

**Live the Unforgettable in the
Land of the Thunder Dragon**

Epic 7
TRAVEL
LIVE THE UNFORGETTABLE

*“Of the 70 countries I’ve visited,
Bhutan is the most captivating and
authentic cultural gem of them all.
Not surprising for a country that
prioritizes Gross National
Happiness.”*

**— Marielena Smith,
Epic 7 Travel Founder**



**Bhutan 2021 Druk Path Trek
Oct 30-Nov 7, 2021**



What Makes Bhutan So Enchanting?



- Witnessing the **extraordinary artistic expression and authentic cultural pride** through hand-painted architecture, colorful national dress, and yak herders' storytelling
- **Experiencing pristine, untouched landscapes** due to the country's constitution mandating **60% of the country remain forested**, making it the **ONLY carbon negative country in the world**
- Reveling at the Bhutanese government's **remarkable foresight** to **prioritize Gross National Happiness** over **Gross National Product**
- **Admiring exquisite hand woven textiles** created from silk or yak's wool
- Marveling within historic seventh century temples and monasteries as an **intoxicating symphony of monks chanting, drums beating and horns blowing wafts over you**
- Appreciating the beauty and significance of **prayer flags' mantras rhythmically flapping in the wind at the high passes**
- Immersing and learning about **Bhutanese Buddhism's sacred rituals, symbols, and beliefs is fascinating and enlightening**
- Delighting in the tasty national dish **Ema Datshi – hot chilis combined with cheese** – a great accompaniment for any meal
- Feeling proud that you are contributing to **“High Value, Low Impact” tourism** as your visit provides \$65 daily to support Bhutan's free health-care and education



7 Reasons to Live the Unforgettable with an Epic 7 Travel Experience in Bhutan



1: Intimate: With a maximum of eight participants, we have plenty of time to **meaningfully engage** with locals and within our group

2: Immersive: Since we are trekking late in the season, we have **unparalleled access** to exceptional and unique experiences

3: Carefully Curated: All locations and activities have been carefully scouted and **handpicked** by me to create a truly **customized** journey of a lifetime, arriving at the optimal locations and time of day to maximize light and exclusivity & time of year to coincide with clear skies

4: Diversity: Compare and contrast the **mesmerizing landscape beauty** and **rural vs urban scenes** as we traverse our way from Paro to Thimphu on foot

5: Educational: Learn tips and tricks to **elevate your visual storytelling** from an **award-winning photographer**

6: Rare: Be one of only 250,000 tourists to visit Bhutan each year. And, relish getting to observe and learn about **yak herders** during the short window they move their yaks down from higher elevations in Bhutan

7: All-inclusive: All costs, entrance fees and gratuities are covered, including your round-trip airfare from Bangkok to Paro



Tour Itinerary



Day 0: Bangkok Since the flight to Paro is at 5AM on Day 1 (Oct 30), **arrive a day or two early in Bangkok** to explore and adjust to the time change. *(Bangkok hotel, food and activities are on your own.) Overnight Bangkok*



Day 1: Paro Depart at 5AM from Bangkok and **soar over the majestic Himalayas**. *(Round-trip airfare from Bangkok to Paro is included in the tour price.)* Trying our hands at **archery**, the national sport, under the guidance of a national champion, is an entertaining way to kick off our Bhutanese tour. Exploring **our first dzong (fortress)** and **temple** will provide a foundational understanding for our next eight days of exploration. Perusing **handicrafts** in downtown Paro will give us a taste for Bhutanese craftsmanship. *Overnight Paro.*



Day 2: Paro Hiking to **Tiger's Nest**, Bhutan's most famous site, is the perfect way to warm up for our upcoming trek. Perched on the side of a mountain, you will marvel at the **stupendous views** and this engineering feat from viewpoints throughout the hike. We'll rejuvenate with **hot stone baths** (another unique Bhutanese tradition) at a **local farmhouse** after. *Overnight Paro.*

*We may be joined this day by clients completing the Bhutan Cultural Tour - maximum 8 additional guests.



Tour Itinerary



Day 3: Trek to Jele Dzong (10 km/6 miles, 4-5 hours hiking, 1115m/3658 ft ascent
Camp altitude 3480m/11,417 feet)

After starting at the National Museum, we'll enjoy a **shaded and steep uphill trek** through Himalayan hemlock, blue pine and fir trees. Since the air is so clear, it's not uncommon to see delicate adornments on the trees that look similar to Spanish moss. Watching and listening to the **prayer flags** at this camp, which has views of Jomolhari mountain when it's clear, is **meditative**. If we are lucky, we might encounter **nomadic yak herders** and their beautiful **Tibetan Mastiff dogs** at our first camp and learn more about their lives and customs.



Day 4: Trek to Jangchulakha (11 km/7 miles, 4-5 hours hiking, 425m/1400 ft ascent
Camp altitude 3770m/12,369 feet)

If yak herders are present, we'll observe and photograph the interactions between mums and calves as the **yak herders milk them** just after sunrise, which is quite a treat. After exploring the **18th century dzong**, we'll set off on our hike. Today we'll pass **alpine forests** and **rhododendrons**. Tonight we'll camp in an area that offers beautiful **sunset and sunrise opportunities** as a result of the surrounding layered mountains.



Day 5: Trek to Jimilangtsho (12 km/7.5 miles, 5-6 hours hiking, 375m/1230 ft ascent & 370m/1230 ft descent Camp altitude 3870m/12,700 feet)

Leaving camp today, the **trail will climb steeply** to 4180m/13715ft and treat us to **spectacular views** of a village in the valley below flanked by jagged mountains. **Hands down, one of the most breathtaking views I've had the privilege of experiencing.** We'll continue on to another **jaw-dropping viewpoint** from which we will marvel at the numerous mountain peaks surrounding us while we enjoy our **delectable hot lunch**. Given the steep ascent and descent today, trekking poles are recommended. Our camp site tonight is ideal for **night photography** given the moon phase and lack of light pollution.



Tour Itinerary



Day 6: Trek to Simkota (11 km/7 miles, 5-6 hours hiking, 820m/2690ft ascent & 400m/1300 ft descent Camp altitude 4110m/13,484 feet)

After setting off from our lakefront campsite, we will pass a sacred lake, Janetso, enroute to our second lakefront campsite (Simkota Tsho,) which overlooks Himalayan peaks in the distance. Hopefully, we'll encounter **yak herders** again and might even see them preparing Balu Sulu plants for **incense**. Our campsite is also a prime **sunset** and **night photography** location that affords us the opportunity to listen to our horses' tinkling bells as they graze and we marvel at the **pastel colors painting the sky**.



Day 7: Trek to Thimphu (15km/9 miles, 7-8 hours hiking, 130m/426ft ascent & 1810m/5938 ft descent) If the skies are clear, we'll be treated to **exceptional views** of **Gangkar Puensum**, Bhutan's highest mountain, surrounded by other formidable peaks, **Jomolhari** and **Tiger Mountain**. We'll undoubtedly **linger, admiring** and photographing these **extraordinary views** throughout the day. We'll take a break in an area with numerous handmade rock stupas, known as lhapsa, marveling at the designs. Before starting our steep descent to Thimphu, we'll soak in the **expansive views** at our lunch spot one last time, while listening to **prayer flags whisper** to the mountains beyond. Given the **long descent over uneven terrain**, trekking poles are recommended. We'll enjoy a delightful rest and hot shower at our hotel in Thimphu tonight.



Day 8: Thimphu We'll start the day appreciating the **mystical nature of Dochula Pass** and its 108 stupas (often cloaked in fog). After arriving back in Thimphu, we'll witness the nuances of creating **handmade paper** from start to finish followed by the energetic bustle of the **local market**. We'll drive to Paro and overnight there.

Day 9: Depart Everyone **flies back to Bangkok** for their onward journeys home. Spending a night in Bangkok is strongly recommended since flights departing from Bhutan are subject to change and delay.



Epic 7 Travel Experiences – Bhutan 2021 Druk Path Trek

Dates: October 30 - November 7, 2021

Price: US \$5,995 (Individual tent while on trek and a private single occupancy room in Paro and Thimphu)

Locations: Paro, Druk Path, Thimphu

Group Size: Maximum 8 guests

Skill Level: Suitable for culturally curious and enthusiastic travelers & photographers of all skill levels

Fitness Level: Suitable for people comfortable carrying their daypack + photo gear over uneven terrain for up to 8 hours at altitude (3,500-4,100m/11,400-13,500ft). *(Your duffel bag & tent will be carried by the support team)*

Steep ascents & descents required. To prepare, 1-2 hours a day of aerobic exercise, hill walking or stair climbing 3-4 times a week for 3 months leading up to the trek is recommended.

Visa: Bhutanese visa will be arranged for you and is included in the tour price



Typical Trekking Day



- **6:15AM:** Sunrise
- **8AM:** Tea & a bowl of warm water for washing is delivered to your tent. Guide will fill your reusable water bottle with boiled potable drinking water.
- **8:30AM:** Hot breakfast served at a table outside with camping chairs while support team breaks down and packs your tent, camping gear, and duffel bag.
- **9AM:** Start hiking (our support team and horses will leave ahead of us) – we will be carrying our daypacks/photo gear
- **10:30AM:** Stop for mid-morning snack
- **12:30PM:** Hot lunch served at a scenic viewpoint. Our waiter will be hiking ahead of us and carrying the hot lunch our chef has prepared in tiffins.
- **3PM:** Arrive to camp. Support team will have already set up our sleeping tents, the cooking tent, dining tent, and toilet tent
- **4PM:** Bowl of warm water for washing is delivered to your tent (best to wash up and change clothes while it's still warm and light)
- **5PM:** Evening tea & snacks in the dining tent
- **5:15PM:** Sunset
- **6:30PM:** Three course dinner inside dining tent with table and camping chairs (**Chef & waiter are trained in hygienic food preparation. Potable boiled water is used for food preparation, tea and to fill our water bottles)
- **8PM:** Hot water bottle delivered to your tent to put inside your sleeping bag for warmth
- **Night temps range from -5 to -10C (14-23F) & day temps range 5-17 C (41-63F). No electricity is available while trekking





Marielena Smith, Epic 7 Travel Founder & Visual Storyteller

I truly believe **travel is one of the most important gifts we can give ourselves**. It can shape our lives in innumerable ways and **expose us to people, ideas and experiences we could never imagine**.

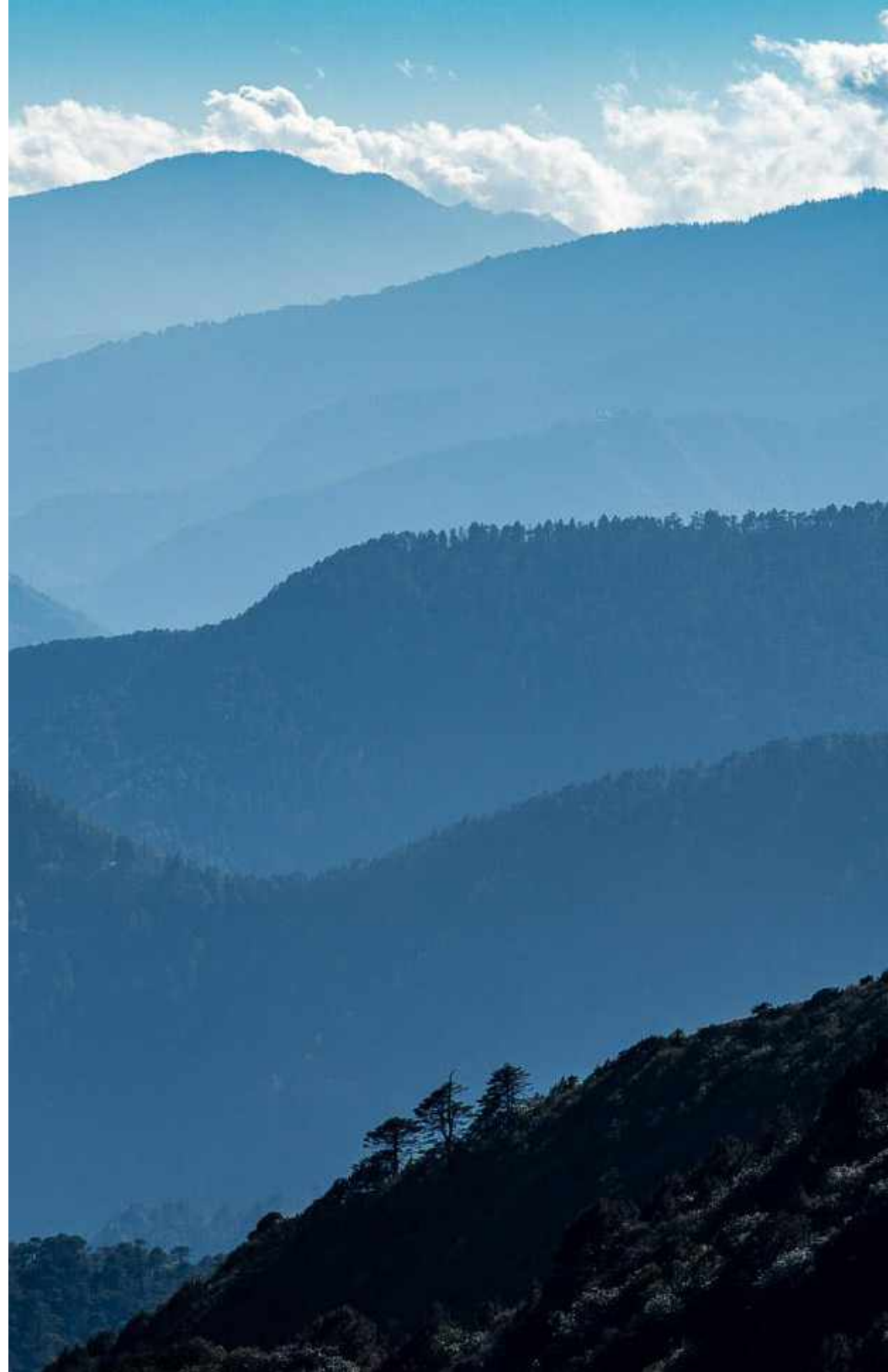
It **enlightens our cultural and historical understanding of destinations**.

After traveling to **70 countries on seven continents**, either alone or with my husband, and sometimes as a client with various sized groups and photo workshops, I'm excited to **share Bhutan's magic** with you. I'll reveal and teach my favorite visual storytelling photography tenets, which have helped me win numerous awards.

By partnering closely with my expert ground operator and guides in Bhutan and scouting for three weeks, I've **meticulously planned** and developed an **intimate, customized tour with unparalleled access that captures Bhutan's unique spirit**.

Join me and immerse in the **exceptional and stunning journey that awaits**.

www.epic7travel.com



Your Trip Package

Included

- Expert leadership from Paro to Thimphu with an experienced adventure guide with strong attention to detail
- 4 nights accommodation in mid-range hotels + 4 nights accommodation in your own comfortable tent
- Sleeping bag, mattress pad, pillow, trekking poles
- Support team (chef, waiter, horseman) + horses to transport all camping gear and our large duffel bags
- Return airport transfers in Bhutan
- Round-trip airfare Bangkok-Paro
- All meals in Bhutan
- All activities, transportation and entrance fees
- Bhutanese visa
- Mandatory Tourism Development Fee
- Bhutan Government Taxes (35%)
- Gratuities for guide, support team and driver
- Unlimited photography guidance

Excluded

- Travel insurance with trip cancellation, trip interruption & \$500k emergency evacuation coverage (mandatory)
- International airfare from your home to Bangkok
- Airport taxes, excess baggage fees
- Pre-travel health check, vaccines, immunizations, medications
- Meals, activities and hotel in Bangkok
- Incidental expenses such as alcoholic beverages, laundry, SIM card, Internet access, phone calls, souvenirs
- Charges incurred as a result of delays beyond the control of Epic 7 Travel
- Additional hotel nights due to change in airline schedule



Terms & Conditions



Booking and Payment

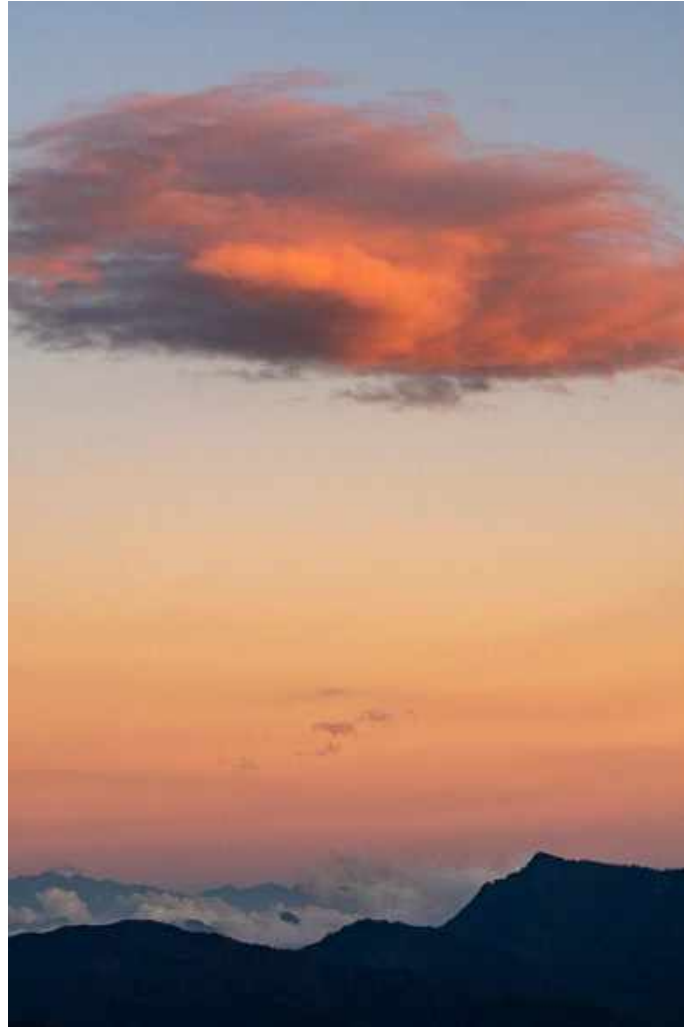
- A **non-refundable deposit of \$1,800** is required upon booking to secure your space
- Balance due June 21, 2021
- If full payment is not received by June 21, 2021, I reserve the right to treat your booking as cancelled
- If a reservation is made less than 90 days prior to the tour, full payment is required at the time of booking

Cancellation Policy

- **120 days or more notice:** Any payments minus the non-refundable deposit will be returned to you.
- **120 days or less notice:** No refunds will be issued
- I reserve the right to cancel or alter this tour at any time due to sickness, personal injury, or not enough participants (*your non-refundable deposit would be returned to you in this instance*)

Client Responsibility

- You will be required to sign a **General Release of Liability** upon booking
- You will need to provide **proof of travel insurance** (which includes trip cancellation & trip interruption coverage as well as emergency evacuation of at least \$500,000) upon final payment



Interested in Joining Me to Live the Unforgettable in Bhutan

- Fill out the expression of interest form here: epic7travel.com/bhutan
- After receiving your interest form, Marielena will set up a **30 minute video call** so that you can **make sure that this trip is a good fit for you** and she can **learn more about you and your interests**
- Pay the **\$1,800** deposit
- Recommendations for flights, camera gear, packing, and Bangkok hotel & Bangkok activities will be provided
- This tour can be combined with the Bhutan Cultural Tour