

JOURNEY TO THE ‘ROYAL HIGHLAND FESTIVAL’

Photography as practice, travel as transformation.

An immersive experience of Bhutan culture and mystic
adventure with Roberta Marroquín, Karma Lotey,
and Yangphel team.



BHUTAN 2026
OCT. 18 - 28

EMBARK ON A JOURNEY TO RECONNECT WITH YOUR SENSES AND CREATIVITY

Experience Nature, Spirituality and Adventure in Bhutan



★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"Traveling to Bhutan with Roberta, Karma and Yangphel team has been sublime."

- Barbara Savage (Founder Tribal Trust Foundation) -

These Photography Workshops offer a rare opportunity to sharpen your creative and photography skills while exploring the stunning Himalayan kingdom. Over ten days, participants will delve into Bhutan's rich culture, breathtaking landscapes, and spiritual heritage, guided by expert instructors.

Led by acclaimed photographer Roberta Marroquín, Karma Lotey and Yangphel team, this journey invites you to explore Bhutan's breathtaking, untamed landscapes. Roberta brings her expertise in capturing compelling stories through expressive imagery, while Karma and Yangphel team offers deep insights into Bhutan's rich culture, traditions, and natural beauty, creating a truly unparalleled experience.

WELCOME TO BHUTAN

Bhutan is a mystical kingdom nestled in the Eastern Himalayas, renowned for its breathtaking natural beauty and rich cultural heritage. It is home to majestic peaks, ancient monasteries, and vibrant festivals, offering a glimpse into a unique blend of tradition and spirituality in one of the world's most serene landscapes.

Whether it is the enchanting Tigers Nest, the vibrant festivals, or the serene Himalayan landscapes that calls you to mystical Bhutan, you are in for the adventure of a lifetime.

Roberta and Karma first met in Bhutan in 2018, a pivotal moment that sparked a shared passion for this unique country, its people, and its culture. Since then, Roberta has returned four times, deepening her connection and expertise. This shared enthusiasm will enrich your workshop experience, offering you an unforgettable journey into the heart of “The Land of the Thunder Dragon”.

During the 10-day photography workshop, you will explore various parts of Bhutan, shooting, collaborating, discussing, and learning. Roberta, Jigme and Karma will guide you through different photography and cultural themes, offering practical lessons on how Roberta approaches visual storytelling, including her workflow process and shooting regimen, to help you enhance your skills and refine your craft while Karma and Jigme will share all about this majestic country.

The highlight of the October trip is the Royal Highland Festival, where we'll meet the Laya Indigenous community. In December, we'll journey to Jangbi to spend time with the Monpa Indigenous community. On both trips, we'll enjoy unforgettable hikes and explore the country deeply—through landscape, culture, and connection.

With a small group, the experience stays intimate, personal, and truly immersive. Bhutan is a remarkable place—rich in tradition, spiritual depth, and warmth—and its people's hospitality makes it the perfect setting for a photography and cultural adventure.



WHO IS THIS WORKSHOP FOR



This workshop is designed for both amateur and professional photographers, with a passion for culture, adventure & photography who wants to enhance their abilities to create stunning images. Participants should have a basic understanding of their cameras (digital SLR or mirrorless) and equipment, including basic post-production software.

Traveling through Bhutan requires a sense of adventure, flexibility, stamina, and, most importantly, curiosity. You will need to be comfortable adapting to situations beyond anyone's control (such as weather) and other conditions that may affect the team while traveling. Patience is also essential, as you will be engaging with local cultures and traditions that may be very different from your own. We will be in a constant move so not everything will be controlled. Roberta, Karma and the Yangphel team will discuss these aspects with participants prior and upon arrival to provide an understanding of the local people and traditions.

IMPORTANT NOTE: This is not a conventional photography or cultural tour, nor a typical travel experience. We are not simply chasing iconic viewpoints or planning sessions around "perfect" sunrise and sunset shots.

While we'll witness extraordinary landscapes, light, and cultural moments, this workshop goes deeper. It's for creative, adventurous souls who want to slow down, observe, and truly engage—with the people, the culture, and the land—using photography as an immersive practice, not a checklist of shots.

WORKSHOP MISSION



INSPIRATION, CREATIVITY, AND VISUAL LEARNING THROUGH DOING, LEARNING AND CREATING

Roberta & Karma's mission is to help you find your grounding and distinct vision as a storyteller by sharing their extensive knowledge and years of professional experience in a country they both love. Whether you are new to photography, a serious amateur, or a professional, we will help you define your style by tapping into what inspires you and strengthening your creative process and goals. Throughout the workshop, Roberta will demonstrate and teach in a casual, hands-on style, allowing ample time for practice and shooting, with personalized feedback for each participant while Karma will walk you through Bhutan in a fascinating cultural, mystical and spiritual way.

We will approach photography and culture through travel, nature and portrait perspectives, working primarily with available ambient light. Discussions will cover sources of inspiration, ranging from everyday life to art, nature, and colors. This workshop emphasizes an organic approach to photography, fostering creativity and vision through immersive, real-world experiences culture, adventure and spirituality.

LECTURE TOPICS*

CREATIVITY & DEFINING YOUR STYLE

Roberta will guide you in discovering your personal creative voice and help shape it into a distinct visual aesthetic. Through a mix of compositional techniques and creative exercises, you will develop a stronger artistic identity in your photography.

LANDSCAPES & SACRED SPACES

Bhutan's dramatic landscapes, misty valleys, and centuries-old monasteries provide an ideal setting for mastering landscape photography. We will explore light, composition, and weather conditions, using locations such as the Paro Valley, Punakha, and the remote highlands of Laya as our canvas. The interplay of nature and spirituality in Bhutan's Dzongs (fortresses), temples, and stupas also offers stunning architectural photography opportunities.

VISUAL STORYTELLING

Roberta will walk you through the step-by-step process of crafting a compelling visual narrative with your images. Bhutan offers rich storytelling opportunities, from monks engaged in prayer rituals to bustling markets and vibrant Tshechu festivals (if the workshop coincides with one). You will learn how to sequence images effectively and develop a documentary-style approach to photography.

PORTRAITURE (LAYA/MONPA PEOPLE & MONKS)

Roberta will share her personal process for capturing authentic, emotive portraits and teach techniques for approaching and interacting with the Laya people as well as Bhutan's monastic communities. You'll learn how to work with natural and artificial light, master environmental portraiture, and create storytelling images that highlight culture and tradition.

EDITING & POST PRODUCTION

Before arriving in Bhutan, Roberta will host virtual classes via Zoom to cover essential editing techniques, ensuring that participants are well-prepared. These sessions will focus on digital processing, color grading, and refining your photographic style. While in Bhutan, we will have opportunities to review and critique our work in the evenings, fine-tuning our images to maximize impact.

*The classes will be taught via Zoom before the workshop begins, allowing us to focus on the practical side of photography while in Bhutan. During the trip, we will have opportunities to review material as needed, ensuring a fully immersive learning experience.

* ALL LECTURES WILL BE TAUGHT IN ENGLISH.

ITINERARY OCT. 18 - 28 2026

PHOTO WORKSHOPS

ROYAL HYLAND FESTIVAL & HIMALAYA INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY IN LAYA *


City	Overnight Hotel	Room	Nights	Check in	Check out
Thimphu	Zhiwaling Ascent	Deluxe	2	Oct.18	Oct.20 2026/27
Punakha	Hotel Vara/Similar	Dekuxe	1	Oct. 20	Oct.21 2026/27
Laya	Tented Camp	Camp	3	Oct. 21	Oct.24 2026/27
Punakha	Hotel Vara/Similar	Deluxe	1	Oct. 24	Oct.25 2026/27
Paro	Zhiwaling	Junior Suite	3	Oct. 25	Oct.28 2026/27

* Detailed itinerary & schedule page 13.

* For those seeking a more private experience, we offer bespoke journeys curated around your preferred dates and interests. Whether traveling solo or with a private group, we'll design an itinerary that reflects your vision. Contact us for a custom itinerary and pricing options.

PHOTOGRAPHY, CULTURAL & ADVENTURE WORKSHOP AT A GLANCE



 **DATES:** Oct. 18 - 28 / 2026 (10 nights & 11 days)
EARLY BIRDS: Save \$400 if you book before APRIL 25, 2026

COST: **ROYAL HIGHLAND FESTIVAL**
- 1 to 4 participants: **\$16,300 per person**
- 5 to 8 participants: **\$15,500 per person**

1. The above cost is based on double or twin room occupancy.
2. On the above cost, if opted for single room the additional supplement \$2,552.50 US.

DEPOSIT: Non refundable 31% booking deposit paid upon booking in order to hold your seat.

GROUP SIZE: Max. 8

- The final cost per person will depend on the total number of participants. This way, they understand that if there are more than 4 participants, they will benefit from a lower cost per person.

EXPERIENCE LEVEL: Amateur and professional photographers, whether you come wanting to improve your photography skills, ignite your creativity or simply want to go on a one-in-a lifetime wildlife Safari experience.

TO ALL PARTICIPANTS Initially, the payment will be based on the higher rate for 1 to 4 participants. However, if more than 4 participants join, we will happily adjust the final amount and refund the difference. We appreciate your understanding and look forward to sharing this experience with you

SIGN UP & PAYMENT DETAILS

 **RESERVE YOUR SPOT NOW:** Send your name and email to robertamarroquin@gmail.com or info@yangphel.com

We understand that investing in this life-changing workshop is a big decision. To make it easier, we offer a **structured payment plan** with flexible installments:

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Payments can be made via bank transfer.

Bank Name: Chase Bank

Account Name: Kamin Macomber DBA Yangphel USA

Account Number: 589555173

Routing: #322271627

Bank Address: 185 Railroad Avenue Danville, California 94526

SWIFT CODE: CHASUS33

✓ DEPOSIT: A deposit of **\$5,000 USD**. The deposit is non-refundable.

✓ INSTALLMENT 1:


☆ **\$5,000 USD** is due by **End of Aug. 2026**

✓ FINAL PAYMENT:

☆ **Sep. 20 2025**

CANCELLATION POLICY

- Cancellations **before** the final payment deadline: Partial refund available if we fill your spot.
- Cancellations **after** final payment deadline: Non-refundable unless we find a replacement.
- ~ *Travel insurance is highly recommended. Contact us for guidance or referral options.*

 **BONUS:** The participants will receive a free 1- hour private Zoom session with Roberta to discuss photography goals before the trip!

HAVE QUESTIONS?

Drop us a line at robertamarroquin@gmail.com & info@yangphel.com

PRACTICAL NOTES*

GENERAL PACKING LIST (DETAILED LIST TO COME LATER)

Comfortable, outdoor clothing is recommended. In April, Bhutan offers pleasant weather with clear skies and blossoming landscapes, making it an ideal time for exploration. Layers are a basic in Bhutan, as mornings and evenings can be colder, along with a light jacket for during the day. Daytime temperatures are typically mild, reaching up to 20°C (68°F), while nighttime temperatures can drop to around 10°C (50°F), so packing some warm layers is essential. Light trekking shoes are ideal for navigating Bhutan's picturesque trails. Don't forget to bring a swimsuit, sunscreen, a hat, and sunglasses for protection against the sun, as well as a raincoat or umbrella, as occasional light showers can occur during this month.

PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT LIST

- ♦ Digital Camera (SLR or mirrorless) and lenses (fix or zoom) ranging from 17mm to 100/120mm. Or for Wildlife up to 500mm. Feel free to bring an analog camera + lenses, rolls of film and a light meter as well.
- ♦ Memory cards, card reader and cables
- ♦ Batteries & battery chargers
- ♦ Tripod
- ♦ Backpack (to carry your equipment and some light snacks, water, etc...)
- ♦ Laptop (with protective case or bag to protect from dust and vibration) with Adobe Photoshop, Lightroom, and Bridge installed. Most of these softwares are possible to download a 7 day free trial.
- ♦ International adapters. In Tanzania, power plugs and sockets (outlets) of type D and type G are used. The standard voltage is 230 V at a frequency of 50 Hz.

*** It is highly recommended that each participant has a basic technical knowledge of the general settings of his/her camera.**



PRACTICAL NOTES II

HEALTH

Make sure all of your vaccinations are up to date. We recommend you check with your doctor regarding recommended vaccinations and precautions against diseases.

Your trip will be an active participatory experience. Regular exercise prior to your departure will certainly add to your enjoyment. Take the time to get into shape with a consistent fitness routine.

PASSPORTS & VISAS

You will need a valid passport and visa to enter Bhutan. Please ensure your passport is valid for at least six months beyond your departure date and has at least two blank pages for entry stamps. To process your visa, we require a clear copy of your valid passport along with a passport-style photograph. The visa is an e-visa, which must be readily available for immigration upon arrival.

FOOD

Bhutanese food will be available at every stop and place we will be staying. If you have any dietary restrictions or food allergies, please inform us in advance so we can arrange accordingly.

JET LAG & TIMEZONE DIFFERENCE

If possible, it is advised to arrive a day or two in BKK before to we meet in Paro, especially if you are arriving from the America or Europe, so you may be able to rest and get on local time so as to optimize your energy to start the journey. We can help with logistics on the ground if you intend to arrive earlier. Please let us know.

INSURANCE

For your protection, we recommend that all participants have travel and evacuation insurance. A policy including trip cancellation insurance is highly recommended to cover your non-refundable payments, in most cases, should you have to cancel your trip due to illness or injury. As with most major travel arrangements, there are cancellation fees that will apply regardless of why or when you might need to cancel.

PLEASE NOTE

- All images used in this document were shot in Bhutan.
- More detailed trip information, travel and lecture itinerary, packing and equipment list will be sent to you as the workshop dates get closer.



FAQ



WHAT'S OUR AVERAGE DAY LIKE?

Each day in Bhutan offers a unique opportunity to experience and capture the country's breathtaking beauty and rich cultural heritage. We'll start our days at sunrise, capturing the mystical morning light over the Himalayan landscapes and ancient monasteries. We'll conclude our day at sunset, allowing us to photograph the stunning variations of light and shadow as the day fades into evening.

A typical day will include a hands-on photography workshop and cultural sessions, exploring Bhutan's landscapes, and capturing the vibrant energy of local festivals or the serene beauty of the countryside. We'll spend one day focusing on on-location portraits with local communities, delving into Bhutanese culture and daily life. Meals will be shared at local eateries or during our travels, as we move between locations, stopping whenever something captures our attention. Traveling in a small group ensures an intimate workshop experience, allowing each participant to receive personalized guidance and insights.

In the afternoons, we'll return to our accommodations, where you can review your work, relax, or meet with Roberta to discuss your photography. At the end of the day we'll head back for a relaxing evening with a hot shower and dinner.

HOW MUCH INSTRUCTION CAN WE EXPECT FROM ROBERTA & KARMA?

Beyond time together in the field where you can ask Roberta and Karma anything, Roberta will also make time for anyone interested to join her at tech location in order to review the day's shots and camera settings or discuss anything else regarding creating great images. During the activities Roberta will be on hand to help maximize angles and perfect your settings, as well as how to not just take great photos but craft incredible images.

WHAT KIND OF VEHICLE WILL BE EXPLORING?

We will take our tours in customized vehicles for viewing Bhutanese landscapes and for photography. We will have 6-8 guests, plus Roberta and Karma on the vehicle. Charging sockets, cold beverages, blankets, and bean bags will be available in the vehicle. There are no assigned seats.

WHAT ARE THE ROOMS LIKE? SHARING OR PRIVATE ROOM?

Each location offers shared double rooms with separated single beds and private bathrooms. We will pair guests according to their gender unless a request is made otherwise. You can also pay an additional fee for your own private room with a double bed.

A NOTE ON WILDLIFE

We will do everything in our power to maximize our time amongst the wild animals. Despite the knowledge of the area and our local contacts, we can in no way guarantee sightings. We are in mother nature's hands.



WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ◆ All Government Taxes, Sustainability Development Fee (SDF), Visa Fees
- ◆ Cost of the guide
- ◆ Permits, Museum, sightseeing's and Institutional Fees applicable
- ◆ Listed overnight hotels in the itinerary
- ◆ Transportation for entire trip
- ◆ All meals in hotel or local restaurants
- ◆ Water in the vehicle
- ◆ All cultural activities
- ◆ Mineral water during the trip.

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WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- ◆ Items of personal nature, drinks, laundry, telephone calls, spa, trekking clothing, etc.
- ◆ International (flight in & out of Bhutan) & domestic sector (quoted)
- ◆ No helicopter services.
- ◆ Liability for change in itinerary due to reasons beyond our control like change in flight schedules, cancellation in flights, political disturbances, natural phenomenon, etc.
- ◆ Tips for all service provider and Travel Insurance.

ROYAL HIGHLAND FESTIVAL

OCT. 18 - 28 2026/2027



The Royal Highland Festival in Laya is a rare and vibrant celebration where Bhutan's highland communities gather amid the Himalayas to honor ancestral traditions through ritual, music, dance, and nomadic life—preserving culture while showcasing the spirit and resilience of the Layap people.

ITINERARY

DAY 1 - BKK / DELHI / KATHMANDU TO PARO BHUTAN & DRIVE TO THIMPHU

We begin our journey in Thimphu, Bhutan's capital and largest city, where tradition and modern life coexist in quiet harmony. After completing arrival and visa formalities, our Bhutanese guide and driver will be waiting outside the terminal to warmly welcome us and escort us to our accommodation. We then gather for a relaxed meet & greet with Roberta, along with introductions to the Yanghpel crew.

In the afternoon, we visit the majestic Tashichho Dzong and the iconic Buddha Dordenma, offering a beautiful first immersion into Bhutanese spirituality, architecture, and scale. In the evening, we come together for a welcome dinner, where we review the itinerary and finalize details before an early start the next morning.

Overnight Thimpu (7,710 ft.) - Zhiwaling Ascent

DAY 2 - THIMPHU

[Workshop lecture #1: CREATIVITY & DEFINING YOUR STYLE](#)

We begin with a visit to Thimphu's spiritual pulse at the Memorial Chorten, a beloved gathering site where locals come to pray, walk, and connect. We continue to a traditional handmade paper factory, witnessing centuries-old techniques still practiced with natural fibers—an elegant reminder that Bhutan's heritage is very much alive. In the afternoon, we visit the Royal Textile Museum/Academy, an extraordinary introduction to Bhutanese identity expressed through weaving, symbolism, and color. The day concludes with a joyful cultural highlight: outdoor archery, Bhutan's national sport—an energizing, playful window into local life.

Overnight Thimpu (7,710 ft.) - Zhiwaling Ascent

DAY 3 - PUNAKHA

[Workshop lecture #2: LANDSCAPES & SACRED SPACES](#)

Today we journey toward Punakha, Bhutan's former winter capital, descending into fertile valleys shaped by rivers, rice fields, and soft subtropical light. Once the ancient seat of power, Punakha remains a vital spiritual and historical center and continues to serve as the winter residence of the Central Monk Body.

After lunch, we visit the magnificent Punakha Dzong, an architectural masterpiece built in 1637 at the sacred confluence of the Pho Chhu (Male River) and Mo Chhu (Female River). Set against water and mountains, the dzong offers an exceptional setting to explore how landscape, spirituality, and architecture merge into a single visual language.

A dedicated twilight photography session allows participants to work with changing light, reflections, and shadow, deepening their understanding of place, scale, and atmosphere within a sacred environment.

Optional Activity: White-water rafting on the Mo Chhu (Female River)

Overnight Punaka (4,075 ft) - Hotel Vara

 **DAY 4 - LAYA**Photo workshop lecture #3: VISUAL STORYTELLING

Today we journey deep into the highlands toward Laya, entering a landscape where storytelling, culture, and environment are inseparable. Laya sits at 4,000 meters (12,467 ft) in Bhutan's remote Gasa District and hosts the Laya (Royal Highland) Festival, a powerful annual celebration honoring the heritage of the Layap people—a semi-nomadic indigenous community whose way of life remains closely tied to the land.

Our day begins with a scenic drive through the Bhutanese countryside, passing terraced fields, forested valleys, and small villages before reaching Gasa for lunch. From there, we continue to Tongchudra, where the road ends and the trail into the highlands begins.

We set out on a 3-4 hour hike toward Laya. The trail ascends gradually at first, then steepens as the landscape transforms into alpine ridges and expansive mountain views. Along the way, participants are encouraged to observe, photograph, and reflect on how movement, environment, and anticipation shape visual narrative.

By late afternoon, we arrive in Laya and settle into our tented camp or homestay. This long yet deeply rewarding day offers a first, intimate glimpse into remote highland life—setting the stage for meaningful storytelling in the days to come.

Overnight Laya (12,467 ft.) - Tented camp in Laya / Aup Gaw's Homestay

 **DAY 5 - LAYA**

We wake early for breakfast before joining the opening ceremonies of the Royal Highland Festival, where the highland air comes alive with traditional music, vibrant dances, animal parades, and cultural performances. Set against a breathtaking backdrop of towering Himalayan peaks, glacial lakes, and extraordinary biodiversity, the festival offers a rare window into the living culture and ancestral rhythms of Bhutan's highlands.

Communities from across Bhutan—including other Himalayan tribes—gather to participate in races and animal showings, celebrating both tradition and resilience. We witness Buelwa, the ceremonial offering of grains, fruits, foods, artifacts, or even livestock—a profound gesture of gratitude and respect woven into community life. We also experience Auley, the Layap tradition of epic song and poetic recitation dating back to the time of Zhabdrung Rinpoche, honoring Bhutan's monarchs and their leadership.

Over these two festival days, we attend religious ceremonies and blessings led by local monks, and visit the historic household that first hosted Zhabdrung Rinpoche in 1616, where gifts he bestowed are still preserved. Between events, you may stroll through the village to observe daily life or visit sacred temples—Tashi Lhakhang, Jagchhey Lhakhang, Jangchubcholing, and Zogchencholing—each carrying its own legends and spiritual significance. Each evening, we return to our homestay or camp, carrying with us the warmth of Layap hospitality and the spirit of the highlands.

Optional: Light-painting portrait session

Overnight Laya (12,467 ft.) - Tented camp in Laya / Aup Gaw's Homestay

 **DAY 6 - LAYA****Photo workshop lecture #4: PORTRAITURE**

This morning begins with a focused portraiture session at the festival, where we practice photographing people with sensitivity, presence, and respect—capturing not only faces, but the energy, dignity, and story carried in a single glance or gesture.

After our shoot, we take time to explore the vibrant festival grounds: local produce stalls, agricultural exhibitions, and displays of medicinal herbs showcasing the region's natural bounty. Guests may also browse textile and souvenir markets, and taste highland specialties such as dried yak cheese, butter, and traditional local beverages.

With two unforgettable days in the highlands behind us, we begin our descent. We retrace our steps on the hike from Laya to Tongchudra, then continue by road toward Punakha. The journey down offers fresh perspectives on valleys and ridgelines we encountered on the way up, with opportunities to pause for photographs along the route.

By evening, we arrive in Punakha and settle into our hotel. The rest of the night is yours—to rest, reflect, and enjoy the gentler climate of the valley after our time in the mountains.

Overnight Punaka (4,075 ft) - Hotel Vara

 **DAY 7 - PUNAKA**

We begin the day with a visit to Chimi Lhakhang, famously known as the Mad Monk Temple, where we interact with local monks and learn about the temple's unconventional history and spiritual symbolism.

We then drive to Nepa Goenpa in Shengana Village (approx. 1.5 hours), a serene monastery perched above the Punakha Valley. Surrounded by expansive views and quiet mountain air, we spend time engaging with the young monks, sharing conversation, observation, and a thoughtful photography session.

Lunch is arranged with the monks, in coordination with the Lam, offering a rare and meaningful glimpse into monastic daily life. In the late afternoon, we return to Punakha, with the option to visit the majestic Punakha Dzong and nearby landmarks, allowing time to admire its architecture and riverside setting under changing light.

Overnight Punaka (4,075 ft) - Hotel Vara

 **DAY 8 - PARO****Photo workshop lecture #5: EDITING & POST PRODUCTION**

We drive to Paro and arrive at Zhiwaling Heritage, our home for the final chapter of the journey. After check-in, enjoy a little free time to walk the grounds and settle into the calm, timeless atmosphere of the property.

We then begin with a deeply moving cultural moment: a butter-lamp lighting ceremony at the 8th-century Kyichu Temple, one of Bhutan's oldest and most sacred sites—an invitation to slow down, reflect, and set intention.

Next, we visit the National Museum of Bhutan, followed by a scenic walk past Rinpung Dzong (Paro Dzong) and onward to the iconic cantilevered bridge, offering beautiful opportunities for photography and observation. Lunch is enjoyed in town at Sonam Trophel Restaurant.

In the afternoon, we gather at Soethab, the hotel's Bhutanese kitchen, for a special cultural and culinary experience: a traditional meal lovingly prepared by Kanjur's grandmother, followed by a Bhutanese tea ceremony—a warm, intimate closing to a day rich with beauty, heritage, and storytelling.

Overnight Paro (7,832 ft.) - Zhiwaling Heritage

DAY 9 - PARO

Today we embark on one of Bhutan's most iconic and awe-inspiring experiences: a hike to Taktsang Monastery, famously known as the Tiger's Nest, dramatically perched on a cliffside high above the Paro Valley. The journey is both physical and deeply contemplative, offering extraordinary photographic perspectives and a powerful sense of pilgrimage as we approach this sacred site.

After our descent, we enjoy lunch at Flying Tigress, followed by a relaxed afternoon to shop locally and savor Paro's charm. Later, we gather for a meaningful visual recap of the journey, reflecting on key moments and images, complemented by a traditional astrological reading—a beautiful way to integrate the experience through Bhutanese wisdom.

In the evening, we come together for a heartfelt farewell dinner, celebrating new friendships, creative growth, and the unforgettable stories we've shared.

Overnight Paro (7,832 ft.) - Zhiwaling Heritage

DAY 10 - PARO

After breakfast, we gather for a Tsa Tsa (miniature stupa) making ceremony held upstairs in the temple—a quiet, meditative ritual symbolizing intention, impermanence, and blessings carried forward beyond the journey.

Following the ceremony, we transfer to the airport for departure and check-in, bringing this immersive experience to a close with images, reflections, and connections that will continue to resonate long after leaving Bhutan.



SEE YOU SOON BHUTAN!

ABOUT WHERE WE REST & RECONNECT



THIMPHU



ASCENT THIMPHU

Is a contemporary boutique hotel located in Thimphu, Bhutan. The hotel blends modern design with traditional Bhutanese elements, offering guests a serene and luxurious retreat. Zhiwaling Ascent is known for its stunning views of the surrounding mountains and valleys, providing a peaceful environment for relaxation and contemplation.

The hotel emphasizes sustainability, using eco-friendly materials and practices throughout the property. Its minimalist architecture is designed to harmonize with the natural landscape, and the hotel offers a range of wellness-focused amenities, including yoga sessions and traditional Bhutanese therapies.

The hotel also features a farm-to-table dining experience, with fresh, organic ingredients sourced locally, making it a unique choice for those seeking comfort, culture, and a connection with nature during their stay in Bhutan.

PUNAKHA



PUNAKHA RIVERSIDE DELUXE TENTED CAMP

Four Boutique Hotel in Punakha, Bhutan, offers an intimate and stylish experience in the heart of Bhutan's Punakha Valley. With a blend of modern comfort and traditional Bhutanese architecture, this boutique hotel provides a peaceful escape surrounded by lush landscapes and views of the Himalayan foothills.

The hotel features thoughtfully designed rooms, each reflecting the local culture while offering modern amenities. Guests can enjoy a serene atmosphere, perfect for relaxation, with easy access to nearby cultural landmarks, such as the iconic Punakha Dzong. Four Boutique also offers dining options that highlight local Bhutanese cuisine made from fresh, organic ingredients.

Ideal for travelers seeking a balance of luxury, tradition, and nature, Four Boutique Hotel delivers an authentic and immersive experience in one of Bhutan's most picturesque regions.

LAYA



HOME STAY

Laya, a remote village in Bhutan, is home to the Laya people, a unique highland community known for their distinctive culture, traditional lifestyle, and deep connection to nature. Nestled in the Bhutanese Himalayas at an elevation of around 12,500 feet, the village is a gateway to some of the country's most breathtaking landscapes, including snow-capped peaks and pristine wilderness. The Laya people, often referred to as semi-nomadic yak herders, are recognizable by their unique conical bamboo hats and vibrant traditional clothing, which reflect their rich cultural heritage.

Travelers to Laya can experience the warm hospitality of this isolated community, learning about their traditions, including their deep-rooted connection to both Buddhism and the ancient Bon religion. Despite their remote location, the Laya people maintain a harmonious lifestyle, living in sync with nature and preserving their cultural identity through oral traditions, folk music, and rituals.

From Bumthang to Trongsa to Jangbi's Monpa community, the journey begins with a drive across the scenic Yutong La pass at 11,300 feet, where wildlife sightings are common. Continuing south from the bustling village of Trongsa, the route takes visitors to the village of Jangbi, home to the Monpa people. This community, deeply rooted in their Bon shamanistic practices before Buddhism arrived, offers a unique cultural experience. Visitors are welcomed by the local Monpa community, guided by a resident Buddhist monk, and may witness shamanistic rituals that channel spiritual energies, showcasing the unique blend of old and new spiritual practices.

PARO



ZHIWALING HERITAGE

is a luxurious five-star hotel that seamlessly blends traditional Bhutanese architecture with modern comforts. Set amidst stunning natural surroundings, the hotel offers breathtaking views of the Paro Valley and is conveniently located near some of Bhutan's most iconic cultural sites, including the famous Tiger's Nest Monastery.

The hotel's design is inspired by Bhutanese dzongs (fortresses), featuring intricate woodwork, hand-painted murals, and traditional decor, all crafted by local artisans. Zhiwa Ling Heritage offers spacious rooms and suites that provide a serene retreat with modern amenities, combining cultural authenticity with luxury.

Guests can enjoy farm-to-table dining with Bhutanese and international cuisine, a wellness spa with traditional Bhutanese therapies, and a meditation room for spiritual reflection. The hotel's location and services make it an ideal choice for travelers seeking a deep cultural experience with comfort and elegance.

EXPECT THE
UNEXPECTED
AND WE HOPE TO
SEE YOU IN 2026!

Roberta
Marroquin

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YANGPHEL