



Nabji Festival Trek
& World Peace Tour
to the
Himalayan Kingdom of
Bhutan
January 8-21, 2012

Uniquely governed for “Gross National Happiness” and steeped in the day to day practice of kindness and compassion, the tiny Buddhist Kingdom of Bhutan is tucked into the folds of the rugged Eastern Himalayas. Blessed with some of the world's highest and youngest mountains, glacial lakes, and an intricate network of deep forests rich with life--Bhutan is one of the world's environmental jewels .

Please join us to journey to the center of Bhutan to take a six day Community Based trek to the small village of Nabji and celebrate with many local villagers their annual festival (Tsechu) . This year a newly embroidered huge thangka or tapestry will be unfurled - blessing the village and especially the festival's visitors . Dances will be performed by lay monks (Gomchens) and woman folk-dancers from Nabji and Korphu village. We believe after attending such a sacred festival you are blessed to live twice as long. Devotees from far and near always try to attend this special festival. A first in ecotourism in Bhutan, the Nabji Korphu trek is designed to support local villagers who help supply food, portaging and shelter for guests when they visit their villages.

A collaboration between Sacred Himalaya Travel and International Institute for Peace Through Tourism (IIPT) , this journey offers participants a deep inner and outer experience of peace. May it ripple further into the world on your return.



Daily Itinerary:

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Day 1 :Bangkok to Bhutan, Drive to Punakha.

Flying in on Druk Air, the National Airline of Bhutan, you have spectacular raven's-eye view of the great Himalayan peaks to catch your first glimpse of Bhutan. Descending into beautiful Paro valley at 8,000 feet, you will land in a world apart .

Crystal clear Himalayan air, the scent of pines, a beautifully crafted traditional airport and the greetings of Bhutanese in their distinctive centuries-old style robes, signals that your journey, rare in time, place and spirit has begun.

You'll be warmly received by your Bhutanese guide. A two hour drive winds along a river valley, past small villages and traditional farm houses, through peaceful countryside to Thimphu, Bhutan's capital. It's a small charming capital city sheltered in the heart of the Himalayas. Altitude 7,493ft. All of the houses and buildings are painted and constructed in traditional Bhutanese style . Have lunch and relax. In the afternoon drive from Thimphu to Punakha where you'll overnight. The road climbs steeply through forests of pine, hemlock and spruce bright with rhododendrons. Atop Dochula Pass, at 9800 feet, you'll have a breathtaking panoramic view of the Himalayan ranges: magnificent mountains so vast many remain un-named. Then the road descends through lush forests to the fertile valley of Punakha at 4430ft. Over night in a comfortable hotel.



Punakha Valley, Chimi Lhakang and village

Day 2: Punakha to Trongsa , visit Trongsa Dzong, Overnight hotel

In the morning travel toward the central valleys of Bhutan through breath-taking beauty and serenity of Bhutan's rich flora and fauna .You may spot a yak grazing along the roadside by Pele la Pass at 11,046 ft. The road descends through semi-tropical vegetation and alpine environment, bright with rhododendron trees and dark green dwarf bamboo . As you enter Trongsa valley, the huge fortress of Trongsa Dzong appears on the far side of a deep valley. Visit **Trongsa Dzong**, perched so high on a mountain it's said that the clouds float below it.



Overnight
in
Trongsa
hotel
.Altitude
7150 ft.

Trek Begins:

Day 3: Trongsa to Reotala, 2hr. Reotala (1000m) to Nyimshong (1,300m) about 3 to 4 hours. Its a pleasant drive through villages and farm to the trail head, After meeting with the trekking crew you start to trek by descending 1000 feet down to Mangdue Chhu, and cross a long suspension bridge crossing to other side. Its a steep climb of 2,000 feet, up to Nimshong campsite. The trails, well used by the locals, pass through subtropical forest, offering homes for different species of flora and fauna. With lots of switch backs and several water stops finally reach a neat, small camp site overlooking the river and rugged mountains.



Nabji Valley and Nabji Lhakhang (Temple)

Day 4. Nyimshong (1,300m) to Nabji, about 5 to 6 hours. The trek from Nimshong camp to Nabji is arguably the best birding spot which can boast a bird list of more than 200 species, with, among others, the elusive Rufous Necked Hornbill, who has its nesting holes adjacent to the trail. The walk is mixed with waterfalls and streams and cantilever bridges, with short ups and downs. The evening brings you to Nabji camp near village.

Day 5. Day in Nabji , attend the Festival.

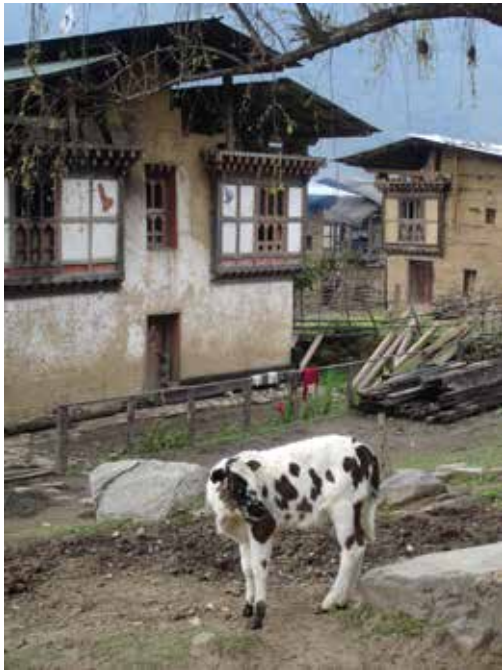
Festival dances will be performed by lay monks (Gomchens) and woman folk dancers from Nabji and Korphu village. Sacred dances are performed during the night to purify the ground. Bhutanese believe after attending such a sacred festival you are blessed to live twice as long. Devotees from far and near always try to attend this special festival, not worrying about the trouble of walking. Bhutanese attend with the most joyous of spirits. You'll see beautiful weavings as everyone attends in their finest traditionally woven kiras and ghos.



Day 6: Day excursion to Korphu village, after the Giant Thongdrel is unfurled at the Temple.

More than 1000, people will come to get the early view of the first thongdrel of the Village ever displayed. Temple is located in the middle of the paddy fields. Inside, there remains a stone pillar on which Guru Rinpoche, while traveling through Bhutan in the 8th century, brought consensus between two warring kings by imprinting their thumbs on each side of the stone.

Korphu village is situated on the hill top overlooking Nabji temple and entire village of Nabji. The most striking thing about Korphu is that the people exemplify hospitality almost treating you like 'A King on accession to a throne.' We can visit a farm house, share lunch with the family. You could also pay a visit to the village temple that houses the sacred relics of Pema Lingpa, the famous 'Treasure revealer' of Bhutan. Return to camp for overnight in Nabji.



Day 7: Nabji(1,300m); Kudra(1,500m) – about 6 hours.

The trail starts with gradual climb passing through farm and villages that leads to subtropical forest, You will get the view of the Nabji village and the farm that looks the shape of peacock. You will encounter Rufous-necked hornbill, Golden langurs. This part of the trek is an assortment of streams, waterfalls and thick forests that will give you an invigorating feeling of being out in the wild. The Giant Malayan Squirrel, Rhesus Macaques, and small snakes are often spotted along the trail. Unseen but present, are Himalayan black bear, Red pandas, tigers, Clouded leopards and many others. The trails are well used by locals with lots of climbing up and down Soon you are at the camp site of Kuda.

Day 8 - Kudra(1,500m), Jangbi(1,350m) about 6 hours . The morning allows you to further interact with the Monpas who are believed to be the first inhabitants of Bhutan. A glimpse of their lifestyle further validates their ethnicity, coupled by mythical legends about their origins. The hike from Kudra provides a touch of jovial atmosphere because this part of the trail meanders along stone imprints of Guru Rinpoche's footprints, dagger and phallus, festooned by stories that support Guru's activities. Ugyendra, is a steep cliff before you pass Phrumzur village, one of the few villages of the Monpa communities scattered around the trail. The trail drops down to a suspension bridge followed by 1 hour steep climb up to the campsite, which offers a beautiful view of the Mangdi valleys.

Day 9: Jangbi to Tongtophy, The trail is mostly down passing through village and chir pine forest, after some time the farm road construction is under process. After crossing a suspension bridge you will have short climb to the road, where our Van and the refreshment will be waiting to transport you back to Trongsa. Overnight.

Day 10: Trongsa to Thimphu

Climbing up the great Dochula Pass on the way back to Thimphu offers another chance to view the astonishing Himalayan ranges. Stop along the way to stretch, take photos, breath crystal clear air. Overnight in Thimphu.



Day 11: Thimphu :visit local sights . Spend a leisurely day exploring .

Its nice to start the day as other, especially elder, Bhutanese do visiting the National Memorial Chorten. Older people often spend all day here, circling the chorten, chanting and socializing. A monument dedicated to the third king of Bhutan, popularly known as the “father of modern Bhutan.” Inside the monument, paintings and statues provide a very rare insight into Buddhist philosophy.

National Library: Text written on scrolls contains ancient Buddhist wisdom. Wrapped and tied in colorful silks, hundreds of sacred texts line the Library shelves.

National Institute for Zorig Chusum , a six year course provides instruction in Bhutan’s Traditional Arts. Students follow a comprehensive course that starts with drawing , painting of thankas, woodcarving, embroidery and statue-making and weaving.

Voluntary Artists’ Studio, VAST is an informal organization that provides an opportunity for Bhutanese youth to develop their potential talents as well as share social responsibilities through artistic explorations. Run by a visionary Bhutanese artist, it’s a great place to experience a contemporary edge of Bhutan.

Zilukha Nunnery. You may arrive as the nuns blow long Tibetan trumpets in their sun filled courtyard . A short distance up the road is the ‘Zoo’ , a large fenced area or ‘zoo’ where you will see Bhutan’s national animal, the Takin.

In the evening freely wander and explore Thimphu’s colorful streets.

Day 12: Thimphu to Paro, National Museum, Paro Dzong. Drive 1.5 hours back to Paro through rural countryside along a river valley. In Paro we’ll visit the National Museum, located in the old Ta Zong watch tower above the small rural town of Paro. Later walk to Rinpong (Paro) Dzong,

a monastic “fortress on a heap of jewels.” Cross a traditional wooden bridge fluttering with prayer flags. Prayers ride the wind to the river below to bless all beings along the river’s journey. You may be lucky to catch the occasional archery match held under a grove of shade trees nearby. With only the sound of wind, bird song and ever present laughter, you’ll be reminded of the magic of Bhutan. Over night in Paro.



Day 13 Day hike to Tiger’s Nest Monastery.

Start the day with short drive to Paro’s upper valley. On a clear day you’ll have an unforgettable view of the “Goddess” Mt. Chomolhari at 23,640 feet. Afterward, it’s a short drive to Taksang trail head.

Hike to Taksang Monastery, the most famous monastery in Bhutan. Taksang means “TigerNest” so named because Guru Rinpoche reportedly flew to the site on the back of a flying tiger late in the 9th century. Between blue pines and a bluer sky, the monastery perches miraculously on a cliff nearly 2,700 feet above Paro’s valley floor. Break along the way for tea and snacks in small tea house. Descend in distilled afternoon light to eat a delicious dinner and overnight at our Paro hotel.

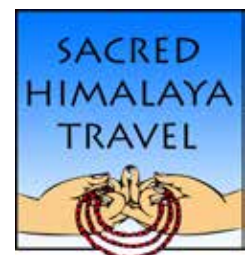
Your last night in Bhutan, step out for a quiet moment under a sky brimming with stars.

Day 14 Depart Paro to Bangkok

Say goodbyes to Bhutan today and board a flight for Bangkok for onward destinations.



We hope you’ll carry this gentle kingdom in your heart: may it bring peace to you and others. Have a safe journey home.



Nabji Festival Trek & World Peace Tour to the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan January 8-21, 2012

Cost : 13 nights/14 days, per person, double occupancy = \$ 3,195.

Cost includes:

- All lodging and meals in Bhutan: 13 nights double occupancy accommodations.
- All transportation, sightseeing, taxes and monument fees in Bhutan.
- Fees and processing for Bhutan visa.
- Expert leadership with English speaking Bhutanese guide.
- \$100 contribution for Thongdrel construction / support of Nabji Temple.
- \$100 donation to International Institute for World Peace Through Tourism.

Not included:

- International airfare to Bangkok, Thailand from guest's airport of origin.
- Airfare between Bangkok, Thailand and Bhutan/ Druk Air: Cost approximately \$900 (Booking will be done by Sacred Himalaya Travel)
- Tips for guide, driver, trekking staff, and hotel staff

Trip Minimum : 3 guests/ Limited to 10 guests.

Single room supplement \$385

\$500 non-refundable deposit is required to reserve your space.

Tour participants should be advised as per Bhutan's regulations total payment of both tour cost and Druk airfare must be submitted in advance. Fees should be paid as soon as possible to secure your reservation.

Airfare Notes:

Participants are responsible to arrange their own tickets to and from Bangkok.

Sacred Himalaya Travel will book and arrange for Druk Air Bangkok – Paro – Bangkok.

Lodging : will be in comfortable hotels reminiscent of mountain lodges and beautifully Bhutanese. Many lodgings have hand painted designs, wood panels and thick quilts. All have hot running water, electricity, and western style bathrooms. Meals are deliciously prepared traditional Bhutanese and Indian dishes suitable for Western tastes.. For single room supplement please add \$385.

Transportation : will be provided by a Sacred Himalaya Travel professionally trained driver in a comfortable well equipped modern vehicle.

Camping is comfortably set up with state of the art tents and equipment. Trekkers need only carry a small day pack . Trek is moderate.

Fitness: A doctors check-up & consultation regarding altitude is recommended.

Insurance: We strongly advise participants to purchase their own travel/health insurance. We ask that you sign a limits and liability waiver on confirmation of your booking. We would be happy to suggest a contact for international health and travel insurance.

* Additional detailed packing lists, details and travel information for Bhutan are available on request.

Sacred Himalaya Travel Cancellation Policy

Cancellations made prior to 60 days before departure will be reimbursed all fees minus \$500 deposit. Cancellations made between 60-30 days prior to departure will be reimbursed at 50% of the trip fees less \$500 deposit. We regret that cancellations made within 30 days of departure cannot be reimbursed

Note: This is a sample intended to give you a general idea of the likely trip schedule. Numerous factors such as weather, tour conditions, group options and the physical condition of participants, may dictate itinerary changes either before departure or while on tour. We reserve the right to change this schedule in the interest of our guests, safety, comfort and general well being.

For more information and to make reservations please contact :

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