



Bhutan, Nepal, Tibet Himalayan Passages Hiking

15 Days



The Adventure Company | EST. 1969

MT+SOBEKTM

MOUNTAIN TRAVEL SOBEK

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS
AS THE PIONEER OF ADVENTURE TRAVEL

➤ Bhutan, Nepal, Tibet Himalayan Passages Hiking

Experiencing all three Himalayan kingdoms in one journey is a rare feat, but MT Sobek's 50 years of expertise in the Himalaya puts this odyssey within easy reach. Blending cultural discovery with moderate high altitude hiking, this exclusive itinerary goes deep into the heart of Bhutan, Nepal and Tibet — beautifully showcasing unspoiled Buddhist cultures. Along the way, discover Bhutan's rich traditions; explore Kathmandu's elaborate temples, stupas, and bazaars; and marvel at Tibet's remote monasteries and the holy city of Lhasa. This incredible line-up of each kingdom's must-see destinations can't be missed!

Details

Arrive: Bangkok, Thailand

Depart: Bangkok, Thailand

Duration: 15 Days

Group Size: 5-15 Guests

Minimum Age: 15 Years Old

Activity Level:



Testimonials

"This was the trip of a lifetime. While only a handful of days in each country, we felt like we were thoroughly immersed in each place thanks to the amazing guides."

Amelia B.

"The Himalayan Passages Journey was an experience of a lifetime! The trip was full of surprises, and unique activities you can only do with a local and experienced guide, like the one I had. I recommend this trip to everyone that can take the time to go. Thank you MTS for providing me with this opportunity. And thank you to my leader, you were fabulous!"

Debra H.

GOT QUESTIONS? SPEAK WITH AN EXPERT.

☎ 1-800-974-0300

✉ info@mtsobek.com

Why Take This Trip With Us?

REASON #01

MT Sobek is a legendary outfitter in the Himalayas, offering pioneering cultural and hiking adventures since 1969.

REASON #02

Our team of local guides are true experts, with over 20 years' experience in Bhutan, Nepal, and Tibet.

REASON #03

This itinerary seamlessly blends culture and activity in three Buddhist kingdoms.

What to Expect



ACTIVITIES

Cultural touring in Bhutan, Nepal, and Tibet with visits to shrines and temples, plus mountain hikes and scenic flights.



LODGING

Comfortable inns and luxurious hotels exuding warm hospitality, also includes two nights at Paro's Zhiwa Ling Hotel.



CLIMATE

Daytime temperatures range from low-50°Fs-low 80°Fs. Nighttime temperatures range from mid-30°Fs-mid-40°Fs.

Meet Our Guides

Our expert guides and trip leaders are truly the key to our trips' success. Many are locals who live in-country year-round; others have made it their second home—all are passionate, enthusiastic and endlessly knowledgeable. Meet two of the guides that might be on your trip.

Sanjay Nepal has been a trip leader in Nepal, India, Bhutan and Tibet since 1999, and is well-loved for his anecdotes, humor, and patience in the field. In addition to a MA in English Literature from Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu and an Executive MBA, Sanjay has deep knowledge of religion and culture on the sub-continent. He speaks Nepali, Hindi, Urdu, English, and French fluently and has traveled extensively to learn more about Buddhism, Hinduism, Palmistry, and Chinese Face Reading. Sanjay is also an accomplished writer and poet. Meet Sanjay on MT Sobek's popular adventures in Nepal.

Sanjay Nepal

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Itinerary

DAY 1

ARRIVE IN BANGKOK

Welcome to Bangkok! Transfer to the hotel via a free 24-hour shuttle bus.

DAY 2

ENTER THE KINGDOM OF BHUTAN

Board an early-morning flight to Paro, Bhutan. Vie for a seat on the left side of the plane: Weather permitting, you'll have spectacular views of the eastern Himalaya, including Cho Oyu and Everest, and Bhutan peaks such as Chomolhari and Jichu Drake. Meet your MTS trip leader at the Paro airport, drive into Thimphu for lunch. In the afternoon, visit the Memorial Chorten; Tashichho Dzong, seat of Bhutan's administrative and religious center; the Traditional Hospital of Herbal Medicine; and a traditional arts school.

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 3

HIKE TO CHERI MONASTERY

After breakfast, drive to Thimphu and then to our trailhead where we set out on our hike: a steep, hour-long climb to Cheri Goemba, constructed in the 17th century. The monastery houses the relic stupas (ashes of the father of Shabdrung, the founder of Bhutan) and is also considered one of the earliest monasteries of Bhutan. We have lunch, then drive back to Thimphu and up to Wangdi Tse for a peaceful one hour loop hike where we can enjoy wonderful views of Thimphu, but see few others on the trail. Return to Thimphu for dinner and overnight.

Activity: 3-4 hours/4 miles hiking

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 4

DOCHU LA, PRAYER FLAGS & PUNAKHA

In the morning, drive across Dochu La (10,000') where, weather permitting, you behold the snow-covered peaks of the eastern Himalaya. The pass, marked by hundreds of colorful fluttering prayer flags, is truly an awesome sight! From here you continue to Punakha, winter seat of the highest lama in Bhutan until the 1950s. Visit the ancient Punakha Dzong (a fortified building for administrative and monastic institutions) dating back to the 17th century, which is spectacularly situated at the confluence of the Mo and Phu Rivers.

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 5

EXPLORE PARO

Drive to Paro this morning, and in the afternoon visit the National Museum, housed in an old watchtower above the Paro Dzong. The museum's collections include spectacular thangkas (religious scroll paintings), bronze statues, Bhutan's beautiful stamps, and the Tshogshing Lhakhang ("Temple of the Tree of Wisdom"), with its carvings depicting the history of Buddhism. Time permitting, we will also visit the Paro Dzong, built in 1644 by the Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal.

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 6

HIKE TO TAKTSANG MONASTERY

Today it's a steep hike to a traditional teahouse for a great view of Taktsang Monastery, perched on a cliff 2,700 feet above the Paro Valley floor. Taktsang, meaning "tiger's nest," is Bhutan's most spiritual place and a major pilgrimage spot. Partly destroyed by fire in 1998, Taktsang has been completely rebuilt. After a tea break, you can sit outside and admire the monastery and its beautiful surroundings or, if you feel energetic, continue another hour to a closer viewpoint. Enjoy free afternoon time to explore Paro on your own.

Activity: 5 hours/2.6 miles hiking with 1,707' elevation gain & loss

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 7

FLY TO KATHMANDU

Enjoy breakfast and transfer to the airport for your flight to Kathmandu (4,500'). Settle in for lunch at the hotel before an afternoon of cultural exploration in the city. Marvel at the remarkable Buddhist stupa at Bodhnath — the largest in Asia and the center of the Tibetan Buddhist culture in Kathmandu.

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 8

EXPLORE THE WONDERS OF KATHMANDU

Experience the rich cultural heritage of the Kathmandu Valley as you visit the Swayambhunath Stupa, Kathmandu Durbar (Palace) Square, and the ancient fortified city of Patan. Patan is best-known for its Royal Palace Museum and Himalayan healing bowls, which have been used across the region for meditative and medicinal purposes for 2,500 years. View the bowls (or even buy your own) before enjoying lunch at the museum cafe.

Activity: 6-8 hours of cultural sightseeing

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 9

HIKE FROM NAGARKOT TO TELKOT

Rise early for a drive to Nagarkot, from where you'll enjoy a 2-hour hike to Telkot. Pass traditional Tamang villages and take in views of the eastern Himalayan ranges en route (weather permitting). Transfer to the ancient town of Bhaktapur for lunch and witness an enchanting display of medieval Nepalese town life. A highlight is Durbar Square, with its many temples, remains of an ancient palace, and intricate Sun Dhoka ("Golden Gate"), a gilded copper gate crafted in 1753. Next, visit Hindu shrines and ghats at Pashupatinath on the Bagmati River before returning to the hotel.

Activity: 1.5 hours/2-3 miles hiking & cultural sightseeing

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 10

FLY TO THE ROOF OF THE WORLD

Another flight this morning — this time reminiscent of the famed novel *Lost Horizons*, as you admire the incredible Himalayan views en route to Gonggar Airport, about 75 miles from Lhasa. After arrival in Tibet, drive 48 miles to Tsedang (11,152') in the Yarlung Valley, which sheltered the ancient kingdom of Yarlung, the cradle of Tibetan civilization. Tsedang is the capital of this modern administrative region, and together with the adjacent town of Nedong, they serve as a green oasis in the middle of the high-altitude desert.

Meals: B

DAY 11

EXPERIENCE SAMYE MONASTERY

No journey to Tibet is complete without a visit to Samye Monastery, Tibet's first monastery (around 775 AD) and the birthplace of Buddhism. Needless to say, it's a holy place of major historical and religious significance. Today is entirely dedicated to experiencing Samye, about a 1.5-hour drive west of Tsedang. Founded as a school to train monks, Samye has the unusual honor of affiliation with all three sects of Tibetan Buddhism. After touring the extensive buildings, chapels, murals, statues, relics, and prayer wheels, we will drive to Lhasa.

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 12

ABSORB THE SIGHTS OF LHASA

The holy city of Lhasa deserves at least the three days this trip dedicates to it. Its major sights are yours for the exploring, from the imposing Potala Palace to the age-worn streets of the Barkhor bazaar, where you mingle with pilgrims, monks, traders, and nomads. The itinerary of your time in Lhasa varies, but you are certain to see the

Tibetan old town and take excursions to key highlights such as the seventh-century Jokhang, the principal and holiest Buddhist temple in Lhasa and all of Tibet.

Activity: 6-8 hours cultural city touring

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 13

VISIT THE POTALA PALACE & GELUGPA MONASTERY

Other Lhasa sights you visit include the 13-story Potala Palace, reputed to contain 1,000 rooms and countless brilliant thangkas, frescoes, and images. One of the world's most extraordinary buildings, it completely covers the mountain it stands upon. Just north of Lhasa stands Sera, a Gelugpa monastery founded in 1419. Its white buildings sit at the base of a rocky hill, and gilded, bell-shaped gyamtschens grace the roofs of many of the larger structures. And tour the architecturally unique UNESCO-listed Norbulingka Summer Palace, from which the 14th Dalai Lama fled Tibet.

Activity: 6-8 hours cultural city touring

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 14

LAST DAY IN LHASA

If you haven't seen it already, today head to Ganden Monastery, about 25 miles outside of Lhasa. Ganden was almost completely destroyed during the Cultural Revolution but is now being painstakingly restored. Founded in 1409, it was the first Gelugpa monastery and is still considered the main seat of this major Buddhist order (the Dalai Lama's sect). The views here are spectacular! Walk the two-hour kora, light juniper, hang prayer flags, and have stunning views of the whole Kyichu Valley. At the end of each day, time permitting, explore Lhasa on your own — or rest.

Activity: 6-8 hours cultural touring

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 15

DEPART LHASA FOR BANGKOK

Bid farewell to Tibet and transfer to the airport for your direct flight to Chengdu. Upon arrival in Chengdu, catch your connecting flight to Bangkok.

Meals: B

Dates

May 4 - 18, 2023

Oct 5 - 19, 2023

Nov 2 - 16, 2023

Apr 4 - 18, 2024

May 2 - 16, 2024

Oct 3 - 17, 2024

Nov 7 - 21, 2024

For full terms and conditions please visit www.mtsobek.com/terms. Please note that our itineraries may be subject to change.

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Inclusions & Exclusions

PRICE INCLUDES

- Expertise and services of our experienced adventure guides
- All accommodations as noted in the itinerary
- All breakfasts, almost all lunches and dinners as noted in the itinerary
- Snacks and water between meals
- Additional regional guides and experts on many trips
- Comprehensive Trip Planner with detailed pre-trip information
- Private guided tours at historic sites, museums, wineries and other select attractions as noted in the itinerary
- Special events and other select attractions as mentioned in the itinerary
- All gratuities at hotels and restaurants
- Equipment and experienced guides for activities as described in the itinerary
- Park and other entry fees (unless otherwise noted)
- Fares for trains, ferries and other modes of travel as listed in the itinerary
- Select transfers as mentioned in the itinerary
- Baggage transfers and portorage

PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE

- International airfare, airport taxes, and excess baggage fees
- Alcoholic beverages (MT Sobek provides wine at select events)
- Gratuities for MT Sobek guides and guide-drivers
- Travel Protection Program
- Personal expenses

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➤ **The World of MT Sobek**

At Mountain Travel Sobek, we believe life is an adventure and adventure is life.

As the originators, innovators and leaders in adventure travel for more than five decades, we passionately create, craft and share indelible, transformative journeys to the world's most memorable places. Our more than 200 unique and once-in-a-lifetime trips are designed to inspire and exhilarate, enliven and excite--opening eyes and minds through profoundly personal connections with nature and culture.

Our small group and custom adventures span the globe, and the spectrum—of interests, environments and activities—every one expertly planned and knowledgeably and passionately guided. And our commitment to making every experience a remarkable one has earned us preferred travel outfitter status for National Geographic Active Expeditions, Active New York Times Journeys, and Smithsonian Active Journeys.

We are *the* adventure company.

Awards



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