

EAST INDIA & BHUTAN TOUR...

14 NIGHTS/ 15 DAYS



★ Anglo Indiago Travels (P) Limited ★

Highlights: Kolkata - Bagdogra – Darjeeling – Gangtok – Kalimpong – Phuntsholing – Thimpu – Wangdue – Paro - Departure (Kathmandu > Optional)

DAY 01: ARRIVE KOLKATA

On arrival at Kolkata Airport, you will be met by your car with chauffeur for the short transfer to your hotel for night stay. Rest of the day free. **No meals neither early check in is Included on day1.**

DAY 02: KOLKATA

Breakfast at Hotel and proceed for Full day city tour of Kolkata with Guide and explore this fascinating city, redolent with history, Victorian architecture. Your visit will include the Victoria Memorial, St. Paul's Cathedral, Couple of important churches. Drive Past Fort William (Inside visit is not allowed as it's under control of Army) Raj Bhawan, Kali Temple, Jain Temple, Mother Teresa's Centre, Tagore House, Hooghly Bridge, Kumhar Toli (Colony of Idol makers) Night in Kolkata

DAY 03: FLY KOLKATA – BAGDOGRA & DRIVE TO DARJEELONG (5HRS)

Breakfast at Hotel and transfer to airport in time to connect flight for Bagdogra. Met on arrival and drive to Darjeeling (7380 Ft / 2250 Mts, 125 Kms / 5 Hrs). arrive and check-in at Hotel. Rest of the day free.

DAY 04: VISIT DARJEELING

Early morning tour to Tiger Hills (8364 Ft / 2550 Mts at around 4 AM) to view sunrise over Kanchendzonga Peak (subject to clear weather). On way back visit Ghoom Monastery, Batasia Loop.

After breakfast go for a half-day sight seeing of Japanese Temple, Peace pagoda, Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park & Himalayan Mountaineering Institute (Closed on Thursday) Tibetan Refugee Self-Help Center (Closed on Sunday) & Tea Estate. Night stay.

DAY 05: DARJEELING

After breakfast drive to Darjeeling Railway station to board Darjeeling Himalayan Railway. This joy ride will be for 02 hrs from Darjeeling to Ghoom & back. Continue to visit Tukvar or Happy Valley Tea Factory to see the Tea processing. Night stay.

DAY 06: DARJEELING –GANGTOK (Drive: 135 Kms/5-6 Hrs)

Breakfast at Hotel and drive to Gangtok (5500 Ft /1677 Mts). Arrive and check-in at Hotel Norkhil. Rest of the day free.

DAY 07: GANGTOK

After breakfast go out for sightseeing covering Rumtek Monastery, Droul Chorten, Research Institute of Tibetology & Enchey Monastery. Evening free to explore Gangtok.

DAY 08: GANGTOK – KALIMPONG (Drive: 85 Kms/3-4 Hrs appx)

Breakfast at Hotel and drive to Kalimpong (3937 Ft / 1200 Mts, 85 Kms / 03 to 04 Hrs), arrive and check-in at Hotel Silver Oaks. Afternoon explore Kalimpong.

Today entering to Bhutan.

DAY 09: KALIMPONG – PHUNTSHOLING (Drive: 175 Kms/6 Hrs appx)

After breakfast drive to Phuntsholing (Border town of Bhutan-India). Check in and if time permits take a stroll around Phuntsholing market. Night stay at Phuntsholing.

DAY 10: PHUENTSHOLING – THIMPHU (Drive: 180 km, 6 hours drive)

Morning after breakfast drive to Thimphu. On the way visit Kharbandi Gompa, the beautiful monastery situated in garden of tropical plants and flowers. The monastery contains paintings depicting scenes from the life of Buddha and statues of Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal and Guru Rimpoche. From the monastery garden there is a splendid view of Phuntsholing and plains of West Bengal and their tea gardens beyond. Proceed further to Thimphu. This entire drive is very pleasant with numerous scenic spots en route. Lunch would be served at Punakha cafeteria,

Fives miles, before Thimphu, visit Simtokha Dzong, the oldest fortress of the Kingdom which now houses the School for religious and cultural studies.

If time permits, please visit the following site in Thimphu:

Trashichhodzong; the beautiful fortress/monastery which houses Secretariat building, King's Throne room and other government's offices. It is also the summer residence of Chief Abbot.

Memorial Chorten; the beautiful stupa built in the memory of Bhutan's third King. The paintings and statues inside the monument provide a deep insight into Buddhist philosophy.

DAY 11: IN THIMPHU

After your early breakfast, our guide and driver will pick you up to begin your hike above the motithang. The hike to Phajoding monasteries is not only historical and religious; it's also amazingly picturesque, since you can have dramatic view of Bhutan's capital and its development. Upon reaching at the clustered monastery, you will eat hot picnic lunch in one of the monasteries or outside in the beautiful meadows. After your nice lunch you will hike another 45 minutes uphill to Thujidra Monastery which is built on a cliff on top of all the monasteries at Phajoding. From the monastery you will have a stunning view of the entire Thimphu valley. Visit the monastery, which was founded by a great saint or Lama, Phajo Drugom in the 12 century, and enjoy the views and tranquility for a while before you start hiking back downhill. Your can will be waiting at the BBS tower and then drive back to your hotel or place. Overnight in Thimphu

If time allows you will visit National Library & Handicrafts Emporium too.

National Library, which holds a vast collection of ancient Buddhist texts and manuscripts, some dating back several hundred years, as well as modern academic books mainly on Himalayan culture and religion:

Handicrafts Emporium: it displays wide assortment of beautifully handwoven and crafted products. Textile and Folk Heritage Museum: These museums, both of which opened in 2001, provide fascinating insights into Bhutanese material culture and way of life.

DAY 12: THIMPHU – DOCHU LA PASS - PUNAKHA (Drive: 75km, 3hrs)

After breakfast drive to Punakha. Enroute stop at Dochu-la pass (3,088m/ 10,130 ft) stopping briefly here to take in the view and admire the chorten, mani wall, and prayer flags which decorate the highest point on the road. If skies are clear, the following peaks can be seen from this pass (left to right): Masagang (7,158m), Tsendagang (6,960m), Terigang (7,060m), Jejegangphugang (7,158 m), Kangphugang (7,170 m), Zongphugang (7, 060 m), a table mountain that dominates the isolated region of Lunana - finally Gangkar puensum, the highest peak in Bhutan at 7,497m. Evening at leisure. Night in Punakha.

DAY 13: PUNAKHA - PARO (Drive: 125 km, 4.1/2 hours drive)

After breakfast visit Punakha Dzong, a massive structure built at the junction of two rivers. It was the capital of Bhutan until 1955, and still serves as the winter residence of the monk body. The first King, Ugyen Wangchuck was crowned here in 1907. The fortress has withstood several damages from fire, earthquake and flood. The latest flood of Oct' 1994 caused great damages to the fortress but miraculously spared the statue of Buddha Jojampa.

Then drive to Paro. Upon arrival check in at the Hotel. Later visit **Ta Dzong**: once a watchtower, built to defend Rinpung Dzong during inter-valley wars of the 17th century, Ta Dzong was inaugurated as Bhutan's National Museum in 1968. It holds fascinating collection of art, relics, religious thangka paintings and Bhutan's exquisite postage stamps. The museum circular shape augments its varied collection displayed over several floors afterwards, walk down a hillside trail to **visit Rinpung Dzong**, which has a long and fascinating history. Built in 1646 by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal, the first spiritual and temporal ruler of Bhutan, the Dzong houses the monastic body of Paro, the office of the Dzong da (district administrative head) and Thrimpon (judge) of Paro district. The approach to the Dzong is through a traditional covered bridge called Nemi Zam. A walk through the bridge, over a stone inlaid path, offers a good view of the architectural wonder of the Dzong as well as life around it. It is also the venue of Paro Tsechu, held once a year in the spring.

DAY 14: PARO

Morning after breakfast excursion to Taktshang Monastery (5hrs hike): It is one of the most famous of Bhutan's monasteries, perched on the side of a cliff 900m above the Paro valley floor. It is said that Guru Rinpoche arrived here on the back of a tigress and meditated at this monastery and hence it is called 'Tiger's Nest'. This site has been recognized as a most sacred place and visited by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal in 1646 and now visited by all Bhutanese at least once in their lifetime. On 19 April 1998, a fire severely damaged the main structure of building but now this Bhutanese jewel has been restored to its original splendor.

Afternoon: Visit **Drukgyal Dzong**: This Dzong, with a delightful village nestling at its foot, was built in 1646 by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal to commemorate his victory over the Tibetan invaders. Historically and strategically this Dzong withstood all its glory and was featured in 1914 vide National Geographic magazine. The glory of Drukgyal Dzong remained even when it was destroyed by fire in 1951. On a clear day, one can see the commanding view of Mount. Chomolhari from the village, below the Dzong.

Kyichu Lakhang: It is one of the oldest and most sacred shrines of the Kingdom dating back to 7th century (the other is Jambey Lhakahng in Bumthang). The lhakhang complex is composed of two temples. The first temple was built by Tibetan King, Songsten Gampo in the 7th century and in 1968, H.M. Ashi Kesang, the Queen Mother of Bhutan, built the second temple in same original pattern.

DAY 15: FINAL DEPARTURE

Early morning transfer to Paro airport to connect flight for onward journey...

End of our services...

NOTE.

1. This tour can be modified as per your requirements.
2. If you wish you stay few nights at Kathmandu after Paro, please let us know. In this case the programme will be as follows:

OPTIONAL / 3 NIGHTS IN KATHMANDU

Day 15 FLY TO KATHMANDU

Upon arrival at Kathmandu Airport, you will be met by your car with chauffeur for the short transfer to your hotel for night stay. Rest of the day free. Night in Kathmandu.

Day 16 IN KATHMANDU

After breakfast full day sightseeing which will include Kathmandu Durbar Square and the home of the living goddess, Pashupatinath - an important Hindu temple on the Bagmati river, Swayambhunath and Boudhnath both important Buddhist stupas.

Katmandu Durbar square:

Katmandu Durbar square Pashupatinath is protected by UNESCO world heritage site. Katmandu Durbar square (old Royal palace) which built in 12th century. The Durbar square provides you numerous temples, Kumari Bahal (House of Living Goddess), Kasthamandap (house of wood) and the old museum.

Swayambhunath stupa is the most ancient and enigmatic of all the holy shrines in Kathmandu. Its lofty white dome and glittering golden spire are visible for many miles and from all sides of the valley. Historical records found on a stone inscription give evidence that the stupa was already an important Buddhist pilgrimage destination of the 5th century AD. Its origins however, date to a much earlier time, long before the arrival of Buddhism into the valley. A collection of legends about the site, the 15th century Swayambhunath Purana, tells of the miraculous lotus, planted by a past Buddha, which blossomed from the lake that once covered Kathmandu valley.

Pashupatinath: Pashupatinath is protected by UNESCO world heritage site. Pashupatinath is the holiest Hindu pilgrimage destination in Nepal. There are linga images of Shiva along with the statues, shrine and temples dedicated to other deities in the complex. A temple dedicated to Shiva existed at this site in 879AD.

Boudhnath: Boudhnath is protected by UNISCO world heritage site. Boudhnath is among the largest Stupas in the south Asia and it has become focal point of Tibetan Buddhism in Nepal. The white looms 36 meters overhead. The stupa is located at the ancient trade route to Tibet and Tibetan merchants rested and offered prayers here for many centuries.

Day 17 IN KATHMANDU

After breakfast visit the historical town centers of Patan or Bhaktapur. Night in Kathmandu.

Patan city: Patan is protected by UNISCO world heritage site. Patan is the second largest city in the valley. It is some time referred to as Lalitpur, which means city of beauty. Patan has long Buddhist history and the four corners of the city are marked by stupas. Patan's central Durbar square is absolutely packed with temples. It is an architectural feast with a far greater concentration of temples per sq meter than in Kathmandu or Bhaktapur.

Bhaktapur city: The Bhaktapur city is protected as a UNESCO world Heritage site. Bhaktapur, also known as Bhadgaon, it means city of the Devotees. It is the third major town of the valley and in many ways the most mediaeval. The Bhaktapur is one of the most charming architecture showpieces of the valley as it highlights the ancient. The main items of interest in the Bhaktapur are: The lion gate: Dating as far back as AD1696, this gate is guarded on either side by two huge statues of lions. A long side, there are two stone images of Gods. The Golden gate: The golden gate is said to be the most beautiful and richly molded specimen of its kind in the entire world. The Golden is the mostly lovely piece of art in the whole Kingdom.

Day 18 Departure

Breakfast and day free till your final departure. Depending on your flight, transfer to the airport for onward destination.

End of our services....