

Discover Bhutan



an 8 day Himalayan Bike, Hike & Raft Tour

Discover the ancient kingdom of Bhutan by many modes. Mix a bit of scenic alpine cycling ... a dash of cultural hiking ... a splash of thrilling whitewater rafting and you have our Multisport Adventure - Discover Bhutan. This unique country, thought to be the inspiration for Shangri-la, has managed to combine tourism with growth without sacrificing it's soul. The ancient ways of life still prevail, men go to work dressed in traditional robes called gho and women in their wrap around kiras. Ancient architectural styles influence newer hotels and fresh mountain vegetables and chilis are combined with cheese for flavorful dishes that have been enjoyed through the centuries. Come explore the fabled Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan by bicycle, raft and foot; tour it's many wonders and discover it's delightful culture and traditions.

Your journey begins with several days of bicycle touring, first exploring the seldom visited valleys north of Bhutan's capital city of Thimphu, where you visit the Gompas of Pangri, Tango and Cheri. Then bike up and over (shuttle available too :-) Dochula Pass and down into the Punakha Valley. Explore the valley by bike, cycling to the spiritual capital at Punakha Dzong. Other than the optional climb, most of your bicycling is in valleys, with rolling hills and scenic landscapes.

Switching modes of travel, we explore areas away from the roads, during a half day of hiking in Punakha ascending to a beautiful temples perched high above the valley floor. Then cool off in the afternoon with some whitewater rafting on the Pho Chu River ... class 2 and 3 rapids, big enough to be fun, small enough for all to enjoy. We finish our adventure back in Paro with a hike to fabled Taktshang Goemba, better known to foreigners as Tigers Nest, a temple perched on a sheer cliff face, hundreds of feet above the valley floor. And unlike many other tours, we have special permits to hike to the actual monastery for a visit, not just view it from far away.

Day by Day Itinerary

Day 1 - Your multisport adventure through the fabled kingdom starts with one of the world's most scenic flights, coming into the Paro Valley. After stepping off the plane into the cool mountain air, we will enjoy lunch and then a short drive to Thimphu (60kms/2 hours). Time permitting we will visit the National Museum of Bhutan. You will have time to admire the museum's collection of rare Bhutanese artifacts and art, traditional weaving and other eclectic pieces. This afternoon we will prepare the bikes and enjoy a brief sightseeing pedal around the city. Wind down your first day in Bhutan with our welcome dinner and orientation. 15 mi / 25 km.

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Day 2 - The ride today heads through a region not often seen on other bike tours in Bhutan, pedaling north to visit the Pangri, Tango and Cheri Gompas. These fortified monasteries have provided spiritual guidance to the local residents for centuries. Now the Tango and Pangri Gompas are centers of higher learning, with Pangri teaching astronomy and Tango instructing monks in Buddhist Philosophy Cheri monastery was built in 1620 by Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal in memory of his father. Beautiful frescoes of saints, who have attained Buddhahood, adorn the monastery, including a very beautiful statue of 'Tara'. It is now a center of three year retreat for the monks. 36 mi / 58 km.

Day 3 - Mid morning we will shuttle to Dochula Pass (you also have the option to cycle up). The views from the pass are magnificent, offering a panorama of the eastern Himalayas. Enjoy lunch at the pass before starting the 26 mile descent from the pass to Punakha through the leafy temperate forests and semi-tropical zone with abundant orange trees, bananas and bamboos. 31 mi / 50 km, Pass: Docula (3100 m) (43 mi / 69 km if you cycle up).

Day 4 - Today's relatively flat ride offers opportunities to visit some of the famed temples of the region and enjoy the quiet rural countryside. Today you will visit the Punakha Dzong built in 1637 by Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel, a Buddhist saint who unified Bhutan in the 17th century. Punakha served as the capital of Bhutan until 1955 and it still is the winter residence of the Je-Khenpo (Chief Abbot) and the central monk body. We will again spend the night in Punakha. 28 mi / 45 km.

Day 5 - Switching modes of travel today, you will set out for a hike through the countryside, visiting several small villages before reaching a temple overlooking the valley. From this higher vantage point you can enjoy great vistas of the area through which you rode yesterday and will raft later today. Descending back to the valley floor, enjoy a great Bhutanese lunch before setting out to raft the Pho Chu River. This scenic float throws some class 2 and 3 rapids at you to excite and refresh, a great way to round out our visit to the Punakha Valley.

Day 6 - After breakfast, you will be shuttled back to Paro, where we spend out last couple of nights. Our hotel here is the former residence of the local governor. In the afternoon, you will visit a small village further up the valley, home to the family of our Bhutanese manager. An opportunity to experience the daily life, as we visit the family farm and explore the village.

Day 7 - This morning we will enjoy a hike to visit the renowned Tigers Nest Monastery (Taktshang Goemba). We will have permits to actually visit the temple and will enjoy most of day here in the mountains, hiking and sightseeing. The Taktshang Goemba is one of Bhutan's most spectacular monasteries, clinging to the cliff face, high above the surrounding valley floor. Upon our return to Paro, you will have a chance to finish your last minute shopping needs. We'll gather for a final Bhutanese dinner, swapping tales of the ride and country.

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Day 8 - We will shuttle everyone back to the airport for your flight to Bangkok.

Dates & Prices:

Please check our website for the currently available dates and the applicable pricing.

<https://pedalers.travel/bhutan-multisport-tours-bike-hike-raft-discover-bhutan.htm>

At Your Request:

Private departures can be arranged pretty much year round. December and January may not be able to raft. The rest of the year is great, with more chance of rain during the summer months. Get your adventure started and request your At Your Request date today. Plan a trip for your outdoor club or corporate incentive, contact us for more details.

Lodging:

Boutique Hotels, Inns & Resorts

What's Included:

- 7 nights Accommodation in the area's better hotels (double occupancy)
- All meals from Dinner on Day 1 until Breakfast on Day 8
- Water, sodas and beer included at dinner
- Service of bilingual Team Pedalers Guide(s)
- Full Van Support
- Sightseeing and cultural activities
- Visa fees and airport taxes
- Airport pick up & drop off

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Meeting & Flights:

Arrive at Paro Airport on Day 1

Departure Paro Airport in the morning on Day 8

Druk Air is the only carrier serving Bhutan, with flights from Bangkok, Delhi, Kathmandu and Calcutta. Airfare is approximately \$915, with occasional fare discounts offered during the low season (summer & winter). Pedalers Pub & Grille arranges these flights on your behalf as part of our service and will bill the cost with the balance due on the tour.

Flights from Bangkok and Delhi depart early in the morning, requiring most guests to arrive a day early in order to meet the flight. The return flights from Paro, arrive back at either Bangkok or Delhi in mid to late afternoon. Kathmandu and Calcutta are stops on the flights from Delhi and Bangkok respectively, so subsequently have later departures and earlier returns.

Adventure Conditions:

The entire cycling section is on paved roads, narrow but with little or no traffic. Our hiking involves a steady, but not steep ascent to the monastery. And the white water is a mix of class 2, 3 & 4 rapids.

Visas & Travel Documents:

Passports are required for all guests. Your passport should have at least 6 months validity past your intended travel dates. Visas fees and processing are included with in the tour price. Visas are sent via email prior to departure.

Payment Dates & Cancellations:

This tour has a 60 Day Prior to Departure deadline for balance due and cancellations. All bookings must be paid in full on or before 60 days prior to departure (not the 45 day deadline listed in our general booking conditions). In addition the cancellation deadline for receiving a partial refund or transferring to another date is also 60 days prior to departure.