

Bhutan Trip Details

TRIP CHECKLIST

- Send a scanned copy of your passport to info@nwrafting.com
- Purchase travel insurance with [Travel Insurance Select](#) or other travel insurance provider
- Send a copy of your insurance to info@nwrafting.com
- Meet with your doctor to receive advice about vaccinations
- Make your flight and hotel reservations in anticipation of your arrival in Bangkok
- Complete your trip registration and sign your release form on our website
- Final payment is due 60 days before your trip

REQUIRED TRAVEL INSURANCE

You are required to purchase travel insurance that includes, among other things, an evacuation benefit. Your trip insurance should cover the trip cost and Druk Air flight, since there are no refunds once we've booked your space. We recommend [Travel Insurance Select](#).

THE RENDEZVOUS

MEETING PLACE

Paro Airport
Paro, Bhutan

FLIGHT TIMES

Will be announced 2 weeks
before the trip

AFTER THE TRIP

You'll fly back to Bangkok
on the last day

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Your passport must be valid for 6 months from date of travel. Digital copies of your Bhutan visa and Druk Air ticket will be emailed to you 2 weeks prior to your trip. A paper copy of your ticket and visa is needed to check in at the Bangkok Airport.



BEFORE YOUR TRIP IN BANGKOK, THAILAND

The easiest way to fly from the United States to Bhutan is through Bangkok, Thailand. Your Druk Air flights from Bangkok to the Paro Airport in Bhutan will be arranged for you along with your visa. We will meet you at the airport in Paro when your flight arrives.

1. **Arrive in Bangkok a couple days early** to explore the city and get over your jet lag. This is highly recommended since you'll want to be well rested when you arrive in Bhutan.
2. **Arrive in Bangkok the day before your flight to Paro** and sleep at the [Novatel Hotel](#), which is close to the airport.

WHERE TO STAY IN BANGKOK, THAILAND

- [Aloft Bangkok Sukhumvit 11](#) is our favorite hotel since it's in the heart of the city and has modern amenities. We'll organize an optional pre-trip meeting here the night before your flight to Bhutan.
- [Aurum The River Place](#) is located on the Chao Phraya River and close to many of the popular visitor attractions in Bangkok. This is a smaller boutique hotel in a quiet part of town.
- [Mandarin Oriental Bangkok](#) is a five star luxury hotel on the Chao Phraya River.

FLYING FROM BANGKOK TO PARO, BHUTAN

At the Bangkok airport check in at the Druk Air counter. Please be aware that baggage over 44 lbs may be subject to additional baggage fees. Please arrive at least 2 hours early to check in. If you miss your flight to Bhutan we may not be able to get you on another flight.



WEATHER AND CLIMATE

The weather in November is typically quite pleasant. Daytime highs are often comfortable, however mornings can be brisk.

Even though we typically have great weather please be prepared for cold and rain. We travel between 4,000 and 11,000 feet so air temperatures will vary throughout the trip.



CLOTHING

The best clothes for Bhutan are practical and comfortable travel clothes. Most days we will find ourselves doing a moderate amount of walking through towns, rice fields, and cultural sites.

Ideal clothing will be functional layers that look nice. Short sleeves are appropriate unless we are in a monastery when you will need long sleeves and long pants. Women can wear either pants or skirts that at least cover the knees for daily activities and full-length for monasteries.

RIVER CLOTHING/GEAR

- 1-2 Pair of River Shorts
- 2 Wool or Polypro Shirts
- Wool or Polypro Pants
- Water Bottle
- River Shoes or River Sandals

DAILY CLOTHING/GEAR

- 2+ Pairs of Pants, Shorts, Skirts, or Dresses
- 2 Long Sleeved Dress Shirts
- 2 Casual Shirts
- Heavy Fleece or Down Jacket
- Rain Jacket and Rain Pants
- Hiking Shoes
- Casual Shoes
- Socks and Underwear
- Wool or Fleece Beanie

MISCELLANEOUS

- Daypack
- Sunscreen
- Sun Hat or Visor
- Camera & Spare Batteries
- Sunglasses with Strap
- Headlamp & Spare Batteries
- Personal Medications / First Aid Kit
- Toiletries
- Hand Sanitizer
- "Schnacks" (Snacks to Share)

OPTIONAL

- Collapsible Hiking Poles
- Handy Wipes
- Neoprene Gloves or Socks
- Water Filter

PRO TIP

- Bring a ziplock bag with toilet paper in your daypack as some public bathrooms don't stock toilet paper.

SHOES

You will need 2-3 pairs of shoes including one pair that can get wet on rafting days. When we visit temples we must remove our shoes. The best shoes are sturdy and comfortable but also are easy to take on and off.

PRO TIPS

- Down puffy jackets are great since they have a good warmth-to-weight ratio and pack down into a small space.
- Don't trust the weather forecasts you find for Bhutan on the internet. They typically report 60° and rainy when it's actually 85° and sunny.

PADDLE JACKET

A paddle jacket can be worn over a shirt and will help keep you warm and dry on cold, windy days. You can wear your rain jacket but you'll need to dry it out in the evening. You might consider bringing a second lightweight rain jacket or windbreaker that is just worn on the river. If you paddle often you might consider purchasing a specialized "paddling jacket" designed for rafting and kayaking.

PERSONAL MEDICATIONS / FIRST AID KIT

- Tums, Pepto Bismol, ibuprofen, motion sickness medication, and personal prescription medication
- Band-Aids and antibiotic ointment
- If you have something you are particularly prone to: ear infections, foot rot, or sinus problems, bring what you need with you

Please advise your trip leader if you are taking any medications or have any health concerns

WATER PURIFICATION

We will always have plenty of bottled purified water available but the empty bottles add up and it's nice to purify your own water when possible. Here are some good options:

Filter - Modern bottle filters like ones made by Grayl press water through a filter, killing bacteria, viruses, Protozoa, and filtering out impurities, making this our favorite water filter.

UV - Ultraviolet light is a great way to make water safe to drink, and new technology has made this option portable. We like the Steripen.



ACCOMMODATIONS

— Hotels vary in style and quality from town to town but are generally considered to be one of the welcome surprises for visitors to Bhutan. During the colder months, hotels are heated and extra blankets or comforters are provided in each room.

Hotel staff are exceptionally accommodating and will do whatever they can do make guest feel more comfortable. All hotels have their own restaurant and some also have a bar.

LOCAL CUSTOMS

— There are many local customs and Bhutanese are typically understanding when we don't follow them. Even though they are understanding, we always do our best to be respectful.

Women should wear pants or a long skirt when traveling in public. Giving children candy or money often does more harm than good.

FOOD

— Bhutanese typically eat a spicy dish called Ema Datsi, a zesty combination of peppers and cheese served with rice. We will typically eat western style food served buffet style at our hotels and restaurants. There will be a variety of meat and vegetable dishes served with rice, noodles, and tea or coffee. Bottled water, soda, and beer will be available at an extra charge.

“SCHNACKS”

— Sharing makes the trip a bit more social. We'll provide ample snacks, but it's always nice to bring something from home to share with the rest of the group during the trip. Feel free to share your favorite candy, trail mix, or bars with the rest of the group!

BEING IN BHUTAN

— The inhabitants of Bhutan are gracious, gentle, and very hospitable. They are peace loving and possess a lively sense of humor. This is adventure travel, and sometimes traveling in a developing country can be fascinating and frustrating at the same moment. Our goal is to maximize the former and minimize the latter without insulating you from the experience. So, a certain “roll-with-the-punches” attitude will go a long way in making your trip fun and memorable.

We will make the most of any situation. If we can't follow our itinerary, we'll do our best to substitute something just as unforgettable.

CURRENCY

— The national currency of Bhutan is the Ngultrum (Nu). US Dollars in crisp 100 Dollar bills can be exchanged when you arrive at the airport or in Thimphu. There are ATMs in Thimphu, but they are not reliable, so please do not depend on them. The nicer souvenir shops in Thimphu, associated with hotels, do take credit cards and can exchange traveler's checks.

All normal expenses during the trip are covered, except for drinks at our meals. Most people bring between \$500 - \$1000 for shopping, drinks, miscellaneous items, and tips.

GRATUITIES

— We are often asked if tipping is appropriate. Tips are certainly appreciated by your guides and are usually around 10% to 15% of the trip cost. Tips can be given to the trip leader who will distribute them between the guides and drivers.

Whether and how much you tip should depend on your satisfaction with the trip, your feelings about tipping, and your financial means