

# BHUTAN TRIP NOTES

The remote kingdom of Bhutan is one of the few remaining places in the world still shrouded in mysticism. Also known as Druk Yul, or the 'Land of the Peaceful Dragon', a visitor will find a rare combination of harmony and accord, amidst a landscape of incredible natural beauty. Fiercely independent, it has managed to remain largely untouched by the influences of the modern world and its powerful neighbours, India and China.

A deep-rooted belief in Buddhism and adherence to the traditional way of life lie at the very heart of Bhutanese society. Its people are proud to wear national dress in public and the country's development is measured not in economic terms, but by 'Gross National Happiness'.

## TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

US citizens can apply for an E-visa prior to departure at this link

<https://www.eta.gov.lk/slvisa/visainfo/center.jsp> Current cost is \$40, subject to change.

## MEDICATIONS & INNOCULATIONS

There are no require shots or medications for travelers arriving from the US into Bhutan.

## CURRENCY

Bhutanese currency is Ngultrum (Nu.) which is pegged to the Indian Rupee. Visitors can also use US dollars - low denomination USD to cover any small daily purchases and higher denomination USD for exchanging into Nu at local banks and also for guide/driver tips at the end of the journey.

## CREDIT CARDS

Only American Express card and Visa Cards are acceptable in Bhutan, in very limited service establishments.

A convenient currency converter can be found at <http://www.xe.com/currencyconverter/>



## **TIME DIFFERENCE**

Bhutan is 11 hours ahead of US Eastern Standard Time and 14 hours ahead of US Pacific Standard Time.

## **SHOPPING**

Items that are most frequently purchased by travelers to Bhutan include postage stamps, lovely hand-woven fabrics, carved masks, woven baskets, thangkhas, wooden bowls, handmade paper and finely-crafted metal objects. In Bhutan, the buying and / or selling of antiques is strictly forbidden.

## **ELECTRICITY**

In Bhutan, electricity runs 220 / 240 volts.

For more information on plugs and voltage, please visit

<http://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets/>

## **LANGUAGE**

Bhutan's official language is Dzongkha, but 18 other languages including Nepali are spoken. English is the medium of instruction in schools and is widely spoken.

## **CLIMATE**

Winter in Bhutan is from mid November to early March and at this time of the year, climate is dry and sunny for the most parts with perfect blue sky, temperatures peaking at around 15c in the daytime and falling below zero at night.

Monsoon in Bhutan is usually from mid-June to September with heavy rains almost every night; in the day there may be long periods without rain. Low clouds hang on the hills, obscuring the views.

## **TIPPING GUIDELINES**

Tipping is not compulsory for tour, nor there is any fixed amount for this. Nevertheless the bottom line in determining whether and how much to tip is to ask yourself how much the individual contributed to make your travels more enjoyable.

## **ETIQUETTE**

Avoid touching anyone of the opposite sex.

Affection is not shown in public.

Use your right hand to eat, pass things and touch people. Do not pass objects with your left hand.

Do not move objects with your feet or point at another person with your foot.

Giving a slight bow when leaving, entering or passing by people means, "excuse me."

This information is provided by Asia Answers as a guideline to the country you will be visiting, and is up to date to the best of our knowledge.