

THE LM DISCOVERY PACKAGE 05 NIGHTS / 06 DAYS



A 05 night/06 day tour of the last "Shangri-La" on Earth, Bhutan, the LM Discovery Package covers the 03 iconic districts of Thimphu, Punakha, and Paro. Showcasing the most visited, as well as the most treasured, sights, monuments, and vistas of the 03 Dzongkhags, discover why the country has been famously labeled the "Land of the Thunder Dragon".

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DAY	PLACE	HOTEL	ITINERARY
Day 1	Thimphu	Le Meridien Thimphu	<p>Arrival at Paro Airport.</p> <p>Your journey to the country begins with a thrilling landing at Paro Airport, the only international airport in the country, precariously located in a narrow stretch along the Paro Valley. Enjoy the ride as your plane rapidly descends to land in, what many pilots consider to be, the world's most challenging airport to land in.</p> <p>As you disembark from your aircraft, and take your first breath of Bhutanese air, you will be struck by how crisp and clean it is. Welcome to Bhutan, the "Last Shangri-La."</p> <p>After your personal guide escorts you to your private vehicle, take a meandering ride from Paro to the capital city of Thimphu, and enjoy the stunning scenery, with rice paddies cascading down magnificent mountains, the pristine Paro-Chu river that flows through the main towns of Paro and Thimphu, and unique two-story houses with brightly painted window designs. This is the "Land of Dragons"</p> <p>Arrive at Le Meridien Thimphu and enjoy a traditional welcome ceremony – the Tashi Khadar ceremony – with a service of Bhutan's authentic herbal tea.</p> <p>After Lunch, visit the iconic Buddha Dordenma Statue, one of the world's largest statues of Gautam Buddha, at nearly 05-stories tall, located 20 minutes away from the hotel.</p> <p>After taking a selfie or two with the Big Buddha, travel to the famous Changankha Monastery – a 15th century monastery, and the oldest in the city, perched on a hill overlooking the entire Thimphu valley. At the temple, make a wish while turning the ancient khorlos (or prayer wheels) located in the inner sanctum – as per myth, the more often you turn the wheels, the more positive the karma you will receive.</p> <p>After taking some breath-taking views of the city, take a scenic drive to the city's outskirts, and visit the Takin Preserve, a sanctuary within the city's peripheral for the national animal of the country, the curious Takin. Within the sanctuary, enjoy feeding the antelope while also seeing Sambhar and Barking Deer.</p> <p>Return to the hotel in the evening.</p> <p>Overnight stay at Le Meridien Thimphu.</p>

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Day 2	Thimphu	Le Meridien Thimphu	<p>Welcome to your first sunrise in glorious Thimphu.</p> <p>Awaken to a gorgeous vista of picturesque mountains covered in ever-green fir trees. Enjoy a sumptuous buffet spread while dining at the al-fresco of Latest Recipe. Take in the crisp, cool breeze as you sip on our unique "eye-opener", a refreshing morning drink to jump start your day.</p> <p>After a hearty breakfast, drive to Tango-Cheri Monastery base, a 13th century monastery complex, widely considered to be one of the most reputed schools for Buddhist learning. Nestled deep in the hills of Thimphu, it is also the summer capital for the monastic body in Bhutan. The base of the monastery complex meanders along the crisp, clean waters of the Thimphu Chu, the great river of Thimphu. If preferred take an hour hike to the Cheri Monastery (the residential complex of Tango-Cheri), and visit the monks and their historic temple.</p> <p>Drive back to the hotel for lunch, or, should you prefer, carry a packed lunch and enjoy a beautiful afternoon picnic at Tango-Cheri Monastery.</p> <p>To conclude your tour of Thimphu, drive back to the city and view the Tashichhoe Dzong, also popularly known as the Thimphu Dzong. The fortress is the seat of the royal government and is the center of all religious affairs for the Kingdom. It also houses the office of His Majesty, King Jigme Khesar Namgyal Wangchuck.</p> <p>After the trip, take a leisurely stroll around the town's commercial district, Norzim Lam, or enjoy a relaxing dip in our indoor heated pool, or an exclusive spa treatment at the Explore Spa.</p> <p>Overnight stay at Le Meridien Thimphu</p>
Day 3	Punakha	Dhensa Resort (or comparable hotel)	<p>Today's itinerary takes you to the lower lying district of Punakha – the rice belt district for the country.</p> <p>An early-check out is recommended, as there is quite a distance to cover.</p> <p>After a fond farewell from Le Meridien Thimphu, start today's tour with a drive to Dochula pass, one of the highest and most important traversable passes in Bhutan at 3200 meters above sea level, offering a stunning 360 degree panoramic view of the Himalayan mountain range. Watch the snowcapped mountains form a majestic backdrop to the tranquility of the 108 chortens (Buddhist stupa) gracing the mountain pass.</p>

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			<p>Continuing with your drive to Punakha, visit the legendary fertility temple, Chimi Lhakhang – a 14th century monastery dedicated to the Divine Madman, Drukpa Kuenley – the primary saint of Bhutan. The monastery is a popular tourist attraction, especially with couples looking to start a family.</p> <p>After that, drive down to Punakha Dzong, considered by many to be the most beautiful fortress in all of Bhutan, located on the confluence of two rivers – the Mo Chu and Po Chu rivers. The Winter Palace for the monastic body of Bhutan, the Punakha Dzong is also a living museum, housing many sacred scriptures and writings.</p> <p>Should you prefer, carry a packed lunch, and enjoy a relaxing hour at the banks of the river, or snack at a nearby restaurant and savor the delicate flavors of the local dumplings (or momos).</p> <p>Time permitting, head out to the scenic Khamsum Yulley Namgyal chorten, a picturesque Buddhist stupa located on a ridge overlooking the entire Punakha valley. The chorten was built by the mother of the current king of Bhutan to provide good karma and blessings to the surrounding valley. A half an hour's trek, the chorten is also a fine example of Bhutanese architecture, with colorful mosaics and motifs all over the columns of the chorten, in stark contrast to the white walls of the inner sanctum.</p> <p>After a long days' worth of sight-seeing, check in to your accommodation in Punakha, the Dhensa Resort (or a comparable hotel).</p> <p>Overnight stay at the Dhensa Resort.</p>
Day 4	Paro	Le Meridien Paro, Riverfront (or comparable hotel)	<p>Your journey around the country now takes you to the Emerald Valley of Paro, the rice bowl of Bhutan. An early check-out is recommended, as there is quite a long drive to Paro.</p> <p>After a fond farewell from the Dhensa Resort (or a comparable hotel), start your drive down to Paro. Along the way, stop at Tamchoe Lhakhang, a beautiful monastery located along the Thimphu-Paro highway. Savor the moment with a couple of pictures, as the picturesque Paro Chu river ebbs along the banks of the monastery grounds.</p> <p>After the monastery, continue your tour with a visit to the Rinpung Dzong, the great fortress of Paro. Built in the 16th century, the Dzong (or fortress) houses the monastic body as well as the administrative head of the district. A perfect example of Bhutanese architecture, the Dzong is also the venue for the famous Paro</p>

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			<p>Tsechu held every year.</p> <p>You may also like to visit the Ta Dzong, located on a hill above the Rinpung Dzong. Home to the National Museum of Bhutan, the Ta Dzong houses a treasure trove of Bhutanese artifacts and handicrafts, offering guests a glimpse into Bhutan's rich cultural heritage.</p> <p>Later on, stopover in town for lunch – enjoy the local cuisine and freshly steamed momos, as you savor the flavors and taste of organically grown vegetables and staples.</p> <p>After lunch, head over to Drugyel Dzong, a beautiful 16th century abandoned fortress located in the outskirts of the district. Though destroyed by a fire more than half a century ago, the fortress still stands as a testament to Bhutanese architectural prowess. The worn out walls now reveal the fortresses original stone color, offering a beautiful contrast to the green of the farms surrounding it. On a clear day, the fortress also offers fantastic views of the famous Mt. Jomolhari, popularly known as the "Bride of Kangchenjunga".</p> <p>Enjoy the stunning scenery as you traverse around the area - take a leisurely walk around the surrounding village, sip on some hot milk tea, or simply enjoy the countryside, as life slowly moves on.</p> <p>Later in the evening, check-in to your new hotel, Le Meridien Paro, Riverfront (or a comparable hotel). Enjoy a lazy dip at the hotel's private indoor-heated pool, or a relaxing spa treatment at the hotel's spa.</p> <p>Dinner and overnight stay at Le Meridien Paro, Riverfront (or at a comparable hotel).</p>
Day 5	Paro	Le Meridien Paro, Riverfront (or comparable hotel)	<p>The climactic end to an immersive week in the "Land of the Thunder Dragon", today's itinerary will cover the iconic Paro Taktsang, or Tiger's Nest, an 8th century monastery mentioned in many leading travel magazines as one of the "Top-40 places to visit in the World". An early start is advised, as there is a lot to do.</p> <p>After a wholesome breakfast, start your tour with a drive to Kichu Lhakhang, the oldest monastery in the country located on the way to Paro Taktsang. A 7th century shrine, the Lhakhang is a complex consisting of two temples - one built in the 7th century by the then Tibetan King Songtsen Gampo, and the other built in 1968 by Her Majesty, Ashi Kesang</p> <p>After the monastery, head over to Taktsang base. Get ready for the trek as you begin your walk on a pathway almost eleven centuries old, steeped with history. Revel in the hardships of the trail, for it makes</p>

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		<p>reaching the destination all the more sweet. As you journey up the trekking path, enjoy stunning views of the entire Paro valley. Upon reaching the monastery, you will be required to keep your phones in a secure locker; take as many pictures as you can before that.</p> <p>The monastery complex is divided into four main temples. While it does take some time, it is said that visiting all four temples confers good blessings and karma. At the topmost temple, visit the original cave where the great saint, Guru Padmasambhava is said to have meditated back in the 8th century.</p> <p>After the hike, head back to the hotel. Enjoy a relaxing foot massage, or a much recommended full body spa treatment at the hotel's spa.</p> <p>Dinner and overnight stay at Le Meridien Paro, Riverfront (or at a comparable hotel).</p>
Day 6	Paro	<p>Departure to Paro Airport.</p> <p>We hope you've had a memorable time in Bhutan, and have taken back a photo gallery chockfull of great memories and wonderful experiences.</p> <p>Safe journeys ahead and Tashi Delek.</p>

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Package Price:

ROOM CATEGORY	LEAN SEASON			PEAK SEASON		
	Single	Double	Triple	Single	Double	Triple
Classic Room	\$ 2,100	\$ 3,050	\$ 4,100	\$ 2,350	\$ 3,300	\$ 4,350
Deluxe Room	\$ 2,350	\$ 3,300	\$ 4,350	\$ 2,600	\$ 3,550	\$ 4,600
Junior Suite	\$ 2,850	\$ 3,800	\$ 4,850	\$ 3,100	\$ 4,050	\$ 5,100
Royal Suite	\$ 3,475	\$ 4,425	\$ 5,475	\$ 3,725	\$ 4,675	\$ 5,725

Notes:

- Package rates are applicable to guests who are required to pay the mandatory tourist tariff charge (prices are inclusive of this charge)
- Room categories mentioned in the above table are based on those offered at Le Meridien Thimphu - comparable room categories will be allotted at other hotels included in the tour The official names of the room categories offered at other hotels may not match the names of the room categories offered at Le Meridien Thimphu - kindly contact the reservations team to know more
- All rates are quoted in US Dollars – applicable currency conversion rate of the day will apply if reservations are made in another currency
- An additional USD 50 + taxes per night will be levied as a supplement charge, if the reservation falls on key Tsechu dates provided below :
 - **Punakha Tsechu** : 15th February 2016 to 21st February 2016
 - **Paro Tsechu** : 18th March to 26th March 2016
 - **Thimphu Tsechu** : 9th October to 15th October 2016
- Tsechu dates are subject to change, depending upon the decisions made by the Monastic Body of Bhutan
- An additional USD 40 + taxes per person will be levied as a supplement charge for gala dinner events such as Christmas and New Year
- An additional 10% Bhutan Sales Tax and 10% Service charge will be levied on the above mentioned rates
- Taxes are subject to change without prior intimation
- Package prices are subject to change without prior intimation, with seasons defined as under – kindly contact the hotel's reservation team in order to reconfirm the package price for your selected date :
 - **Lean Season** : January, February, June, July, August, December
 - **Peak Season** : March, April, May, September, October, November

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Package Inclusions:

- Accommodation for 02 nights at Le Meridien Thimphu
- Accommodation for 02 nights at Le Meridien Paro, Riverfront (or at a comparable hotel)
- Accommodation for 01 night at Dhensa Resort in Punakha (or at a comparable hotel)
- Buffet Breakfast included at the hotels' respective all-day dining venue
- Buffet or Set Dinner included at the hotels' respective all-day dining venue
- Complimentary wireless internet at all included hotels
- Complimentary access to the fitness center, including steam and sauna rooms at the respective hotels
- Complimentary access to the swimming pool at Le Meridien Thimphu and Le Meridien Paro, Riverfront
- Privately guided excursions around the iconic dzongkhags (or districts) of Thimphu, Paro, and Punakha
- A private, experienced English-speaking Bhutanese guide
- Private airport transfers and transport around Bhutan with an English speaking Bhutanese chauffeur
- Tourist tariff charges mandated by the laws of the Tourism Council of Bhutan
- All Bhutanese government visa and royalty fees, service charge, and sales tax
- All museum and visitor center entry fees and road permits

Please Note:

The itinerary provided is intended to serve as a guide only. Routes and weather conditions may cause disruptions or variations within the tour; this may affect the availability of views and panoramas described, and/or cause certain trips within the itinerary to be cancelled or postponed.

Complimentary drinking water will be provided for all guided itineraries booked directly with the hotel. Should you have any special requirements or dietary restrictions, do let us know in advance, and we will do our best to accommodate your requests.

Travel Insurance:

It is strongly recommend that you take out travel insurance against medical and personal accident risks (including repatriation costs, air ambulance and helicopter rescue services), as well as cancellation insurance. Kindly be aware that some policies offered may not cover travel to Bhutan and may not cover certain activities such as trekking, mountain biking, and rafting.

Please ensure that your policy provides a sufficient level of protection that covers you for the activities involved in this package.

You would also be required to carry your proof of insurance (e.g. your insurance certificate) with you in Bhutan.

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Travel Arrangements:

The hotel will handle the entire booking process on your behalf, including arrangements of flights via Druk Air or Bhutan Airlines, if requested for. However, kindly note that the price of flights is not included in the package rate quoted, and will be purchased at an additional charge. Moreover, it is advisable to book your flights well in advance, especially when wishing to visit the country during the peak months of March to May & September to November.

All visa application processing (included in the package) will be handled by the hotels for your convenience.

Visas normally takes 02 to 03 weeks to process, and only require a copy of your flight tickets (if already purchased) and passport details.

Terms and Conditions:

- This package is valid for stay at Le Meridien Thimphu, Le Meridien Paro, Riverfront (or at a comparable hotel in case of non-availability), and Dhensa Resort (or at a comparable hotel in case of non-availability)
- This package has a 30-day cancellation policy with a 50% retention charge if cancelled less than 30 days out from scheduled date of arrival
- SPG points can only be earned on Starwood and SPG affiliated hotels
- SPG points will be earned on room rate (excluding visa and tourist tariff charges), and will be credited to the SPG account holder after check-out
- SPG members can earn SPG points for up to 03 rooms (including their own), if all concerned rooms are paid for by the SPG account holder's credit card
- A limited number of rooms may be available at these rates
- Blackout dates and other restrictions may apply
- This package and its inclusions cannot be combined with other offers or promotions, and are subject to change without prior intimation
- Starwood reserves the right to discontinue this offer at any time

For further information, feel free to contact Le Meridien Thimphu reservations at +975 2 337788, or e-mail us at lemeridien.thimphu@lemeridien.com