



Bhutan Untamed Eastern Bhutan



Opened for tourism in the mid 1970s, even now fewer travellers visit Bhutan than visit Antarctica.

17 Days, 16 Nights

Mild Grade



Photograph Courtesy of Duane Webster

Druk Yul

Embark on a fully hosted adventure to the Kingdom of Bhutan (Druk Yul), a coveted destination that few people get the chance to visit. In collaboration with Tuatara Tours, renowned experts in immersive travel experiences, we invite you to join us on a remarkable journey to Bhutan, starting in Singapore.

Nestled in the heart of the majestic Himalayas, Bhutan offers a unique and magical experience like no other.

This itinerary is specially designed for Tuatara guests, providing a curated and comfortable exploration of Bhutan's remote east. Enjoy the beauty, rich culture, and once in a lifetime experience of this remote region.

Get ready for an unforgettable journey filled with breathtaking landscapes, ancient monasteries, and the warm hospitality of the Bhutanese people, all under the guidance of an experienced host from Tuatara Tours and a local Bhutanese guide.

Tour Starts: 12th September 2024

Tour Highlights

- Stunning views
- Historic towns and villages
- Ecological heart of Eastern Himalaya
- Mountains, monasteries and magic
- Treasure house of Buddhist culture
- Amazing unique festival
- Experienced attentive guides & hosts
- Maximum of twelve people on each tour

Tour Cost: 2024 NZ\$14,995

Options: Single Supplement: NZ\$1800



Tuatara Tours NZ Ltd, PO Box 13544, Christchurch 8141, New Zealand
Phone: New Zealand: 0800 377 378, Australia: 1 800 044 633, World: +64 3 962 3280
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Visit the World's Only Carbon-Negative Country

This Buddhist nation is the only country in the world to have a negative carbon footprint and in 2016 was rated the "least corrupt country in the world".

As a travel destination Bhutan remains unique, sandwiched between its heavily industrialised neighbours, China and India. This isolated nation only opened up to foreign visits in 1974 and allowed TVs in 1999.

It's about the same size as Switzerland with just one tenth the population (approximately 780,000). It has had a slow path to development—the first road was only built in the 1960s.

Eastern Bhutan remains largely unexplored by tourists and is the most densely populated region of Bhutan. However, it is far more remote than the other regions.

One highlight of this region is that it is home to minority ethnic groups, some comprising less than 1000 people. Sharchops are the predominant ethnic group in Eastern Bhutan and they are followers of the Nyingma tradition of Buddhism.

The rugged east of Bhutan sees far fewer tourists than the western regions, which is reason enough in itself to visit. Travellers venturing east will be rewarded with no crowds, fascinating and gentle local people, beautiful silk embroidery and other handicrafts, as well as lush, bird-filled forests.

The east is opening up to tourism but it remains a frontier for travel in Bhutan.

If you want to get off the beaten track and stay in 3 to 4 star comfort, this is your place.

And of course we also visit the west of Bhutan.

Trip Grading

To determine the grade of a particular adventure we consider a number of factors. These include the condition of the terrain, the altitude, the number of pass crossings and the length of the trip.

The **Untamed Eastern Bhutan** tour is graded Mild: An average level of fitness, Walk 12km, on formed tracks and roads with some average to steep inclines at times.

The walk to Tigers Nest Monastery is optional: it is an uphill walk of approximately 3 hours.

There is the option of taking a pony up to the tea house which is two thirds of the way up to the monastery.(extra cost)

We also include non walking options on this tour.

Adventure Travel

By its very nature adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected. To get the most out of your adventure it is important that you are mentally flexible, positive and eager to take on all the challenges that arise.

If you are uncertain about your suitability for this tour, speak with us and we can help guide you in the right direction.





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Your Tour Hosts



Bhutanese schoolgirl in school uniform with Helen, Hamish and Wanda on the riverbank overlooking the Punakha Dzong (fortress) October of 2018

Tuatar staff have sought out magical places for you to visit and will accompany you and local guides on an 10 day Cultural and Festival Tour of Bhutan.

Either Helen, Hamish or Wanda will accompany you on your tour as a tour host. We employ local English speaking Bhutanese guides and drivers so Helen and Wanda are more hosts than guides and will ensure the smooth operation of your experience whilst in Bhutan.

Wanda Vivequin



Wanda is your host for this tour.

Wanda began guiding in Bhutan in 2009 and has visited this incredible Himalayan Kingdom 6 times since.

2018 was the first time Wanda travelled to the east of Bhutan when she went with Tuatar Tours and she is eagerly looking forward to her next time there as it exceeded all her expectations.



Wanda and our Bhutanese guide Rabgay in the courtyard of one of the many monasteries we visit

Helen O'Dowd



Helen has a background in the travel industry. In 2017 she joined Tuatar Tours as a guide and has guided numerous walking and biking tours in New Zealand.

Helen went to Bhutan in 2018 on our reconnaissance trip and was fascinated by this mysterious country and can't wait to accompany her next tour to Bhutan.



Helen with a friend



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Itinerary

Pre Tour - Crowne Plaza Hotel Changi Airport

11 September

We recommend group members arrive in Singapore by at least midday the day before departure. We will meet at the Allora Ristorante and Bar at the Crowne Plaza Changi Airport at 6pm for a pre tour meet and greet with Wanda your kiwi guide. This not a part of the tour itself so attendance is not compulsory but it would be great if you could all attend.

Crowne Plaza Changi Airport is located at Terminal 3 of Singapore Changi Airport. *(more details later)*

Day 1 - Singapore to Paro (2200m) to Thimpu (2334m)

12 September

Our midday flight from Singapore takes us to Paro in Bhutan where our adventures begin. After checking in at the Druk Air counter at Changi Airport in Singapore we will meet as a group in the departure lounge one and a half hours before departure.

On clearing immigration in Paro we will be met by our Bhutanese guide and driver. We visit the giant 51m Buddha statue that overlooks the city as the sun begins to dip behind the hills followed by a short drive to the magnificent Tashi Tso Dzong (fortress) which is lit up early evening and resembles something out of a beautiful fairy tale

Tonight we stay in Thimpu

Day 2 - Thimpu (2334m)

13 September

We depart after breakfast to visit the National Takin Preserve to acquaint ourselves with the odd looking national animal of Bhutan - half goat and half cow. Morning is the best time to visit as the animals are more active.

We enjoy more time in and around Thimpu where we overnight again.

Day 3 - Thimpu to Paro (2200m) 14 September

14 September

More sightseeing around Thimpu and its surrounds and we then travel in the afternoon to Paro where we stay overnight before our flight the next day to Yongphu and on to Trashiyangtse.

Day 4 - Paro (2200m) to Yongphula to Trashiyangtse (1700m) 15 September

Today we take a 45 minute flight from Paro to Yongphula airport and then onto Trashiyangtse.

We head northwards into one of the most remote valleys in Bhutan for a two night stay which gives us plenty of time to soak up and experience everything this incredible valley has to offer. We travel with a packed lunch and will do some sight-seeing en-route into the valley.

The road into the valley makes for a bumpy ride but the destination is totally worth it. Gom Kora is one of the must-see places en route to Trashiyangtse, a remarkably located temple brimming with legends and lore that our local guide will regale you with. Once we get to Trashiyangtse we allow some free time to wander around this delightful town. In the early evening we walk down to Chorten Kora to witness and take part in the evening circumambulation with locals around this remarkable Buddhist stupa.



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Day 5 - Trashiyangtse (1700m)

16 September

We can sleep in a bit this morning, and then go over the options for the day. We will head up to visit the national craft college where students learn Bhutanese traditional arts (the BEST place to shop for locally-made crafts.)

Bumdeling Wildlife Sanctuary is located about an hour's drive up the road for those who want to go for a one or two hour walk. Others may choose to stay back, and look around the town, visit a local school or just relax. Lots of options to choose from. Tonight we stay again in Tashiyangtse.

Day 6 - Trashiyangtse to Ramjar Village (2400) to Trashigang (1130m) 17 September

This morning we leave Trashiyangtse and retrace our journey back to Trashigang, approximately 3 to 4 hours of driving. We depart shortly after breakfast and drive to Gom Kora and then on to the hilltop village of Ramjar where we immerse ourselves in genuine Bhutanese rural life. The views from Ramjar are incredible looking out towards Arunchal Pradesh in India and northwards towards the Trashiyangtse Valley where we have spent the last two days.

We will disembark the bus for the 40 minute walk to our hosts home (non walking option is available). Here we have the opportunity to learn about the food and customs of the eastern rural Bhutanese people. Our lunch will be local fare and we even get the chance to make some ara (a corn-based alcoholic drink) and meet the locals. - Mid afternoon we drive to Trashigang where we stay overnight.

Day 7 - Trashigang (1130m) to Lhuentse Valley (1800m)

18 September

Today will be a driving day about 5-6 hours as we enter the magical Lhuentse valley renowned for its incredible weavers and culture.

Some of the most sought after and expensive fabrics in the country are made here using a technique more akin to embroidery than weaving.

We will spend two nights in Lhuentse.

Day 8 - Lhuentse Valley (1800m)

19 September

Our destination today is the village of Khoma where many of the houses have traditional back strap looms set up on their porches. We take a packed lunch.

We stay again tonight in Lhuentse.



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Day 9 - Lhuentse Valley (1800m) to Mongar (1600m)

20 September

Mongar is the fastest-developing dzongkhag (region) in eastern Bhutan. The road approaching Mongar is one of the most spectacular journeys in the country. It passes over sheer cliffs and through beautiful fir forests and green pastures.

There are countless varieties of rhododendrons here and on clear days you can even catch a glimpse of Gangkhar Puensum (7541 m), the world's highest unclimbed mountain.

The Dzong in Mongar was built (1930), it was constructed the same way as all earlier dzongs, without plans or nails.

However, unlike the earlier dzongs, that are located in strategic positions, Mongar Dzong is located on a small gently sloping area just above the town. A visit to Mongar Dzong demonstrates how traditional Bhutanese architecture has continued to thrive through the centuries. Tonight we stay in Mongar.

Day 10 - Mongar (1600m) to Bumthang (2580m)

21 September

After breakfast we continue driving up towards the summit of the 3750m Thrumshing La Pass where we make a brief stop in the thin air and then onwards towards the Ura Valley and Jakar/Bumthang – one of the most important and historically significant places in Bhutan where we spend two nights. We should arrive into Bumthang mid afternoon in time for you to stretch your legs and check out the pool halls and quaint shops of this lively town.

We overnight in Bumthang

Day 11 - Bumthang (2580m)

22 September

After breakfast we head out for a morning of sightseeing around Bumthang which includes a visit to Jhampey Lhakang (monastery), Kurjey Lhakang (monastery), the Jakar Dzong (fortress), the Swiss Cheese factory and the Red Panda Beer making facility. We get back to town in time for a late lunch, and those of you who want to try a traditional hot stone bath (extra cost), later this afternoon is the time to try this out.

We overnight in Bumthang

Day 12 - Bumthang (2580m) to Punakha (1242m)

23 September

We leave early for a big driving day that affords plenty of window sight-seeing opportunities. A stop at the Yartha shop outside Bumthang is a great place to buy some fabric souvenirs and on we go westwards past the incredible Trongsa Dzong (fortress) and in to the lower elevations of Punakha.

Our goal is to reach the quintessentially scenic Punakha Dzong (fortress) by 3:30-4pm to experience this iconic place during the magic hours of the late afternoon.

We overnight in Punakha





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Day 13 - Punakha (1242m)

24 September

Today we spend the whole day in and around Punakha and soak up the sightseeing highlights in this history rich part of Bhutan

We overnight again in Punakha

Day 14 - Punakha (1242m) to Thimpu (2334m)

25 September

Today we spend time in and around Punakha sightseeing before heading to Thimpu in late afternoon. The roads get noticeably busier as we near the Bhutan capital of Thimpu. We stop at the scenic (and very popular!) Dochu La Pass and its 108 chortens (religious monuments) for tea, coffee and photos and then in to Thimpu city where after a wander around we stay the night.

Day 15 - Thimpu (2334m) to Paro (2200m)

26 September

We are in no hurry to leave this morning! Sleep in, take a stroll or catch up on photo editing (trust us you will have a lot of photos!) We then drive to Paro. We arrive in time for a leisurely stroll down the main street and its abundance of shops. We then drive to our four star resort which will be your home for two nights. Tonight we prepare for the amazing hike tomorrow to the iconic Tigers Nest Monastery!

Day 16 - Paro (2200m)

27 September

Today we walk to the world famous Tiger's Nest Monastery (optional walk). We head off shortly after breakfast for the short drive to the trail head followed by a walk to this iconic temple that clings to the cliffside. Its all uphill but there is an option of a pony ride to the tea house which is located about two thirds of the way up. (extra cost)

We then head back to Paro for lunch and some last minute shopping and then back to our amazing hotel to celebrate the end of our journey traversing this extraordinary country with a final dinner.

Day 17 - Paro (2200m) to Singapore

28 September

Our return flight to Singapore departs mid morning so it's an early wakeup for the short drive to the airport and on to Singapore. We recommend you book your connecting flight for the following day and overnight in Singapore. You arrive in Singapore at 4pm

Please note that this itinerary is subject to change based on local conditions and festival schedules. Tuatara Tours and your experienced guide will ensure that you have the most enriching and enjoyable experience throughout your journey in Bhutan.



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Phutan

16 Nights

Druk Yul

Tourist Information Center, Phone: 1800 044 888, Email: info@tatic.com.np, Web: www.turkattour.com.np



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What Is Included

Guides

You will be accompanied by a New Zealand guide (host) **Wanda Vivequin** who is experienced in travel to Bhutan. Your host will be with you from the time you leave Singapore until you arrive back in Singapore where your tour will end.

We will also have a fully accredited Bhutanese English speaking guide for the duration of the tour. Our guide is very well versed and qualified to comment on all that is Bhutanese. Our driver is also accredited by the Bhutanese government.

Visa

You will require a visa for Bhutan. Please talk to us at the time of booking as we arrange your Bhutan visa which is included in the tour cost.

Transport

All transport including your flights from Singapore return are included in the cost of the tour.

On arrival in Paryou will be met by our Bhutanese Government accredited guide and driver. You will be travelling in a well appointed small bus with very comfortable seating.

Whilst there are approximately 8000km of roads in Bhutan, the quality varies greatly depending on proximity to the major towns of Thimpu and Paro. As such, even short distances can take longer than expected. Bhutan is currently upgrading a lot of their road network and delays are common. The roads are narrow and speeds are slow.

Accommodation

We stay in modern 3 to 4 star hotels or resorts all the way.

Hotels in Bhutan are of a good standard and are comparable with hotels in more developed western countries. They are clean and tidy with modern facilities throughout.

Rooms are double/twin with ensuite facilities. Most rooms have coffee and tea making facilities. You will receive more comprehensive details of the accommodation on your tour at time of booking.

Accommodation on the nights pre tour and post tour in Singapore is not included in the tour cost.

Food

All meals are included in the cost of your trip in Bhutan.

No meals are included in the tour cost whilst in Singapore pre and post tour.

Generally meals in Bhutan are buffet style and taken in your hotel or guesthouse. Breakfast, lunches and dinners will generally include a selection of western, Chinese or Indian style dishes, with some local specialties on occasion. Don't forget to try the national dishes of emma datshe (chilli and cheese) and delicious red rice. Rice and vegetable dishes are always present for every meal.

Vegetarians are well catered for and meat is the exception rather than the rule with most meals. Alcoholic drinks are not included with meals and are paid for separately. Filtered or bottled water is usually freely available in most hotels restaurants and in the vehicle you will be travelling in.


Each meal will typically have three or four dishes to share. Choices are limited and feedback has suggested that the food isn't the main reason to visit Bhutan. Meals may become a little monotonous with similar offerings at a lot of the restaurants.

Please don't be offended that your guide and driver do not eat with you. This is the custom in Bhutan and guides and drivers generally eat together in another section of the restaurant.


Entry and Sustainable Development Fees

All entry fees to monasteries and other attractions when accompanied by our local guide.







These are not dreadlocks, it is a traditional hat made from yak hair, the tassels actually drain the rain away from the head and face.



Layap family



Wanda in conversation with our Bhutanese guide Rabgay. A very rare privilege, we are able to take photos inside this family temple.



Layap girl



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Fitness

A reasonable level of fitness is required to enjoy this trip. Many monasteries in Bhutan are reached by long flights of steps. At times you will be at altitudes of up to 3000m, which can affect even the fittest traveller, so be prepared to be a little breathless.

Clothes and Luggage

We provide a comprehensive list of gear for you in the tour trip notes (sent to you on completion of the booking process.)

A medium size suitcase is sufficient for all your requirements, and ideally on wheels so that it can be pulled along.

You must be careful of the weight of your luggage and limit it to 15kgs ----- 20kgs at the very maximum.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory.

We require that, at a minimum, you are covered for medical expenses including emergency repatriation.

We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects.

We require evidence that you have travel insurance and the insurance company's 24 hour emergency contact number has been provided to Tuatara Tours.

We recommend that you take out insurance at the time of booking to protect your trip payment in the case that you may have to cancel your tour.

If you have credit card insurance we will require details of the participating insurer/underwriter, the level of coverage, policy number and emergency contact number rather than the bank's name and credit card details.

Pre and Post Tour Accommodation and Meals

Pre/post tour accommodation is not included in the tour cost. Pre/post tour meals/dinner are at your own cost. If you would like some help booking pre/post tour accommodation (cost not included in the tour cost) in Singapore we can help you with that.

Contact us at

| | |
|--------------|-------------------------|
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What Is Not Included

- pre and post tour international flights to and from Singapore
- pre and post tour accommodation in Singapore
- all meals pre and post tour
- alcoholic drinks
- personal expenses
- tips



Punakha Dzong (fortress)



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Country Information

Every country has its own charm and its own set of problems. Nothing and no-one is perfect but one can only try and get as close to perfect as possible.

This tiny country which is smaller in area than the majority of Indian states is setting an amazing example of living life in the best way possible. It is still mostly untouched and unharmed by human intervention.

Life in this land is calm, peaceful and surrounded by natural beauty, exactly how it is meant to be.

A few facts about Bhutan

1. Bhutan provides free education and healthcare facilities to not only its residents, but also tourists.
2. Bhutan is the only country that consumes more carbon dioxide than it gives out.
3. Around 70% of the total land is covered with forest in Bhutan.
4. Bhutan is also the only nation that follows the policy of gross national happiness and not the traditional gross national product.
5. It is the happiest country in Asia and probably in the world. Quite an achievement.
6. Bhutan banned the use of tobacco completely in the year 2007.
7. Its capital Thimphu is free of traffic lights.
8. It is the largest exporter of renewable energy in the world.
9. It has banned the use of plastic bags since 1999.
10. The king and queen of Bhutan celebrated the birth of their first child by planting around 108,000 tree saplings.
11. It also has a world record of planting about 49,672 trees in just an hour.
12. It is also the only country in the world that grows its food organically. Bhutan has banned the use of pesticides and other chemicals in agriculture.
13. It is one of the greenest countries in the world.
14. Citizens of the country have constitutional obligations to protect the environment.
15. Simplicity is the policy that every Bhutanese individual breathes and lives.

If all the countries followed Bhutan, our world would be a better place!



GNH - Gross National Happiness
Something you will experience



Young monks



Peppers



Local milking shed on the side of the road



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What will the weather be like?

September and finally an end to the monsoon season. The rains that have fallen in previous months become more infrequent and the hot sticky temperatures are becoming more comfortable. By the end of September, Bhutan is a lot cooler, the skies much clearer.

While you can expect it to be pretty cool in the evenings and at higher altitudes, for the most part the weather across the country is very pleasant. In Thimphu daytime temperatures average around 23°C, while in the Punakha Valley, further east, it can be closer to 30°C. Generally speaking most areas are a lot drier than they were in August.

October is one of the most popular months of the year to visit Bhutan. Visibility is sparkling clear, allowing for sublime views of the mountains. The weather is warm and sunny, and there is lush scenery all around.

October heralds the start of autumn, which is one of the nicest times of the year for a trip to Bhutan. It's a month characterised by pleasantly mild temperatures, ranging from around 19°C in the historic region of Bumthang to 22°C in the capital, Thimphu, and dreamily clear visibility of the majestic Himalayas. It can get significantly cooler in the evenings, and at the highest elevations, there may be a hint of early snowfall.

Bhutan's autumnal colours are beautiful, whether you're in the mountains, the valleys or exploring the forested regions in the centre of the country.



Meconopsis (Blue Poppy) - The national flower of Bhutan



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BHUTAN 17 Days

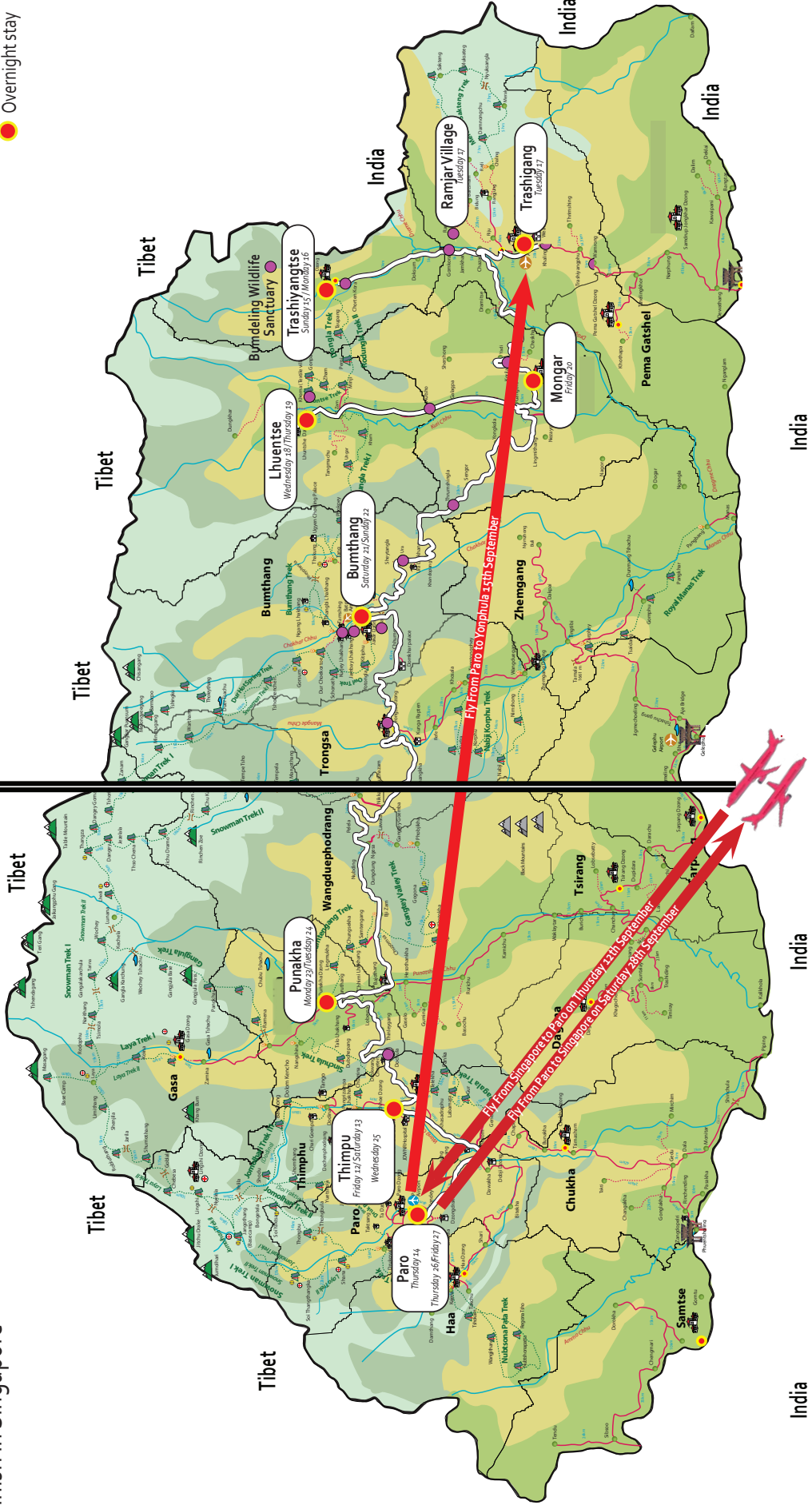


Tours Start in Singapore
Finish in Singapore

8 Days in the West

9 Days in the East

Maximum 12 people
 Overnight stay





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FAQ's - frequently asked questions

How do we book a tour? The deposit is \$1500 per person to confirm your place and can be paid with a credit card through our website at <https://www.tuataratours.co.nz/make-a-payment/> (we accept Visa or Mastercard with no card surcharges) or by internet banking or bank transfer (New Zealand bank account holders only) to Tuatara Tours NZ Ltd account: 01 0797 0308837 00. Please use your surname or tour booking number as a reference when making a payment so we can identify it as yours.

When is the balance due? Your final balance is due 90 days prior to departure. We will email you a reminder when this is due. You are welcome to pay in instalments as long as your tour is paid in full by the due date. Please email us each time you make a payment so we can confirm receipt.

What if I need to cancel? Please see our Terms and conditions for our cancellation policy: <https://www.tuataratours.co.nz/terms-conditions/>. We do recommend you purchase travel insurance to cover you in the case that something unexpected happens and you cannot proceed with your tour.

How big are the groups? Normally we take a maximum of 12 people on a tour but are happy to cater to larger groups on request if you are planning to get a group together.

Do I have to share a room? The tours are priced on a twin share basis (2 people to a room), please let us know at the time of booking if you prefer a queen room (one queen bed) or a twin room (2 separate beds). If you are a solo traveller we will room you with another single person of the same gender, or you may wish to pay an additional single supplement to reserve a private room to yourself.

Am I fit enough? As a general guideline we suggest the following activity level guide for our tours:

Walking Tours:

Easy/Mild: An average level of fitness, you should be comfortable walking 12km on well-formed tracks and roads with a small amount of incline.

Moderate: An above average level of fitness, you should be comfortable walking 20km, on formed tracks and roads with some average to steep inclines at times.

Challenging: An above average level of fitness, you should be comfortable walking 20+ km, on partially formed tracks and roads, some steep inclines, some easy river and creek crossings.

Cycle Tours:

Previous cycling experience is necessary to comfortably complete a multi-day cycle tour.

Easy/Mild: An average level of fitness, you should be comfortable biking 25km on well-formed tracks and roads with a small amount of incline.

Moderate: An above average level of fitness, you should be comfortable biking 45km on formed tracks and roads with some average to steep inclines at times.

Challenging: An above average level of fitness, you should be comfortable biking 50+km on partially formed tracks and roads, some off-road, some steep inclines, some easy river and creek crossings.

If you have any concerns about your fitness level, or ability to complete a tour, please call our office staff and we can discuss this further with you.

Can you pick me up for the tour? Yes, if your tour starts in Nelson, Christchurch, Queenstown or Rotorua pickups and drop offs are available at most central city hotels and motels. Pick-ups are not possible at Airbnb properties or in residential suburbs. Please check with our office before you book accommodation if you are not sure about the location of your stay. If your tour departs from Picton we ask you to make your own way to the meeting point on the wharf for the tour departure.



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FAQ's - frequently asked questions - continued

What's the best time to do a tour? New Zealand is known to have four seasons in a day. Rain can be expected at any time throughout the year, and we depart rain, or fine so you should always be prepared for sudden changes in weather or temperature and always have the appropriate gear with you. Gear lists are in our trip notes for each tour.

Spring (September-November) and Autumn (March-May) are generally cooler months for experiencing the outdoors with temperatures averaging 15-25 degrees during the day.

Summer (December-February) is usually warmer with averages of 20-30 degrees and has longer sunshine hours due to daylight saving. We typically see more activity on the trails over February, March and April so September to December can be a quieter time to travel if you prefer trails less busy.

Do I have breakfast on the first day or is this included? Your tour starts after we pick you up on the first day so please come having had breakfast. After this all meals on tour are included for you as per the trip inclusions in your itinerary.

What sort of food do you provide? We provide continental breakfasts, either café or packed lunches, and an evening meal either in-house at your accommodation, or dining out at a local restaurant. We can cater for vegetarian, vegan, gluten free and dairy free diets, and most food allergies, however these need to be advised at the time of booking.

Do you provide alcohol? No but this can be purchased each evening with your meal, or you are welcome to bring a small amount for your own personal consumption. BYO is not available when dining at licensed premises.

Do I need to come ready to walk or cycle? Yes, please come dressed ready to walk or cycle with your overnight bag packed ready for the transport. During the day you will not have access to your overnight bag so please make sure to have all the items you require for use during the day, packed in a day pack for easy access. For some of the tours there is a ride of up to several hours in the bus to get to your start location, if you are not comfortable travelling in full walk or cycle gear, please have this readily available to change into before the walk /ride starts.

Can I fly in/fly out the same day? Ideally, we recommend you arrive the day prior to your tour and depart the morning after the tour finishes just in case there are any unexpected delays or cancellations to your flights.

Can I bring my own bike for the cycle tours? Yes, please make sure it has been serviced and is fit for purpose for the trail you are undertaking. If you are not sure, please check with our office staff on booking.

What comes with the hire bikes? Our hire E bikes, and standard bikes all come with a comfortable memory foam saddle and a rack bag for carrying your jacket, phone, and a drink bottle. Helmets and hi-vis garments are issued with each bike, and as helmets are required by law in New Zealand, we ask riders to wear these at all times while riding. The support vehicle is never far away if you need access to other items of your clothing or equipment.

How much luggage can I bring on tour? Space is limited so we would appreciate if you could please keep your luggage to one hand carry and one overnight bag or suitcase max 20kg. For the Abel Tasman we provide a bag for you to pack into (please see trip notes for the Abel Tasman tours) and for Queen Charlotte tours please limit luggage to 15kg as there are restrictions on the size and weight of bags that can be transported on the water taxis. On some of the hiking tours you may be required to carry your own pack, this is specified in the packing list for your tour

Are all your tours guided?

Our walking tours, with the exception of the Queen Charlotte Boat stay tour, are all guided by a knowledgeable local guide, they provide information on the terrain you are passing through as well as logistical support.

On a cycle tour we provide a support vehicle and driver-guide throughout to help with any bike issues, first aid, trail instructions and to set up for meal breaks. On occasion they will bike a section of the trail with you to highlight places of interest or point out directions, but they do not guide the full trail. If anyone needs to take a break from the riding, you are welcome to make use of the vehicle at any stage.

If there is something we have not covered in these FAQ's please feel free to call **0800 377 378** or email our office team for further assistance.



Bhutan Untamed Eastern Bhutan



TERMS & CONDITIONS

Tuatara Tours NZ Limited accepts bookings subject to the following conditions:

Contract

This contract is between Tuatara Tours and you the client being any person travelling or intending to travel on a tour supplied by Tuatara Tours as the operator. The contract, including all matters arising from it, is subject to New Zealand law and the exclusive jurisdiction of the New Zealand courts. Only Employees and Directors of Tuatara Tours have authority to vary or omit any of the terms.

Cancellation Policy due to travel restriction that is imposed by either the New Zealand government or any other government. Should your trip be impacted by a travel restriction that is imposed by either the New Zealand government or any other government, we will either work with you to transfer your trip to a future date at no additional cost, or provide you with a full refund.

Price

The price is quoted in New Zealand dollars and includes GST of 15%. The price is based on prices at time of publishing and Tuatara Tours hereby reserves to modify without notice those prices in any way considered necessary or desirable.

Organised tour accommodations are based on a twin/double share accommodation. Individual travellers will be placed in rooms together with other individual travellers of the same sex. A single supplement is available on request.

Confirmation of Booking

Bookings are confirmed upon receipt of the full tour price which is payable 90 days prior to the commencement of the tour. Tuatara Tours or their agents reserve their right to decline any booking at their discretion.

Cancellation

If a client wishes to cancel a Tour the following charges will be applied: (Unless stated otherwise)

1. 91+ days prior to departure – no fee
2. 90-60 days prior to departure – NZD\$300.00 per person applies
3. 59-30 days prior to departure – 30% of total package cost applies
4. 29-0 days prior to departure – 100% of total package cost applies
5. After tour commencement – no refund available.

These cancellation fees are not negotiable, therefore we strongly recommend that you purchase travel insurance.

Travel Insurance

Tuatara Tours recommends that the client take out tour cancellation insurance together with all other necessary travel insurances. Obtaining all necessary insurances is the responsibility of you the client and Tuatara Tours can not held liable for any failure on your part to get insurance.

Medical conditions

When you book you must notify us of any medical condition, medical history or medication that you are on.

Changes to Tours

Tuatara Tours will use its best endeavours to ensure that all tours are operated as advertised. It may be that reasonable changes in the itinerary may need to be made where is deemed necessary or advisable by Tuatara Tours. Changes will be advised to the client as soon as is reasonably possible. Where a tour service needs to be changed, a substitute or similar quality or standard will be provided.

Weather

Adverse weather conditions may mean that planned activities cannot proceed as intended. A decision to change an advertised tour based on the weather conditions will be made by a tour guide at the time and is made in the best interest of the group and their safety. Tuatara Tours and or their contracted suppliers can not be held responsible to any changes as a result of the weather.

General conditions

Tuatara Tours, its agents, contractors and guides do not accept responsibility or liability for loss, damage to, or theft of personal belongings (owners risk) or for any expenses, including medical and transport expenses arising from a personal accident, injury, illness, or hospitalisation. Tuatara Tours and their guides reserve the right to make any alterations to the itinerary in the interest of safety, or unforeseen circumstances due to causes such as weather, illness or misadventure. Every reasonable endeavour will be made to keep to published schedules but no guarantee is given. Tuatara Tours will not be held liable for costs incurred by change, delay or the missing of connecting services. Tuatara Tours reserves the right to exclude a person from a tour at any time, if in the opinion of the guide or operator, that person may be likely to risk the health, safety or comfort (including unsociable behaviour) of other clients, him or herself or the environment. In such circumstances, Tuatara Tours will not be obliged to offer any refund or transfer ticket. These terms and conditions apply to each participant including in a group booking. Where a booking is made on behalf of a group or two or more people then each participant in the group must be made aware of and accept these terms and conditions.



Bhutan Untamed Eastern Bhutan



RISK DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

In any adventure activity, there is an element of risk involved. Risks in undertaking this activity include (but are not limited to): hypothermia, heat exhaustion, physical injury caused by environment i.e. rock falls, and physical injury caused by self, i.e. falling over.

Tongariro National Park is an active volcanic area, and eruptions from any of the volcanoes can happen at any time. Early warning systems and alarms are in place that indicate times of increased volcanic activity, however events can occur without any warning.

The staff and management of TuataraTours and any of its agency partners take all practicable steps to identify and minimise potential dangers. The Operator makes all arrangements for all tours on the condition that it shall not be liable for any sickness, injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity which may be occasioned, either directly or indirectly, by reason of any defect in any vehicle, vessel or aircraft, by weather, by any other cause, or through acts of default of a company or person engaged in conveying the passengers, or in carrying out arrangements for these activities.

We strongly recommend that you purchase travel insurance prior to your trip. By participating in this activity, you are expressly assuming those risks and responsibilities and are, to the maximum extent permitted by law releasing the Operator, its officers, employees, directors, agents and any other person associated with us, from any liability, claims, loss, damages or expenses (whatsoever and irrespective of whether direct, indirect or consequential) caused by any event including but not limited to: personal injury or death; property loss or damage; acts which may be construed as negligible or accidental; any other loss, damage, suffering, emotional or nervous disorder suffered by you or any other person in relation to this activity. You accept that you have been advised to obtain adequate travel insurance for all persons named on the booking.

In participating in the activity, the customer agrees to be bound by the following conditions:

- My successors, executors and administrators are bound by the Terms and Conditions;
- I agree not to commence any litigation proceedings in any country in relation to the risks and liabilities set out above and to indemnify the Operator against any claims;
- I confirm and warrant I am physically fit and suffer no medical conditions, which may affect my ability to participate in the activity;
- I confirm I am aware that professional medical assistance may be difficult and/or take some time to access due to the remote areas in which we are travelling;
- I consent to receive medical treatment in the case of injury, accident or illness during the activity and to indemnify the Operator against any claims, costs or expenses in respect of the treatment;
- I agree that any film, sound, video or other recordings taken of or during the activity will not be used in any production, or advertising without prior consent of the Operator, however the Operator may use such recordings itself at its complete discretion without any prior approval; and
- I agree to listen to my driver/guide/host, follow their instructions and make sure any children in my care do the same. Furthermore, the Operator will not be responsible for any personal injury and/or property damage caused by you and any costs for such injury/damage will be your responsibility. You shall indemnify the Operator in relation to such costs.

NZ Walking Tours

The Akaroa Walk
The Queenstown Ben Lomond Walk
The Queen Charlotte Walk
The West Coast Trail
The Hump Ridge Track Walk
The Coromandel Explorer Walk
The Tongariro Crossing Walk
The Waikaremoana Discovery
Great Barrier Island Escape
The Abel Tasman Walk - 3 Days
The Abel Tasman Walk - 5 Days
The Abel Tasman Walk/Kayak - 3 Days
The Abel Tasman Walk/Kayak - 5 Days
Bucket List Walk

NZ Cycling Tours

Around The Mountains Cycle Trail
The Alps 2 Ocean Cycle Trail
The West Coast Wilderness Cycle Trail
The Queenstown Cycle Trail
The Best of the West Cycle Trail
The Otago Rail Trail
The Tasman Great Taste Trail and
Golden Bay Explorer

Overseas Tours

Bhutan Tours
Japan Walking Tours

All of these tours and more available at
www.tuataratours.co.nz



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