: Activities from Phobjikha Valley \(BLD\)](#)

Phobjikha Valley: elevation: 9,514'

Walk #4: Phobjikha Valley Hike - 5/10 km, rated 2B (starting elevation: 9,840')

Following a leisurely breakfast, we set out on a hike through stands of dwarf bamboo on a scenic trail through one of Bhutan's most beautiful glacial valleys, a Himalayan canvas painted with colorful village landscapes, high-altitude farmland, and pristine pine forests.



Bhutanese village kids encountered along the trail

Our destination is Tangjey Village and **Tangjey Lhakhang** (temple), dedicated to Lord Buddha and the local protective deity Yeshe Gempo. The original foundation of the temple dates to the early 16th century.

After visiting the temple and a break for picnic lunch nearby, the return trail crosses a wooden bridge over crystalline waters of one of Phobjikha Valley's signature rivers, and finishes at the hotel.

Our afternoon activity is a visit to the **Black Neck Crane Information Centre**. Phobjikha

Valley is a wintering area for this rare migratory wading bird on the endangered species listed as an endangered species. With luck, we should enjoy sightings of early arrivals from the spotting scope-equipped observation room. The center also offers display information that outlines the natural and cultural history of the area.

After the visit, return to the hotel by bus or on foot (a 30-minute walk) and enjoy a relaxing dinner and evening in this special Himalayan valley.

[DAY 5~October 27: Phobjikha Valley – Punakha \(BLD\)](#)

Punakha elevation: 4265'

Walk #5: Gangtey Gompa Village Walk – 3 km, rated 2B (starting elevation: 9514')

Walk #6: Chimi Lhakhang Paddy Fields Walk – 3 km, rated 2C (starting elevation: 4,265')

Before leaving the paradise of the twin Gangtey and Phobjikha Valleys, we visit **Gangtey Gompa** (monastery). Perched on a small hill that rises from the valley floor, the Gangtey Monastery is the largest Nyingmapa (the oldest school of Tibetan Buddhism) monastery in Bhutan. It is surrounded by a village inhabited mainly by the families of the 140 Gomchens (lay priests) who care for the monastery.



Gangtey Goempa (Monastery)

The morning hike is a scenic trail descending from Gangtey Monastery through nearby villages. The route offers a chance to experience local life as we meander through small bazaars in settlements where you can observe locals engaged in everyday activities like

farming, weaving, or cooking. Exceptional, expansive views of the Phobjikha Valley and surrounding pine forests are an ongoing theme of this trail.

From Gangtey Valley, we continue to Punakha, where we enjoy lunch at our hotel before a second walk.

The afternoon walk takes us through terraced paddy fields to **Chimi Lhakhang**, a temple dedicated to Lama Drukpa Kunley, also known as the “Divine Madman.” The temple is particularly famous for its association with fertility blessings. Chimi Lhakhang is situated on a hillock in the center of the valley and our trail takes us through the tiny enclave of Pana, offering more intriguing encounters with the daily life of local villagers.



A trio of happy monks ~ Buddhism is woven into the fabric of life in Bhutan

[DAY 6~October 28: Activities from Punakha \(BLD\)](#)

Punakha elevation: 4,265'

Walk #7: Khamsum Yuelley Namgyal Chhorten Hike - 5 km, rated 3C (starting elevation: 4,265')

After breakfast, enjoy a hike in Punakha to **Khamsum Yuelley Namgyal Chorten** (stupa or shrine) where clear weather unveils stunning views of the Punakha Valley.

The trail crosses a suspension bridge over the Mo Chhu River and leads through terraced rice paddies and farmland, offering more insight into Bhutan's agricultural life.



Hard working Bhutanese woman along the trail

At the top, the Khamsum Yuelley Namgyal Chhorten offers a peaceful space for reflection. You can enhance the experience by climbing to the rooftop for panoramic views up towards the peaks of Gasa and over the Punakha Valley and Mo Chhu River.

After a picnic lunch by the river at walk's end, we explore a few of Punakha's highlights. Built strategically at the junction of Pho Chhu and Mo Chhu rivers in 1637 by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal, **Punakha Dzong** (fortified monastery) served as the religious and administrative center of the region and played an important role in Bhutan's history. It was damaged by four catastrophic fires and an earthquake but has been fully restored by the present King.



Punakha Dzong Monastery

Later this afternoon, we plan to visit a traditional **Bhutanese Farmhouse** to enjoy a cup of tea with the locals and see the *inside* of a rural Bhutanese residence.

[DAY 7~October 29: Punakha - Paro \(BLD\)](#)

Paro elevation: 7,480'

We leave Punakha this morning, returning west over Dochula Pass to the verdant valley of Paro. Home to a number of Bhutan's oldest temples and monasteries, the Paro region encompasses rich Bhutanese culture, natural beauty, and a plethora of myths and legends. The snow-clad peaks of Chomolhari Mountain reign supreme at the northern end of the valley while its icy waters plunge through deep gorges to form the Pa Chhu or Paro River.

After checking into our hotel for the next two nights, we explore a few of Paro's claims to fame.

Paro Ta Dzong, the National Museum of the Kingdom, was originally built as a Watch Tower fortress, but has served as the National Museum of the country since 1967. Worthwhile collections of art, artifacts, Thangkha paintings and Bhutan's exquisite postage stamps provide deeper insight to this "land of the thunder dragon".

Afterwards, walk down a hillside trail to visit **Rinpung Dzong**. This monastic fortress was commissioned in 1646 by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal, a Tibetan Buddhist lama

considered the father of unified Bhutan.

The Shabdrung was the leader who first joined factions of Bhutan under a centralized dual system of government combining spiritual and temporal leadership. He was an Asian renaissance man, developing a comprehensive law code while making lasting contributions to Bhutanese culture in fields of art, architecture, and literature, and establishing the Tibetan Drukpa Lineage school of Buddhism as the state religion.

The Dzong currently houses the monastic body of Paro, the office of the Dzongda (district administrative head), and Thrimpon (judge) of Paro district.

After dinner this evening, we are treated to a traditional Bhutanese cultural program, a vibrant, captivating display of the kingdom's rich heritage and deeply rooted customs. Performances like this serve as a cherished medium for preserving and promoting Bhutanese culture among locals and visitors alike.

Adorned in colorful, traditional attire, dancers gracefully weave together stories from mythology, folklore, and daily life, accompanied by enchanting sounds of traditional instruments like the dramnyen, flute, and drums. These cultural programs are typically performed during festive celebrations, religious events, and other special occasions, and instill a deep sense of pride and cultural identity in the hearts of the Bhutanese people.



Rinpung Dzong (Monastic Fortress) in Punakha

[DAY 8~October 30: Activities in Paro \(BLD\)](#)

Paro elevation: 7480

Walk #8: Tiger's Nest Monastery - 4 km, rated 4C (3 stages of participation on an out and back trail)

Stage 1: Start point to Tiger's Nest Cafeteria - 2 km, rated 3B (starting elevation: 8,530')

Stage 2: Tiger's Nest Cafeteria to Lookout - 1.5 km, rated 3B

Stage 3: Lookout to Taktshang (Tiger's Nest) Monastery - 0.5 km, rated 4C (ending elevation: 10,240')

After breakfast, we embark on what may become the signature experience of our visit to Bhutan. Clinging dramatically to the side of a cliff 3,000' above the Paro valley floor, **Taktshang Monastery**, or Tiger's Nest, is arguably the most famous of Bhutan's monasteries.

Legend says that Guru Rinpoche arrived here on the back of a tigress and meditated at this monastery, hence its nickname 'Tiger's Nest'. The site is recognized in Bhutan as a most sacred place and was visited by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal in 1646. It is now the goal of every Bhutanese to visit it at least once in their lifetime.



Taktsang Monastery, also known as Tiger's Nest Monastery

Today's hiking event to Tiger's Nest takes place in three stages.

The first stage is the hike from our start point up to the Tiger's Nest Cafeteria, situated on a

rocky outcrop across a ravine from the monastery. It is a well-defined trail that ascends through a pine forest and passes several prayer wheels and chortens (Buddhist shrines). This leg of the hike takes approximately 60 to 90 minutes.

At the cafeteria, we take a break and enjoy a hot or cold beverage as we gaze across the gorge at the monastery, pondering the next stage of the trail. Travelers are encouraged here to monitor their stamina and strength and consider opting out of the rest of the hike, using the cafeteria as a place to relax and enjoy the view.

The second stage of the walk leaves from the Tiger's Nest Cafeteria en route to a second lookout opposite the monastery. This leg takes close to one hour. This is also a point for hikers to consider snapping a few photos and returning to the cafeteria, opting out of stage three.

The third stage involves descending the 475 steps in the cliff face to the bottom of the ravine, then crossing a stream and passing a waterfall before ascending another 300 odd steps to the entrance of the monastery. The climb and visit to the entrance and back to the lookout will take approximately one hour.

We begin the walk at approximately 8,530' elevation and ascend to 10,240' at the monastery. Stage 3 involves a descent before the final ascent. This results in a one-way ascent of all 3 stages of more than 2,000 feet over a distance of about 4 kilometers. The return journey does, of course, involve a *descent* of more than 2000 feet over that same distance.

NOTE: It is possible to rent ponies for part of the journey. However, ponies are only allowed to take visitors up to a certain point (usually the cafeteria at the end of the first stage), and staying astride your mount on an uneven mountain trail can offer its own set of physical challenges and risks.

We rendezvous at Tiger's Nest Cafeteria for lunch, then hike back to our start point. En route to the hotel, we visit **Kyichu Lhakhang**, one of the 108 temples built in the Himalayas by Tibetan King, Songtsen Gampo. The building of this temple marks the introduction of Buddhism in Bhutan.

After an unforgettable Bhutanese hiking experience, we come together this evening for a farewell dinner to fellowship and reminisce over our visit to the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan ~ the last Shangri-La.

[DAY 9~October 31: Depart for Home or continue to Delhi, India \(B\)](#)

After breakfast, we transfer to Paro International Airport for flights home, or to India for those joining us for the onward journey to *Taj Mahal Pearl of India Optional Extension*.

Bangkok ~ Crossroads of Culture & Culinary Delights

Optional Pre-tour

[DAY 1~October 19: Arrive Bangkok Thailand](#)

Welcome to Thailand, Land of Smiles! Bangkok is the vibrant capital of Thailand, renowned for its blend of ancient traditions and modern lifestyle. It offers a thrilling mix of bustling markets, awe-inspiring temples, vibrant street life, and state-of-the-art shopping malls. Famous for its cultural landmarks, such as the Grand Palace and Wat Arun, Bangkok also boasts a dynamic culinary scene, ranging from street food to fine dining.

Whether you're interested in history, shopping, or exploring its lively neighborhoods, Bangkok has something for every traveler. The rest of the day is yours to enjoy at your leisure. You can relax at the hotel or take a casual stroll around the nearby area, soaking in the local culture and ambiance, before resting up for our first full day of activities tomorrow.

[DAY 2~October 20: Activities from Bangkok \(B\)](#)

Walk #1: Bangkok Temples Walk - 5 km, rated 1B

After breakfast at our hotel, we meet our Bangkok guide and transfer to the stunningly beautiful Grand Palace, established in 1782. This colorful complex consists not only of royal and throne halls, but also a number of government offices as well as the renowned Temple of the Emerald Buddha, known as Wat Phra Kaew. Later this morning, we walk a short distance to nearby Wat Pho or "Temple of the Reclining Buddha," one of Bangkok's most attractive temples.

Following a tasty Thai lunch on our own, we board a local public ferry that crosses the Chao Praya River to lovely Wat Arun, the Temple of Dawn. This is a popular place for locals and tourists alike to dress in native Thai garb for a fun and unforgettable fashion shoot. After this brief temple visit, we take the ferry back across the river and savor a short walk through the Flower Market of Chinatown, bursting with local color and offering a fun window into Bangkok's bustling culture! We then return to the hotel for free time to rest and cool off from the typically warm Thai weather.

Optional Manohra Dinner Cruise on the Chao Praya River

The remainder of the evening and dinner are free. However, we offer a memorable optional cruising cuisine experience this evening on the Chao Praya River. The Manohra Cruise takes place on a converted old teak-wood rice barge, where magnificent nighttime views of the city await as we glide peacefully along the river, enjoying a 5-course Thai Dinner with free soft drinks and a traditional Thai dessert. As we dine, our vessel offers a moving postcard of brightly lit temples and skyscrapers that illuminate Bangkok's colorful skyline. It's a delightful experience! Estimated price: \$175

[DAY 3~October 21: Activities from Bangkok \(B\)](#)

After breakfast, we meet our Thai guide and drive out of the bustling Bangkok metropolis,

transitioning to southwest Thailand to visit the renowned Maeklong Railway Market. The market is famous for the astonishing transformation that takes place as the train approaches and the merchants swiftly retract their stalls to allow the train to pass through the middle of the market. It's an unforgettable sight!

After this unique experience, we stop at a local home to sample the cottage industry of palm sugar, along with other unique and charming aspects of Thai culture. Later this morning we visit the Damnoen Saduak Floating Market, where we board boats for a wild ride through a jumble of canals overflowing with lively vendors selling all manner of fruits, vegetables, and other goods. It's a progressive, one-stop shopping experience like no other!

Optional Bangkok by Night Tuk Tuk Tour + Dinner

Upon our return to Bangkok in the early afternoon, lunch and dinner are free for you to experience from the city's wonderful and varied culinary scene. Or you can choose to join us on an optional Bangkok by Night Tuk Tuk Tour that includes dinner. Three-wheeled fun awaits, as we caravan with our guide on a fleet of blinged-out tuk tuks, passing by several of the city's popular attractions (Golden Mount, Wat Ratchanaddaram, Pillar Shrine, Grand Palace, Wat Pho, and others) for photo stops, before enjoying wildly neon Chinatown, where the city's most famous street food abounds. Dinner here will be another memorable Thai experience! Following this fun night, our tuk tuks whisk us back to our hotel for a well-deserved night of rest! Estimated price: \$125

[DAY 4~October 22: Activities from Bangkok \(B\)](#)

Walk #2: Ayutthaya Ancient Temples UNESCO Walk - 5 km, rated 2B

We venture north of Bangkok this morning for a fascinating experience at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Ayutthaya in the heart of ancient Siam.

Our walking tour of this historic complex begins at Wihan Phra Mongkhon Bophit, a temple housing a large, seated bronze Buddha image. As we explore the temple, paying our respects, and capturing memorable photos, it becomes apparent that Wihan Phra Mongkhon Bophit provides an effective introduction to the impressive scale of Ayutthaya's religious structures.

Next, we take a short walk north to Wat Phra Si Sanphet, the holiest temple in the royal palace during the Ayutthaya period. Visiting this temple provides an excellent perspective on Ayutthaya's royal history.

A lovely park stroll later this morning connects us with Wat Mahathat, famous for the iconic Buddha head entwined in tree roots at one of the most important temples in the kingdom.

Finally, we continue to Wat Ratchaburana, which features a large prang (Khmer-style tower) that you can climb, before finishing our walk at a nearby restaurant for another delicious helping of Thai cuisine, as we enjoy lunch on our own.

We return to our hotel in Bangkok late this afternoon where you can rest and savor the magic of air conditioning. Dinner is on your own tonight, but there are plenty of food choices at and near the hotel. You'll also want to budget time to get all of your bags packed and ready for tomorrow morning's early departure to Bhutan!

[DAY 5~October 23: Bangkok to Paro, Bhutan \(B\)](#)

This morning, we will likely grab a box breakfast from our hotel as we bid a fond farewell to the Land of Smiles. We depart very early in order to arrive at the airport for our flight to Paro, Bhutan and our ongoing adventures in the Himalayas!

Taj Mahal Pearl of India Optional Extension

[DAY 1~October 31: Fly from Paro, Bhutan to Delhi, India \(BD\)](#)

We fly today (flight included) from Bhutan to Delhi, India for the start of *Taj Mahal—Pearl of India*. Our guide and driver for the program meet us at the Delhi airport and take us south in the direction of Agra. On the outskirts of Delhi, we spend the night in a lovely hotel in preparation for tomorrow's journey to see the world-famous Taj Mahal!

[DAY 2~November 1: Delhi - Agra, India \(BLD\)](#)

Taj Mahal Walk ~ 5 km, rated 1A

This morning's drive to Agra introduces us to India's mesmerizing kaleidoscope of transportation moving people and goods on every imaginable wheeled conveyance and beast of burden.

Agra was capital of the Mughal Empire and remains home to what is arguably the most admired piece of architecture on the planet—the Taj Mahal.



Our 2019 group in front of the Taj Mahal

Poignant poetry in marble, the Taj Mahal stands serene and awesome on a raised marble platform by the banks of the Yamuna River, one of the seven modern wonders of the world. The grounds are extensive, and our walk here offers many dazzling perspectives of this 17th century mausoleum for the favorite wife of Emperor Shah Jahan, queen Mumtaz, who died giving birth to their 14th child.

Construction of the Taj commenced in 1631AD and continued for 22 years. About 20,000 workers, from all over the country and central Asia, were recruited to translate this dream into reality.

We also visit Agra's other highly regarded monument—Agra Fort—from the same era, sited dramatically on the banks of the Yamuna River.



The symmetry of Agra Fort

[DAY 3~November 2: Agra - Jaipur, India \(BD\)](#)

Jaipur Pink City Walk ~ 2 km, rated 1B (unsanctioned)

We continue west this morning to Jaipur, the Pink City, in the colorful Indian state of Rajasthan. The city's conspicuous pink hue dates to 1876, when many of the avenues were painted pink to welcome the Prince of Wales, later crowned Edward VII.

Our afternoon visit takes us to 18th century Jantar Mantar, a series of massive, intriguing, stone astronomical instruments designed by astrologer king Jai Singh II, founder of Jaipur. From Jantar Mantar, we explore the colorful core of the old part of city on foot, passing through photogenic local markets and down narrow by-lanes to reach Chandpole Bazaar and the marble statue market.



One of Jai Singh II's astronomical instruments

Nearby is our hotel for the next two nights, offering a relaxing evening and dinner.

[DAY 4~November 3: Activities from Jaipur \(BLD\)](#)

Jaipur Countryside Walk ~ 8 km, rated 1B

Picturesque Palace of the Winds (Hawa Mahal) is one of Jaipur's many wonders, renowned for its 953 multifaceted windows and niches, allowing ladies of royalty to see and not be seen.

Leaving Jaipur, a convoy of jeeps takes us to visit dramatically-sited Amber Fort. This impressive and expansive fortress is situated high in the Aravali hills 11 km north of Jaipur. It was the ancient capital of the Kachhawaha Rajputs (Hindu warrior caste) till 1037.



Defensive walls of Amber Fort

From Amber Fort, we continue into nearby countryside to begin our walk. Today's trail starts at the old Delhi Gate and takes us through tiny farming communities and past fields of wheat and mustard seed, stopping to see a photogenic medieval step well. The last section of the walk crosses an elephant polo field where we arrive for lunch at a hidden rural resort.

Back in Jaipur, tonight's special dinner experience is hosted by a local noble family who were feudal lords up until independence in 1948, collecting rents from tenants and supporting the King of Jaipur.

[DAY 5~November 4: Jaipur - Deogarh, India \(BD\)](#)

Another memorable drive takes us deeper into the colorful state of Rajasthan. Upon arrival in Deogarh, we reach our hotel by walking through fascinating market lanes too narrow for our coach.

Our hotel, Deogarh Mahal, is a converted 17th century palace owned by the local feudal lord. The grandeur of Deogarh Mahal tells us that its rulers must have been serious players in the Mewar aristocracy. This magnificent fortified palace was a fitting stronghold for one of its sixteen "umraos" - the most senior feudal barons attending on the Maharana of Udaipur.

Following time to rest at our castle hotel, the afternoon stroll takes us through mesmerizing scenes of villagers performing day-to-day activities. Watch women around a community well fetching water, washing clothes and gracefully transporting water in beautiful matkas (clay pot) on their heads. Wander along market lanes past cobblers, seamstresses, potters, jewelers, and other craftsmen displaying labor intensive skills long lost in the West.



A beautiful face in Deogarh

Deogarh is a magical place to interact with locals and purchase lovely handmade items that could even become family heirlooms.

[DAY 6~November 5: Activities from Deogarh \(BD\)](#)

Rajasthan Villages Walk ~ 8 km, rated 1B

Following breakfast, we drive to a nearby village for a walk between farming communities where the sands of time have had a negligible impact on the way of life.

We never know what we'll encounter—a potter at work, preparation for a wedding ceremony, but always a joyfully curious and uninhibited group of children eager to interact with the unexpected spectacle of foreigners.



Kids herding kids on our villages walk

Our afternoon is unscripted and could involve a visit to the home of the maharaja or simply free time to explore charming Deogarh from our centrally located palace hotel. This is a place that tugs at the heart!



Colorful markets in Deogarh

[DAY 7~November 6: Deogarh - Udaipur - Depart India \(BL\)](#)

Udaipur was one of few kingdoms in northern India to remain independent of the dominant Mughals and resist annexation by the British. Depending upon departure flight schedules from Udaipur airport, our plans here include a relaxing cruise on lovely Lake Pichola, and a visit to opulent City Palace extending majestically along its eastern banks.

The construction of City Palace was initiated by Maharana Udai Singh, but successive Maharanas made extensive additions to the complex while retaining remarkable uniformity in the design. The entry to the massive Palace is from the Hathi Pol, the Elephant Gate. The Bari Pol or the Big Gate brings you to the Tripolia, the Triple Gate. It was a custom to weigh the Maharaja under this gate in gold and silver, which was then distributed to the populace. Balconies, cupolas, and towers of the palace give a wonderful view of the Lake Pichola.

City Palace is astounding; it exemplifies the almost unbelievable wealth of ancient and medieval India that attracted invaders and occupiers like the Moghal Empire and their successors, the British.



City Palace opulence in Udaipur

Following lunch this afternoon, travelers fly from Udaipur back to Delhi or Mumbai (flight not included) to catch flights home to North America. India is truly a land of 1000 dimensions, a place that defies description, and we are grateful for the opportunity to experience it together!

Before You Book

Click on each heading for more details.

[How Do I Lock in My Place on This Adventure?](#)

To register, a **non-refundable** \$500 deposit is required to hold your spot. A **second deposit** is due 6 months before departure, April 23, 2025. **Final payment** is then due 90 days before departure, July 25, 2025. All payments are **non-refundable** after the due date. You will receive prompter emails from us 2 to 3 weeks in advance of the 2nd deposit and final payment.

Travelers who have submitted a \$100 pre-registration deposit have only an additional \$400 due for the full registration deposit.

Once this tour has a viable number of participants, an “Adventure Advice” email will be sent with critical information on flight arrangements as well as important steps to take in the months before your trip. Please do not buy your airline tickets until you review this Adventure Advice email.

Please follow this link to read our full [General Tour Conditions](#).

[What is a Classic Curated Tour?](#)

With help from in-country partners, local experts, and walking guides, Classic Curated itineraries are hand-crafted to WAI specifications.

When planning Classic Curated Tours, our objective is to capture the essence of a destination – the history, culture, and natural wonders unique to that part of the world. We then build activities and walks that take us *inside* these characteristics.

These tours are educational, but they are also interactive and immersive; walking gets us off the bus and penetrates local cultures to not only see but touch, smell, and feel these special spaces.

Along the way, local walking guides amplify the experience by sharing insights into the magic of that particular location.

Bhutan: In the case of Bhutan, WAI tour planner and guide, Scott Isom, will conduct an on-site scouting trip in Spring 2025 to test and confirm collaborative planning with our in-country partner that has produced this itinerary; Scott will review the trails and inspect the hotels and activities our in-country partner has suggested, and make any improvements he can to amplify the itinerary.

India: In the case of India, an in-depth planning trip was conducted in 2011 by WAI planners. Four tour groups have experience the India itinerary in intervening years, enjoying incremental adjustments made after each visit.

[What is a High Adventure Tour?](#)

“High Adventure” is a tag we add to tours to warn travelers of possible additional challenges. These challenges could stem from a variety of sources including:

1. A higher percentage of 1-night hotel stays
2. More time driving than usual or challenging traffic settings (e.g. India)
3. Walks routes that are more challenging on average (e.g. Appalachian Trail, Swiss & French Alps)
4. More walking distance per day than usual (e.g. Hiking the Camino de Santiago)
5. Walks and/or travel at high altitude (e.g. Peru; Colorado; Bhutan)
6. A greater number of mid-tour flights (e.g. Chile, Brazil)
7. Cultural factors that can be stressors (lack of public toilets; extra caution required regarding food and gastro-intestinal challenges – e.g. India, Hiking the Camino de

Santiago)

Bhutan

High altitude travels combine with a charming but rustic developing culture to earn Bhutan our classification of “high adventure”. Over 98% of the country is covered by the Himalayas and most of our walks take place at elevations of 8000 feet elevation or higher.

Transportation is in 17 passenger mini-buses (2 for a full group of 24 travelers) and though distanced traveled are not great, roads are winding and at high altitude.

India

India is an ancient and remarkable kaleidoscope of humanity! The first-time visitor may be surprised by markedly different standards of living, including hygiene and safety norms that most North Americans would consider unacceptable. We’ve discovered, however, that India is changing.

India’s economy has been on an upward trend now for years, and millions of people are being lifted out of poverty annually. Depending on how you crunch the numbers, India has the largest middle class on the planet. Everywhere we’ve been in India, we encountered new roads being built and signs of a culture adapting to 21st century technology and international standards of education and business.

Travelers should read the itinerary and **Before You Book** sections carefully and call or email with any questions before committing to a **High Adventure** tour.

[High Adventure: Eastern Religions](#)

Emanating from India, Hinduism is one of the world’s oldest belief systems. Out of Hinduism grew several other faiths with significant numbers of adherents, including Buddhism, Sikhism, and Jainism.

In Bhutan, the majority religion (about 75%) is Lamaistic Buddhist, with heavy influence over the centuries from Tibet. Most of the rest of the population is Hindu. Over 80% of current Indians consider themselves Hindus.

Unlike in the modern West, religion in both Bhutan and India permeates life, and a very strong public and official blessing over this permeation generally comes from all levels of government and public institutions. Influence on architecture is ubiquitous, and often visually stunning. Furthermore, since the Hindu pantheon boasts over 330 million gods (devas), very little space exists in India where one deity or another is not honored. To a lesser extent, this is also true in Bhutan.

Regardless of one’s personal convictions, North America’s heritage is Judeo-Christian, a monotheistic faith in which belief in or relationship with God is usually considered personal and private, and where worship of other gods is not permitted. Moreover, North Americans come from a culture where a growing public secularism discourages some displays of religious belief.

In this part of Asia, on the other hand, religion actually provides the reason or explanation for much of what is seen and done. Religious stimuli in this part of the world can be a little overwhelming but becomes part of our project of understanding Bhutan and India.

Travelers are encouraged to opt out at any point if they sense this eastern faith overload becoming oppressive.

[High Adventure: How High is High in Bhutan?](#)

Elevations of hotels are listed in the daily header of the itinerary for each day of the Bhutan tour. Starting elevations for hikes are also listed in the header for each day.

Hotels: The elevations of our hotels is especially relevant because of the possible impact of reduced levels of oxygen during sleeping hours. Our itinerary notes that we are at approximately 4,300' for 2 nights, 7,000' – 7,500' on 4 nights, and around 9,500' for 2 nights.

Hikes: Though walks in Bhutan have been geared down both in distance and difficulty to allow for altitude, we are still at high altitude. 6 of the 8 trails start over 8,000'; the other 2 start at about 4,200'.

NOTE: Walk ratings listed in the itinerary do not factor in altitude. They are based instead on elevation gain and loss and trail surface. Updates on the trails will be provided upon the return of WAI tour planner and guide, Scott Isom, in March.

Altitude sickness can be a serious ailment. Travelers will be reminded to pace themselves and drink plenty of fluids.

Check with your doctor: It is important to pursue any concerns you have about altitude with your doctor. You may wish to ask your them about the prescription drug Diamox which is sometimes used to treat altitude sickness. As always, travelers are free to opt out of any activities.

For most of us who live near sea level, acclimation to high altitude is an important aspect of a successful visit to the Himalayas.

[High Adventure: Visiting a Developing Country](#)

Both Bhutan and India are developing countries where the average citizen is accustomed to making do with much less than the average American. Expectations for life are often remarkably simple. Varying degrees of this minimalist lifestyle will be visible at times and may impact us.

Expect to experience scenes of poverty, of overworked horses or draft animals, of conditions that seem blatantly unsafe, and other norms of life in this part of Asia that would feel stunningly out of place in the USA.

Extreme minimalism seems an unavoidable part of the human condition for many in Bhutan and India. And though in India, we stay mostly out of largest cities that can amplify these conditions, we may be confronted with harsh realities at points during our visit. At the same time, we look forward to developing a better understanding of what makes Bhutan so unique and India such an indomitable and growing force in the world.

One of the primary benefits of travel is seeing life through the eyes of a different culture and from differing points of view. This is exceedingly true of a trip in Bhutan and India. Sometimes this can be uncomfortable. Always it is thought-provoking.

Walk Ratings

We generally walk at a pace of 2 to 3 miles per hour. Walks that are oriented more towards education may take longer due to stops for guide commentary. Nature walks, on the other hand, generally continue at a steadier pace because we're stopping less to talk. In most cases, we are not "strolling." We are walking at a relaxed but steady pace. Your experience will be significantly affected by your level of physical fitness. If not walking regularly at home, we strongly recommend that you make a priority of "training" beforehand to both enjoy the trip and avoid medical issues due to overexertion.

If you have questions about your ability to participate, please contact our office at fun@walkingadventures.com.

We have adopted a walk difficulty rating system which contains a numeric indicator for trail incline and an alpha indicator for trail terrain. The explanation for this system is presented on the table below:

INCLINE

1. Minimal hills or stair climbing. Cumulative elevation gain: <200 feet.
2. Some moderate hills and stair climbing. Cumulative elevation gain: 200-1000 feet.
3. Some significant hill or stair climbing. Cumulative elevation gain: 1000-2000 feet.

TERRAIN

- A. Almost entirely on pavement.
- B. A significant part of the route is on well-groomed trails with very few obstacles.
- C. A significant part of the route is on somewhat difficult terrain (rocky / rooted paths or soft sand).

How Is Airfare Arranged?

BHUTAN

Bhutan has only 1 international airport and only 2 airlines handle international flights.

Bangkok, Thailand is the obvious gathering point for this tour to catch a flight to **Paro, Bhutan**. A group flight is therefore offered from **Bangkok to Paro, Bhutan** on **October**

23.

Because the flight from Bangkok to Paro on **October 23** departs very early in the morning, an overnight in Bangkok on **October 22** is necessary, and is advisable in any event to break up the long journey. This night is included for travelers participating in the **Bangkok Optional Pre-tour**.

For travelers who opt out of the Bangkok Optional Pre-tour, the cost for the hotel room in Bangkok on the night of **October 22** is \$108 per person with 2 people sharing the room. The single supplement to have a private room is \$98.

India travelers: Cost of the **Bangkok-Paro one-way flight** on October 23 is \$575 and includes airport to hotel transfers in Thailand and Bhutan.

Bhutan only travelers: Travelers participating in **Bhutan only** will need a return flight from **Paro** to **Bangkok** at the end of the Bhutan tour on **October 31**. From Bangkok, these travelers will catch their transpacific flight to North America. Cost of the **Bangkok-Paro-Bangkok roundtrip flight** is \$1059 and includes airport to hotel transfers in Thailand and Bhutan.

INDIA

Group air flight from Bhutan to India: A group flight is provided at the end of the main tour on October 31, departing from **Paro, Bhutan** and arriving in **Delhi, India**. The cost of this flight is included in the tour price, along with the transfer from hotel to airport in Paro. Fees for checked baggage, if any, are not included.

The *India Extension* finishes after lunch in Udaipur at the Udaipur Airport (airport code UDR). Most, if not all, of us will fly to either Delhi or Mumbai to make connections for the international flight home from India.

Since it is generally more advisable to book domestic flights together with the ongoing international flight on the same booking (to protect against missed connections), this flight from Udaipur to Delhi to Mumbai is not included in the tour price and should be booked in tandem with your flight back to North America.

More details about flight arrangements and travel agent contact information will be provided in an Adventure Advice PDF by email after you register for the Adventure. Please do not book your airfare prior to receiving these flight details from us!

We recommend that you contact Laura Pfahler, the travel agent we work with, to help book your flight arrangements. In this age of airfare complications and airport uncertainty, using a travel agent is a good investment!

- Laura Pfahler: 503.434.6401 or llp@wtpdx.com

[Travel Insurance](#)

WAI recommends travel insurance for financial and medical protection from any number of unforeseen circumstances that can arise before departure or during your Adventure. Travel insurance is an especially prudent investment for a high adventure travel experience such as Bhutan and India! We strongly recommend it!

Many travel insurance providers are available for you to consider. Laura Pfahler and Sharon Mitchell of World Travel Inc. can provide travel insurance options for your WAI tour, as well as for your airfare. For those who purchase airfare through Laura, purchasing your travel insurance from her colleague, Sharon Mitchell, may be the simplest option.

Sharon Mitchell: 971-261-2091 or smitchell@wtpdx.com

Be aware that some travel insurance policies contain time-sensitive provisions (i.e. some benefits, such as coverage of pre-existing conditions, are available only if the policy is purchased within a certain number of days of the purchase of the travel package). These time-sensitive provisions are generally measured from the date you make your full, non-refundable deposit, not the refundable \$100 pre-registration deposit. In addition, remember that airfare is not covered by any travel insurance policy you may have purchased for the tour, but may be added to your policy later, after you book your flight.

Check out [Insurance Tips](#) from World Travel for a short introduction to travel insurance.

Other options include:

- Allianz
- Betins
- Travel Guard
- Travel Insured International

Using the [SquareMouth.com](#) website can be a good way to compare pricing.

NOTE: WAI receives no commission or financial remuneration from World Travel Inc. In addition, WAI bears no responsibility for travel insurance benefits advertised by various credit card companies. If you are relying on this type of benefit for insurance, we advise you to verify coverage types and limits and that your purchase does in fact qualify you for this insurance.

We suggest purchasing from a reputable, well-established insurance company (avoid buying insurance from an unknown company found only online). Travelers interested in purchasing “cancel for any reason” insurance coverage should be careful to check pricing and terms BEFORE they register for a tour. Recent changes in the international travel landscape has caused changes in the policies of some insurance companies, and made the purchase of this particular type of policy even more time-sensitive.

[What if WAI Cancels the Tour](#)

Walking Adventures International reserves the right to cancel this tour departure with fewer than 12 participants, in which case registered participants will receive a 100% refund of payments received.

This refund policy contains one exclusion. Many suppliers require non-refundable deposits as a condition of booking services. Though it is rare, unforeseen circumstances can force us to cancel a tour. In cases where supplier's non-refundable policies are imposed, WAI attempts to retrieve as much of these deposits as possible but cannot guarantee a 100% refund. In cases where full refunds cannot be obtained for a cancelled tour, we will do our best to transfer unrefunded money as traveler credits to be applied to a future tour to that destination.

[Wellness Policies for This Tour](#)

Our approach to wellness on tour has traditionally been to encourage travelers to:

- Focus on health before the tour so you start healthy.
- Pace yourself while on tour; travel is inherently stimulating and can produce adrenalin boosts that mask energy drain. Guard your energy reserves and consider the length of the trip and whether to opt out of some activities and/or walks.
- Be self-aware. If you feel yourself tiring or feel a bug coming on, take precautions to block it (e.g. extra rest, extra doses of vitamin C, etc).
- If you feel a bug coming on or if you take ill, distance yourself from others when possible.
- If you feel ill, isolate yourself towards the back of the bus and away from others and please wear a mask.

Click [WAI Wellness on Tour Policy](#) to view the WAI policy on Wellness on Tour.

[What Happens Next?](#)

Once we have a viable number of participants, an "Adventure Advice" email is sent with critical information on flight arrangements as well as important steps to take in the months before your trip. Please do not buy your airline tickets until you review this Adventure Advice email.

A second \$500 deposit is due 6 months before departure, April 23, 2025. Final payment is then due 90 days before departure, July 25, 2025. All payments are non-refundable after the due date. You will receive prompt emails from us 2 to 3 weeks in advance of the 2nd deposit and final payment.

Please see our [General Tour Conditions](#) for the full terms and conditions for participation in this Adventure.

About 2 weeks before departure, you will receive a final email packet with details of the program, including hotel names and contact information, a list of fellow travelers, and a

more detailed daily schedule.

Bhutan and India offer one of our most-adventurous experiences yet. Fascinating, delightful, colorful, culture-crammed, friendly... we invite you to join us for the Adventure of a lifetime in two parallel cultures, one more isolated in remote, high altitude Himalayan valleys and the other operating at a seemingly frenetic pace at times, rapidly changing and quickly growing into one of the planet's most influential nations.

Join us for a journey of discovery — a hiking and walking adventure to explore the history, culture, and scenery of *Bhutan: The Last Shangri-La* and *Taj Mahal Pearl of India Extension*!



Bhutan - The Last Shangri-La

Bhutan: The Last Shangri-La



Taj Mahal ~ Pearl of India

Taj Mahal Pearl of India Optional Extension

Adventure Pace

Tour Pace: 1 2 3 4 5

Walk Challenge: 1 2 3 4 5

[About Adventure Pace](#)

How much Adventure do you want? Here are a few features to help gauge the following factors on each tour.

Tour Pace: On a scale of 1 (slowest pace) to 5 (fastest pace), we've rated the following factors: number of 1-night hotels; driving miles per day; fullness of schedule; mid-tour airline flights; high elevation setting; and average amount of walking per day.

Walk Challenge: This number represents an average walk difficulty rating for the tour using a scale of 1 (easiest) to 5 (hardest).

[Contact Us](#)

Important Info



Group Size

24 travelers maximum



Accommodations

Strategically located superior tourist class accommodations or better



Meals

Bhutan: 3 meals a day included. **India:** Breakfasts and dinners included along with 3 lunches. Letters BLD on daily header indicate which meals are included.



Airfare

Flights to and from Asia not included. **Bhutan:** Flights into Bhutan are limited. A group flight from Bangkok, Thailand will be offered on an optional basis. **India:** Flight from Bhutan to Delhi India included in price of India Extension.



Transportation

Bhutan: 17 pass mini-buses used; with full group 2 buses will be used. **India:** Standard-sized coach used (40+ seats). Buses have air conditioning.



Traveler Age

Our travelers usually range from 50-75 years of age. All ages welcome!

Your Guides



Scott and Tim horsing around on another classic mountain Adventure in Switzerland

Scott Isom (left) has had a passion for the outdoors ever since his childhood days spent exploring the waterfalls and outstanding hiking trails of the Columbia River Gorge with his family.

Since 2007, Scott has led tours on all 7 continents and is one of WAI's busiest guides and on-site Adventure planners.

Tim Friesen has been guiding for Walking Adventures since 2003, most often leading summertime adventures in Europe due to his long career as a high school music teacher in Molalla, Oregon.

Tim recently retired from teaching music but is still occasionally known to burst into song on the trail!