



Jhomolhari Trek – 13 days/9 days trek

Tour JTT-BT01: Paro - Taktsang - Shana - Jangothang - Lingshi - Dolam Kencho - Thimpu - Guwahati



In this two-week program we visit the highlights of western Bhutan and make one of the most scenic treks in the Himalayas. The trek passes through beautiful villages, isolated hamlets, arcadian farmland and richly forested valleys to the high alpine yak meadows of the Himalayan Range. The highlight is camping at the base of Mt. Jhomolhari (7,329 m / 24,029 ft.), a beautifully glaciated Himalayan giant. On this trek you will see blue sheep and many birds, such as the majestic lammergeier, and if you're lucky the mysterious *takin* or even the elusive snow leopard.

Itinerary

Day 01: Arrival at Paro

Flying in to the country's only airport, in the beautiful Paro valley, the clear mountain air, forested ridges, imposing monasteries and welcoming Bhutanese people in their striking national dress, provides a breath-taking first impression.

Your guide who is going to be with you throughout your trip will meet you at the airport. visit the Ta-Dzong which was built in 1647 as a watch tower for the Rinpung Dzong. Since 1968, the watch tower has served as the home of the National Museum and holds a fascinating collection of art, ancient relics and religious artifacts. Next in line is Rinpung Dzong built in 1646 by Shabdrung, the first spiritual and temporal ruler of Bhutan, the

Dzong houses the monastic body of Paro and its district administration. If there is time, we will walk across the cantilever bridge and along the small main street of Paro in the evening with its typically Bhutanese shops and small lodges. Alt. at Paro 2250 m. Overnight in the hotel at Paro.

Day 2: Taktsang Hike

Today as the part of acclimatization trip, we will hike up to the famous 17th century temple called Taktsang or the Tigers nest perched on a rock face 900 meters above Paro valley. In 8th century, Guru Rinpoche; the great Indian saint who brought Buddhism to Bhutan, is believed to have arrived here flying on the



back of a tigress and have meditated here for about three months. It is revered as one of the most sacred places, every Bhutanese wish to visit this place at least once in their lifetime. To get there, it takes about two hours of uphill walk. The trail to the monastery climbs through beautiful pine forest, many of the trees festooned with Spanish moss, and an occasional grove of fluttering prayer flags. Visit Kyichu Lhakhang, the oldest temple in Bhutan which dates back to 7th century.

Overnight in the hotel at Paro.

Day 3: Paro – Shana 17km, 5-6 hours

The trek starts from Drukgyel Dzong (2,580m) with a short downhill walk on a wide trail. The trail then climbs gently through well-maintained rice terraces and fields of millet. Later on we come to apple orchards and forests. Soon the valley widens, and we reach the army post of Gunitsawa (2,810m). This is the last stop before Tibet. We continue upwards to just beyond Sharma Zampa (2,870m), where there are several good camping places in meadows surrounded by trees.

Day 4: Shana – Soi Thangthangka, 20km, 7-8 hours

The trail again follows the Pa Chu (Paro river), ascending and descending through pine, oak and spruce forests. After crossing a bridge to the left bank of the river, we stop for a hot lunch. Then we continue along the river, climbing upwards through rhododendron forests, and crossing the river once more before reaching our campsite (3,750m).

Day 5: Soi Thangthangkha – Jangothang, 19km, 7-8 hours

The path ascends for a while until we reach the army camp. We then follow the river above the tree line, enjoying stunning views of the surrounding peaks. Hot lunch is served at a yak herder's camp. A short walk from here into the valley takes us to our campsite at Jangothang (4,040 m). From here, the views of Chomolhari and Jichu Drake are superb.

Day 6: Halt at basecamp

The day in Jangothang provides plenty of possibilities for day hikes with great views on lakes and snow capped mountains such as Jhomolhari and Jichu Drake. There are good chances to spot some blue sheep on the upper slopes of the valley. Jangothang is a perfect environment for your acclimatization. Trek up to Tsophu or hike around the area. There are good short hiking trails in three directions. Jhomolhari and its subsidiary mountain chains lay directly west, Jichu Drake to the north and a number of unclimbed peaks to the east.

Day 7: Jangothang – Lingshi, 18km, 7-8 hours

The trail follows the stream for half an hour and crosses the bridge to the right bank. We now start our climb up to the first ridge, enjoying breathtaking views of Chomolhari, Jichu Drake and Tserimgang. The trail then takes us across a fairly level valley floor until the climb up to Nyele-la pass (4,700m). We descend gradually from the pass to our campsite at Lingshi (4,000m), enjoying a panoramic view of the mountain peaks and Lingshi Dzong as we walk.

Day 8: Lingshi – Shodu, 22km, 8-9 hours

The Laya-Gasa route leaves the Chomolhari trek route here. Our trail climbs up towards a small white chorten on a ridge above the camp, then turns south up the deep Mo Chu valley. The trail stays on the west side of this largely treeless valley, climbing steadily a short distance above the Mo Chu. It then crosses the river, and climbs steeply for two hours



to Yeli-la (4,820m). On a clear day you can see Chomolhari, Gangchenta, Tserimgang and Masagang from this pass. Descend alongside a stream to a rock shelter in the cliff face, and then continue on downstream till reaching Shodu (4,100m), where we will camp in a meadow with a chorten in it.

Day 9: Shodu – Barshong, 16km, 6-7 hours

We are now back at the tree line, and our path follows the course of the Thimphu Chu, descending through rhododendron, juniper and mixed alpine forests. There are stunning views of rocky cliff faces and waterfalls along the way. We stop at the riverside for a hot lunch. Then the trail takes us gradually upwards to the ruins of Barshong Dzong (3,600m), near which we camp for the night.

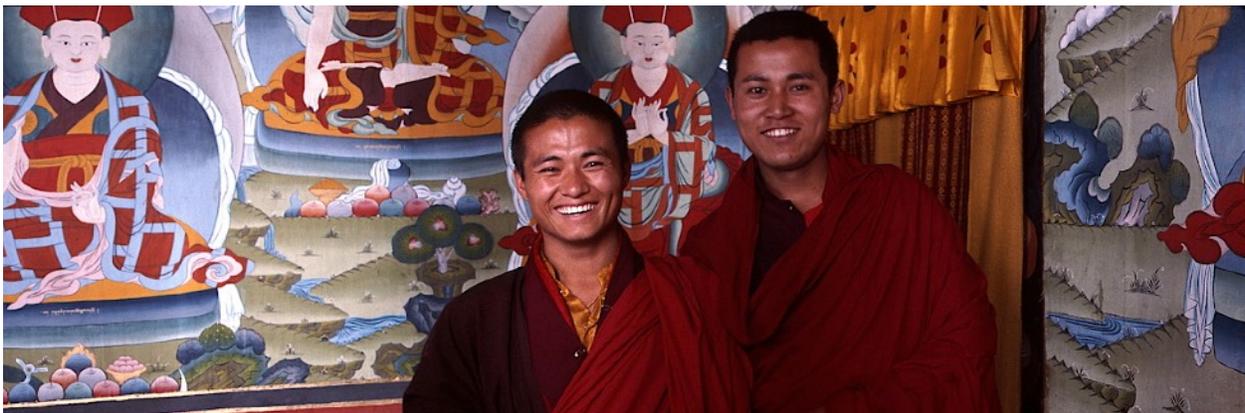
Day 10: Barshong – Dolam Kencho, 15km, 5-6 hours

The trail descends gently through a dense forest of rhododendron, birch and conifers, then drops steeply to meet the Thimphu Chu. The trail runs along the left bank of the river, climbing over ridges and descending into gullies where side streams run down into the river. The final stage of the trail climbs around a cliff face high above the Thimphu Chu, coming out onto pastureland where we camp for the night at 3,600m.

Day 11: Dolam Kencho – Dodena – Thimphu, 8km, 3 hours

The trail winds in and out of side valleys above the Thimphu Chu, making a long ascent through a forest of conifers and high altitude broadleaf species to a pass at 3,510m. The trail then drops steeply down to the river, following it southward to the road head at Dodena (2,600m). Our driver and car meet us here, and we drive to Thimphu. On the way we can make a short walk to visit the scenic Tango Gompa. Overnight at hotel in Thimphu.

Day 12: Thimphu - Halt



Today we'll do local sightseeing in Thimphu. We visit as time permits: the National Chorten (built as a memorial to Bhutan's Third King and as a monument to world peace); Changangkha Lhakhang which date back to 12th century. The Takin Reserve, (the National animal of Bhutan). Dupthob Goemba, where female practice Buddhism. The institute for Zorig Chusum, where students learn the 13 traditional arts and crafts of Bhutan; the National Institute of Traditional Medicine (only the museum) where herbal medicines are made up and dispensed and traditional medicine practitioners are trained; Folk Heritage Museum, is dedicated to connecting people to the Bhutanese rural past through exhibits of rural life; the National Library, which houses an extensive collection of Buddhist literature including many ancient Buddhist texts in Block-Printed format. In the afternoon visit Traditional Paper making Factory, National Weaving Centre.

Day 13: Thimpu - Paro/Phuentsoling

After breakfast we drive to Paro for boarding the flight to New Delhi/Bangkok or Guwahati. Or: we drive down to Phuentsoling on the border with India. In the afternoon, visit Zangtopelri temple in the town. Overnight at the hotel.



(Day 14: Exit to India)

In case you exit through Phuentsoling you will enter India from there on this day.

Price: USD 2640 in high season (April, May, Sept, Oct. & Nov) or USD 2120 in low season (June, July & Aug), all-inclusive. USD 40 surcharge per day for individual travelers, USD 30 per day for parties of two. Travel from and to India not included. Please ask for quotation.

Price

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