

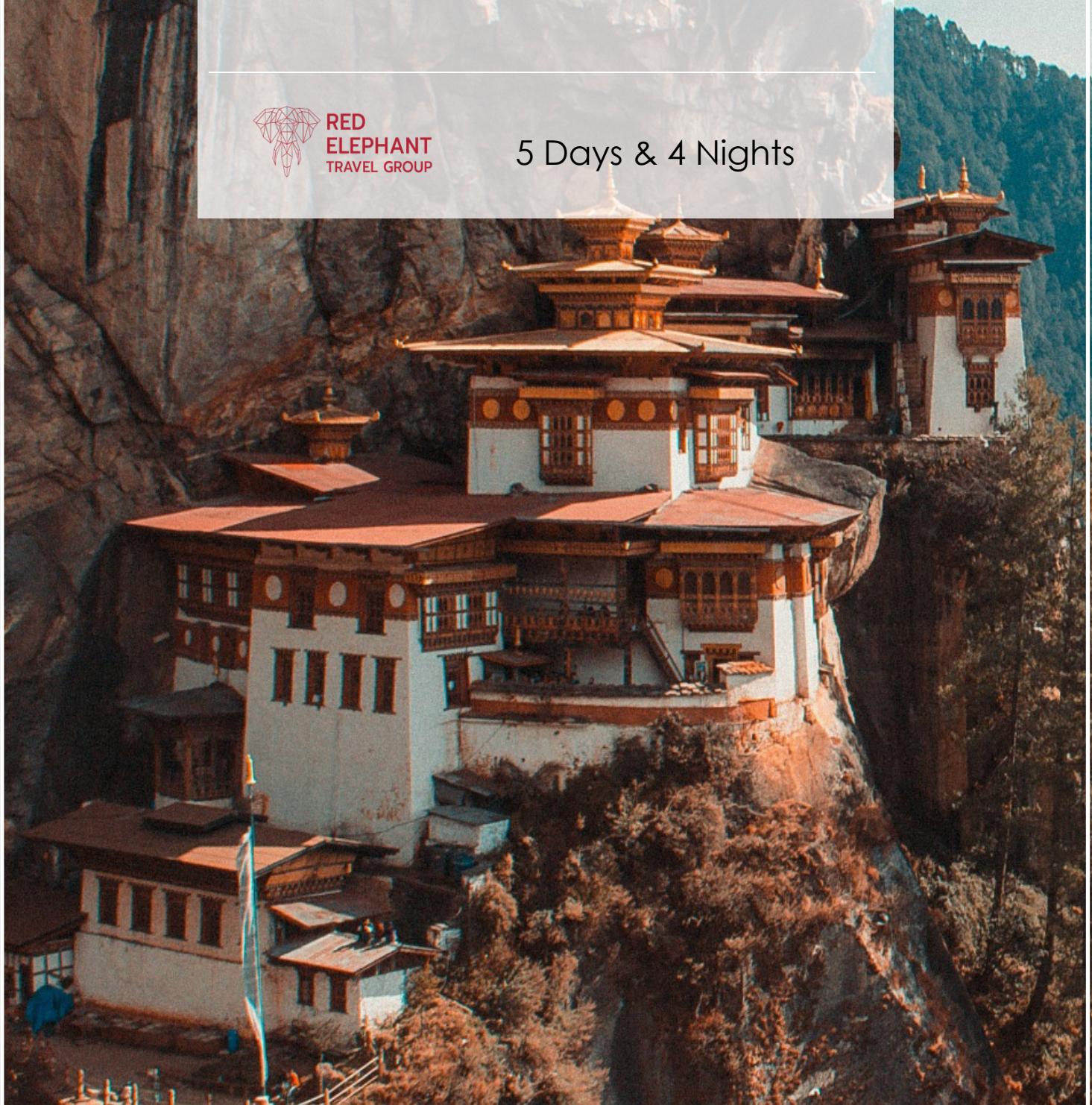
Bhutan in a Nutshell

BHUTAN



RED
ELEPHANT
TRAVEL GROUP

5 Days & 4 Nights



At a Glance

Bhutan, *Magical and Surreal*

- Day 01: Arrival in Paro – Thimphu
- Day 02: Thimphu
- Day 03: Thimphu – Dochula – Paro
- Day 04: Paro – Excursion to Taktsang
- Day 05: Departure from Paro

Sneak peek of a few highlights

Tashichho Dzong

A Buddhist monastery and fortress, the main structure of the whitewashed building is two-storied with three-storied towers at each of the four corners topped by triple-tiered golden roofs.

Motithang Takin Preserve

The Takin is the national animal of Bhutan and listed as a vulnerable species by international conservation agencies.

National Institute for Zorig Chusum

Students undertake a six-year course on the 13 traditional arts and crafts of Bhutan.

Paro Taktsang

The famous 'Tiger's Nest'. Perched on the side of a cliff, 900m above the Paro Valley, it is undoubtedly one of the most well-known of Bhutan's monasteries.

Day 1. Arrival in Paro – Thimphu

Your adventure starts when approaching the airport in Paro. During the flight you can enjoy views of Mt. Everest, Mt. Kanchenjunga and other Himalayan mountains including the sacred Mt. Jhomolhari and Mt. Jichu Drake in Bhutan.

Welcome to the Kingdom of Bhutan!

Bhutan is no ordinary place. It is the last great Himalayan kingdom, shrouded in mystery and magic, where a traditional Buddhist culture carefully embraces global developments.

The Buddhist Kingdom of Bhutan lies along the lofty ridges of the Eastern Himalayas. It is bordered by Tibet in the north and west, and Indian states in the east, west and south. The country within these borders forms a giant staircase, from a narrow strip of land in the south to some of the highest unclimbed Himalayan peaks on earth.



Upon your arrival at Paro Airport our representative will await you and you will drive together to Thimphu, Bhutan's own mini-metropolis.

In the afternoon, after lunch, enjoy an excursion around town:

Kuensel Phodrang is the largest Buddha statue in the country with amazing views over the Thimphu valley.

Tashichho Dzong - The "fortress of the glorious religion" was initially erected in 1641 and rebuilt by King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck in the 1960s. Tashichho Dzong houses some ministries, His Majesty's secretariat and the central monk body.

Overnight in Thimphu

Meals: Lunch, Dinner

Day 2. Thimphu

After breakfast, explore Thimphu and its surroundings.

Zilukha Nunnery - Built more than half a century ago, Zilukha Nunnery is also known as Druthob Goemba. Housing around 60 nuns in its premises, a visit to the site energizes the soul because of its peaceful surroundings, which lures one's mind to never leave the site. From here, the spectacular view of Tashichho Dzong can be captured in a camera to make for a beautiful photo album.



The Motithang Takin Preserve houses the rare national animal of Bhutan. The Takin is listed by international conservation agencies as a vulnerable species and it is only found in Bhutan, Nepal and Myanmar (Burma).

In Bhutan, equal emphasis is given to both allopathic and traditional medicines. The rich herbal medicines made up from medicinal plants are prepared and dispensed at the Traditional Medicine Institute.

At the National Institute for Zorig Chusum, students undertake a six-year course on the 13 traditional arts and crafts of Bhutan.

Simply Bhutan is an integrative living museum that gives a quick introduction to various aspects of traditional life in Bhutan.

Overnight in Thimphu.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 3. Thimphu – Dochula – Paro

After breakfast, drive approximately 45 minutes to Dochula, passing picturesque valleys and mountain slopes dotted with typical Bhutanese villages. From the Dochula pass, at over 10,000ft, vast panoramic views of the high snowcapped peaks of the Bhutanese Himalayas can be enjoyed on a clear day.



We continue our tour and drive to Paro, where we will visit Kyichu Lhakhang, one of the oldest and most sacred temples in the kingdom, dating back to the 7th century.

We will also visit Ta Dzong, a former Watch Tower which now serves as the National Museum, as well as Rinpung Dzong which houses a monastic school and the office of the civil administration.

Overnight in Paro.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 4. Paro – Excursion to Taktsang (Tiger`s Nest)

We will first drive for half an hour and then continue the day with a hike, which will take about five hours (round trip.) The trail leads along an ancient path marked by river-powered prayer wheels. As you reach Taktsang you will be struck by the architectural wonder of this most pious Buddhist shrine.



Perched some 900m on a cliff overlooking the valley it justifiably qualifies as one of Bhutan's wonders. Tragically wrecked in a fire in 1998, it has been rebuilt to its original glory. It is said that the legendary Indian saint, Guru Padma Sambhava, flew from Tibet on the back of a tigress to tame five demons, who were opposing the spread of Buddhism in Bhutan in 746 A.D. Hence the name, Taktsang, or the "Tiger's Lair."

If time permits, drive further north to visit another symbolic structure, which is now under reconstruction. Drugyel Dzong, or "Castle of the Victorious Drukpa" was also built by the Shabdrung to commemorate Bhutan's victory over the Tibetans in the 16th centuries. From here, the Jomolhari Peak ("Mountain of the Goddess") can be seen on a clear day (7,329m).

Overnight in Paro.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5. Departure from Paro

Breakfast at the hotel and transfer to the International Airport for your onward journey.

Meals: Breakfast



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