

SPICE ROADS





CYCLING



BHUTAN HERITAGE BY BICYCLE

Tour Code
BTN-BUH

7 DAYS
6 NIGHTS

	Destinations	Bhutan
	Tour Meets Tour Ends	Paro Paro
	Fly in to Fly out of	Paro International Airport (PBH) Paro International Airport (PBH)
	Group Size Minimum Age	1-16 riders 14 (on scheduled departures)

ACTIVITY PROFILE



4 Cycling days	190 ^{km} Total cycling distance
48 ^{km} Avg distance / day	1242 ^m Avg climbing / day

PRICING



Price	US\$ 2,450
Bike Hire (Mountain Bike)	Included
Bike Hire (E-Bike)	US\$ 420
Single Supplement	US\$ 260

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ SpiceRoads jersey
- ✓ Water bottle
- ✓ Visa fees
- ✓ Support vehicle
- ✓ Guide(s)
- ✓ Meals (as indicated)
- ✓ Airport pick up
- ✓ Airport drop off
- ✓ Accommodation
- ✓ Snacks and drinks

WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- ✗ International flights
- ✗ Domestic flights
- ✗ Alcohol
- ✗ Tips

DEPARTURES



16 March - 22 March 2020
13 April - 19 April 2020
19 May - 25 May 2020
15 September - 21 September 2020
19 October - 25 October 2020
16 November - 22 November 2020
03 May - 09 May 2021
31 May - 06 June 2021
20 September - 26 September 2021
25 October - 31 October 2021

TRIP PROFILE

This bike tour is a true classic with Himalayan mountain passes, sweeping descents, magnificent views, clean air, abundant culture and history in one of the most secluded countries in the world. We ride 190 km in 3 full and 1 half days of riding. The riding varies between some easier shorter days and one challenging hill climb to the top of a pass.

The accommodations are generally 3-star hotels with traditional amenities. We have attempted to keep the tour as authentic as possible and have tried to use local small accommodation wherever possible. Regardless of the location, every day you can be assured to get a comfortable room and a good night's sleep.

Biking Conditions: This tour is primarily on paved roads with very little traffic. The tour goes over one mountainous pass as well as valley flat-lands. There are a few challenging climbs as well as some fast, sweeping descents. Any portion of the ride can be skipped by utilizing our support vehicle.

Suitability: Cyclists should be in relatively good overall physical shape with at least a moderate degree of cycling experience. Being physically fit will of course be a huge asset, but, as the tour is fully supported, the van is always close at hand if needed.



Day 1 Arrive in Paro

Arrive in Paro where you will be picked up from the airport. We check into the hotel, and, in the afternoon, we'll visit Paro Museum, which features local art, textiles, artifacts, and sculptures. We'll also visit one of the major Dzongs located in Paro. In the evening, we'll have a welcome dinner prepared in traditional Bhutanese style.



Gangtey Palace



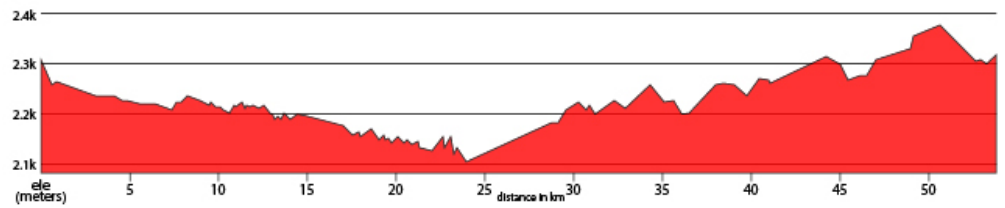
Lunch, Dinner

Day 2 Thimphu - Dodina Loop

There is a short morning transfer to Thimphu (approx 2 hrs), and then the rest of the morning will be spent visiting museums and the National Institute for Zorig Chusum (an arts and crafts school). In the afternoon, we ride to Dodina past small villages, farmlands, and dense forests. The end of the road in Dodina features two monasteries set back high amongst the mountains. The return is a

gradual downhill to Thimphu. Later in the evening, you can explore the town well known for its handicraft shops.

 Jhumolhari Hotel  Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

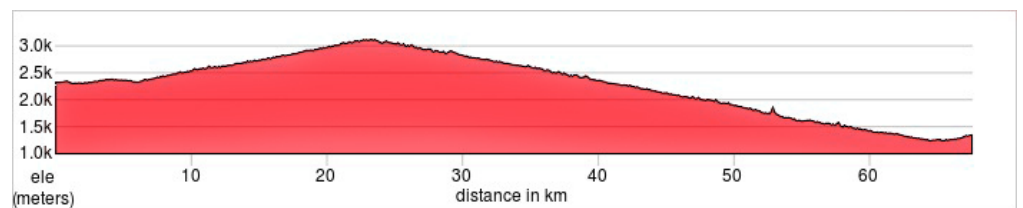


 Ride 54km  +844m  -833m

Day 3 Thimphu - Punakha

Today will be a major hill challenge, as we have a 5 km warm up before we start climbing for the next 18 km to the pass at Dochula, which is known for its spiritual energy and 108 Chortens that are atop the pass. Lunch at Dochula Café is the perfect place to take in the expansive views of the deep valleys and eastern Himalayas. After lunch, as we descend down the pass, we move from oak, maple, and blue pine forests into rhododendron, hemlock, and fir vegetation, and along with many monasteries that come into view to make this a downhill ride to remember.

 Meri Pinsum Resort  Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

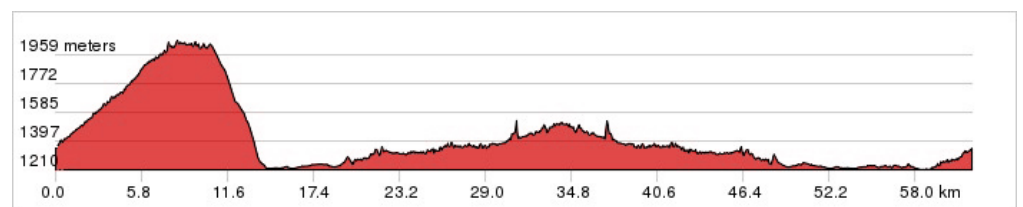


 Ride 68km  +843m  -1750m

Day 4 Punakha - Tashithang Loop

Today is an enjoyable out and back ride with the outward leg being a gradual climb to Tashithang. We pass through lush forests famous for their rhododendron trees, which, if they are in bloom, make for magnificent views. This area is also well known for its bird life and wild orchids.

 Meri Pinsum Resort  Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



 Ride 62km  +1781m  -1792m

Day 5 Punakha Valley

The ride is more leisurely as we take time to explore the beautiful and lush valley that surrounds Punakha. We will visit Punakha Dzong, one of the most impressive Dzongs in Bhutan which was built in 1638 and is all the more remarkable as it was constructed without the use of drawings or a single nail! The other major visit today will be to Chimi Lhakhang. Built in 1499, it is also known

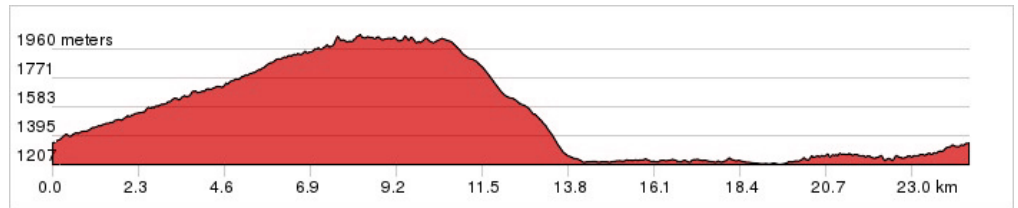
as the temple of the "Devine Madman" (Lama Drukpa Kunley) and of the disciple of one of the five great tertons (treasure discoverer), Pema Lingpa. This temple is also noted for its blessing of women who wish to bear children.



Meri Pinsum Resort



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 25km



+958m



-969m

Day 6 Punakha - Paro

We leave Punakha early for the drive back to Paro. It will take about 4-6 hours depending on road construction, but we will ensure that there's time to visit the Tiger's Nest (Taksang Monastery), a highlight of the tour. Perched on a cliff, it's a hike to reach and, before reaching it, one must cross a bridge that fords a large waterfall that drops 60 m (200 ft) into a sacred pool, not easy for those with a fear of heights. First built in 1692, this monastery is sacred to Buddhists all over the world.



Gangtey Palace



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7 Airport for Onward Travel

The tour concludes as we transfer you to the airport for your travels onward.



Breakfast

Disclaimer: The adventure cycling tours we operate often go beyond the beaten track, and the countries where we ride are not always predictable. Due to these reasons, it is occasionally necessary to reroute or update itineraries. Our guarantee is that we will not change a trip unless for safety or to improve it. Our listed hotels are always accurate at the time of writing, but should we have to change any hotel, it will always be for a similar or better one.

NUTS & BOLTS

Bikes

Bikes are included for this tour and are well-known makes of hybrid or mountain bikes (depending on the tour) with lightweight alloy frames, 24- to 27-speed gearing, v-brakes, and Shimano components and front suspension.

Bike Repairs

Basic spares and tools are carried by the guide and on the support vehicle, though we cannot guarantee having spares for every conceivable problem. Carrying a basic tool kit, a spare tube and a pump while riding is recommended.

Safety

Wearing a helmet is required on all our biking adventures and is non negotiable. If you do not wear a helmet you will not be allowed to cycle. Your tour leader is trained in first aid and emergency rescue, but to a large degree you must be responsible for your own safety while riding. It is therefore compulsory that you take out travel insurance that will cover you for a mountain biking tour.

Guides

You will be led by a local English-speaking guide and if the group is 9 people or more we will add another guide to the tour. All our guides are well informed in the history, culture and religions of the area where you are biking and are skilled at passing that knowledge on to you. Your guide is also medically trained and an experienced cyclist, able to handle most minor repairs en route.

THE NITTY GRITTY

Passports and Visas

Contrary to just about the rest of the world, Bhutan does not issue visas before you arrive through their embassies or consulates. The only way to get a visa is on arrival to the country, however, you must submit an application form through a tour operator for approval before arriving.

SpiceRoads will submit your application for approval. This takes a minimum of 1 week. Please contact us for more information.

Health

We recommend that you visit a travel medical doctor and ask about the following vaccinations: typhoid, polio, tetanus and hepatitis A. As there are some high altitude passes you may consider bringing Diamox – but please consult a physician first.

Weather

An umbrella, or light rain gear, should never be too far when traveling in Bhutan. During any month of the year it could, and will, rain. There are two optimal times of the year to travel in Bhutan. The months of March/April offers a period of warmer temperatures and bright skies. During August/-October is even more popular because of the cooler temperature and cloudless and crisp skies. Bhutan has a fairly mild climate year-round.

Accommodation

The hotels listed are our first choice and where we hope you will stay, however, during festivals or other major events there is a chance we will have to substitute another hotel.

Food

Meals are included as per the itinerary where B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner. Meals are a mixture of Bhutanese and western cuisine, with the local food being mainly rice with vegetables with chili being used as a vegetable, not a flavoring – so beware! Local cheese is also popular and also quite tasty. Lunch will tend to vary between a packed lunch and some hot meals when local restaurants are available. Any special dietary requirements can also be catered for as well. Please let us know at the time of booking.

Drink

Keeping you completely hydrated is a job we take very seriously. Cold water, some energy-restoring local fruit and soft drinks are included in the tour price while riding. Soft drinks and other beverages during meals are not included. Beer is freely available everywhere, but is NOT included in the price.

Solo Travelers

SpiceRoads does not require you to pay a surcharge for travelling alone. We will arrange for you to share accommodation with another traveller of the same gender and if we can not match you up we will provide a single room at no extra charge. If you prefer not to share a single supplement is payable to guarantee your own room. The cost of the single supplement is listed above.

Extra Expenses

We recommend that you tuck away a few extra dollars, perhaps US\$20 a day, for incidentals.

Money

The Bhutanese currency is the ngultrum and is pegged to the Indian rupee. As the rupee and ngultrum are traded at par, rupees are generally accepted in Bhutan and may be occasionally given as change. Bhutan is a cash economy. Don't count on using your Visa and Mastercard, but there is an America Express office in the capital, and Amex is accepted in a few rare instances. Your best option is to change dollars or euros into ngultrums at the airport as the exchange rate is the same as in the banks in town. You can also change your money at the hotels in Thimphu, but the rate is not as good. You'll mainly need money for handicraft souvenirs and drinks as everything else is included in the tour.

GENERAL BOOKING INFO

Booking

If this is the tour for you here's what you need to do to confirm your place: Read our [Booking Conditions](#)

From the tour page click the 'Book Now' link. All departures for this tour will appear, just select the date you'd like to travel. There is a minimum number of participants (usually 2) required to enable the trip to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to Depart'. Once a trip is guaranteed to depart you are free to book your flights and make other travel arrangements. If you are unsure about the trip status, please [email us](#) or call our office. For the next steps you'll need to know the names of the people traveling and have either a Visa or a MasterCard. If you wish you can also provide extra details such as passport numbers, height, or you can add that later by logging into [Manage My Trip](#) (we'll set up an account for you automatically if you don't already have one). However, if you wish to get a children's discount, please do fill out the date of birth of the riders. If you are having any problems, [please send us an email](#), or give us a call (+66 2 381 7490) and one of our travel specialists will assist you with your booking.

Deposit

When booking your tour, you'll be required to pay a deposit to guarantee your place. For tours priced US\$ 2,000 and lower, the deposit amount is US\$ 200 per tour, per rider. For tours priced US\$ 2,001 and above, the deposit amount is US\$ 500 per tour, per rider. For tours priced US\$ 500 and below, full payment is required upon booking.

Read more about booking and paying for your trip [here](#).

All SpiceRoads trips require proof of travel insurance when booking your holiday. Besides covering you during your trip, travel insurance will also enable you to claim any fees that you have paid to us, including your deposit, if you have to cancel your trip

Balance

Tours priced below US\$ 500 require full payment at the time of booking. For tours priced US\$ 500 and above, full payment must be paid 45 days before the departure date with fees for any bicycle rental(s), single supplement(s) and extra hotel nights. Our confirmation will include personal details you provided us (including your flight information), visa application advice, a packing suggestion list and a detailed tour itinerary. It will also include a checklist to ensure you get everything ready for your holiday.

Cancellation Policy

On the rare occasions when we, SpiceRoads, must cancel a trip, all payments received to date will be 100% refunded, which constitutes full settlement. There will be absolutely no deductions. If you, the client, must cancel your reservation, your cancellation fee will be determined according to when you cancel. For full details, please read our [cancellation policy](#).

Loyalty Riders Club

For those who have been on several long tours with us we reward customer loyalty by offering repeat customers a special discount off the tour price (excludes single supplement and bike rental). If this is your fourth scheduled tour or more you will receive a 5% discount. If this is your eighth scheduled tour or more we will extend a 10% discount. The discount will be reflected in your online booking, but please contact us if any questions. Loyalty discounts can not be used in conjunction with any other offer. Note: Only tours of 7 days or more will be applicable for loyalty discount.

International Flights

International flights, to and from the start and finish points are not included in the tour price. Once your tour is Guaranteed to Depart you can book your flight. Please contact us for advice before

arranging flights for the best arrival and departure times. We would only cancel a trip for an extreme circumstance, but in that case, where we cancel your trip, we cannot be liable for losses incurred relating to any flight booking you have made. Please claim any losses from your [travel insurance](#) that you acquired when you booked your holiday.

Newsletter

Our adventure travel [e-newsletter](#) is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from SpiceRoads, be sure to subscribe.

The information in this document is given in good faith, and covers the average range of conditions likely to be found on this trip. Please note that the itinerary is subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances, however, we will always do our best to adhere to this original itinerary

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