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SIX SENSES

BHUTAN



## *Six Senses Bhutan*

*Six Senses Bhutan is located within the amazing Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan known for its rich diversity of flora and fauna along with omnipresent spirituality and colorful culture. Geographically, Bhutan descends from the highest Himalaya, which exceed 33,000 feet (7,000 meters) in height to the plains in the south that are at an altitude of just 1,000 feet (300 meters). To the north lies Tibet while to the west, south and east sits India. Through this dramatically descending landscape, the rivers run from north to south and over the years have forged deep valleys and ravines that are separated by lofty ridges and mountain passes. Each of these valleys has a scenic beauty that is unique unto itself and it is these valleys that provide the opportunity for an enchanted journey through the Kingdom.*

The western and central valleys of Bhutan are the sites for our homes, the Six Senses lodges. Scattered throughout these valleys, collectively referred to as Six Senses Bhutan, are five lodges, each with its own character, environment and experiences.

Guests may visit one of the lodges or, to have the best experiences that Bhutan has to offer, we can plan a tailor-made journey that will include a combination of the lodges located in Thimphu, Punakha, Gangtey, Bumthang and Paro. The lodges range in size and facilities, however our focus embraces the Six Senses guiding principles which include spa, wellness, healthy eating, comfort in sleep in addition to a journey of self-discovery within Bhutan's beauty of spirituality, culture and nature.



## THIMPHU

At an altitude of 7,710 feet (2,350 meters), Thimphu lies in a steep valley surrounded by richly forested mountains dotted with ancient monasteries and *lhakhangs* (temples), and to this day remains the world's only national capital without traffic lights. The town is built up from the Thimphu *Chhu* (River) and is centered on the quaint clock tower and its surrounding lanes of shops, fruit and vegetable markets, and assorted local restaurants. Thimphu is the largest center in Bhutan with a population of about 100,000 and expanding rapidly.

Situated within beautiful apple orchards to the north and young pine forests to the south, The Thimphu lodge is strategically perched on the valley hillside due south of the town at an elevation of 8,695 feet (2,650 meters). Spectacular views reward the property overlooking Thimphu Valley and across to the 170 foot (52 meters) high giant Buddha. This location provides a comfortable escape from the bustling capital of the Kingdom, while yet close enough to easily access the many attractions. Our Thimphu lodge with its grand design and lobby reflecting ponds has been named Palace in the Sky. Some of the lodge details are:

- 20 Suites measuring 721 sq.ft. indoors (67 sq.m.) and 97 sq.ft. outdoors (9 sq.m.)
- 3 One-Bedroom Villas measuring 1,453 sq.ft. indoors (135 sq.m.) and 344 sq.ft. outdoors (32 sq.m.)
- 1 Two-Bedroom Villa measuring 2,798 sq.ft. indoors (260 sq.m.) and 398 sq.ft. outdoors (37 sq.m.)
- 1 Three-Bedroom Villa measuring 3,358 sq.ft. indoors (312 sq.m.) and 398 sq.ft. outdoors (37 sq.m.)
- Living Room for 48 guests
- All-day Dining Restaurant for 60 guests indoors and 16 guests outdoors
- Private Dining Room for 10 guests
- Bar and Lounge for 29 guests
- Banquet facilities for 60 guests
- Six Senses Spa and Wellness Center with five single rooms, one double room, gym, manicure and pedicure room
- Indoor Pool
- Boutique
- Prayer Pavilion
- Business Center
- Sunken outdoor Performance Deck
- Parking
- Altitude: 8,695 feet (2,650 meters)
- Lodge land: 15 acres (6.1 hectares)
- GPS: 27°25'06.0"N 89°39'45.8"E



Thimphu, being the capital, is home to many attractions. The National Textile Museum, Folk Heritage Museum and National Library, where Bhutanese craftsmen continue to pursue the traditional art of xylography by carving new wood blocks to print old manuscripts, all offer insights into Bhutan's culture. Thimphu's Philatelic Center in the General Post Office displays some of the world's most innovatively designed stamps. Further up the valley the Tashichho *Dzong* (fortress) houses the seat of government.

Nearby, one can visit Pangri Zampa, two 16th century buildings that now house a monastic astrologer training school. At the head of the valley, a walk across one of the country's oldest cantilever bridges leads to Cheri *Goemba* (Monastery) where the Kingdom's first monk community was based. Closer to town, Thimphu's main street provides the opportunity to browse Himalayan jewelry and Bhutanese handicrafts and textiles.

## PUNAKHA

Punakha Valley is the warmest of the Six Senses Bhutan destinations. Summer temperatures can reach 86°F (32°C). The road to Punakha from Thimphu winds and climbs through pine forests and passes streams, waterfalls, *chortens* (stupas) and prayer flags, rising to Dochu La Pass, with its wonderful vistas, at an elevation of 10,223 feet (3,116 meters). Gradually the road descends during the 90-minute drive to Punakha Valley, one of the lowest lying valleys in Bhutan. At an elevation of 4,265 feet (1,300 meters) and with a temperate climate, this valley is the market garden of the country, where produce grows year round and many Bhutanese reside during the cooler winter months. Punakha has an interesting history, as it was the Kingdom's capital for a period of 300 years until Thimphu was declared the official capital in the 1950s. It is the site of one of Bhutan's most historically important dzongs, the magnificent 17th century Punakha Dzong. Situated a short 15-minute drive north of the grand Punakha Dzong along the Mo Chhu and nestled several hundred meters above the valley floor at an elevation of 4,595 feet (1,400 meters) is our Punakha lodge.

One of the highlights of Punakha is a visit to the Punakha Dzong. Straddling the confluence of the Mother (Mo) and Father (Pho) Chhu, it is truly a masterpiece of Bhutanese architecture and the wedding location of His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck. Its first of three courtyards functions as the administrative headquarters for the Punakha district. Twenty-one temples are contained within the area of the Dzong's third courtyard, the largest of which is the monks' hundred-pillared Great Assembly Hall.

Beyond the dominating dzong, a visit to Chimi Lhakhang is a must to take in the history of the worship house and its ritual phalluses. The Chimi Lhakhang is dedicated to Drukpa Kuenley who in the late 15th century used humor, songs and outrageous behavior to dramatize his teachings. Closer to the lodge a beautiful morning hike takes one to the regal Khamsum Yuelley Namgyel Chorten, which was built to remove negative forces and promote peace, stability and harmony in the changing world.



Referred to as the Flying Farmhouse amidst the Rice Fields, this spectacular lodge takes on a more rustic rural feel adorned with the warmer climate of its surroundings. Some of the lodge details are:

- 16 Suites measuring 721 sq.ft. indoors (67 sq.m.) and 398 sq.ft. outdoors (37 sq.m.)
- 1 One-Bedroom Villa measuring 1,312 sq.ft. (122 sq.m) indoors and 344 sq.ft. (32 sq.m) outdoors, with private pool
- 1 Two-Bedroom Villa measuring 2,454 sq.ft. indoors (228 sq.m) and 969 sq.ft. (90 sq.m) outdoors, with private pool
- 1 Three-Bedroom Villa measuring 2,949 sq.ft. indoors (274 sq.m) and 969 sq.ft. (90 sq.m) outdoors, with private pool
- Living Room and Lounge for 16 guests
- All-day Dining Restaurant for 38 guests indoors and 16 guests outdoors
- Library for six guests
- Six Senses Spa and Wellness Center with three single rooms, gym, two meditation huts, yoga facilities
- Outdoor Pool
- Parking
- Altitude: 4,595 feet (1,400 meters)
- Lodge land: 10 acres (4 hectares)
- GPS: 27°37'28.0"N 89°48'04.6"E

The Chorten dominates the upper Punakha Valley with commanding views across the Mo Chhu and up towards the mountainous peaks of Gasa and beyond. High above Punakha Valley also lies the picturesque village of Talo, the birthplace of the Zhabdrung who unified Bhutan and built many of the Kingdom's existing dzongs.



## GANGTEY

From Punakha, traveling easterly, the road passes through the village of Wangdue Phodrang and climbs past deep ravines with dizzying drops to the little-visited Phobjikha Valley that is home to the quaint rural settlement of Gangtey. At an elevation of 9,843 feet (3,000 meters) on the western slopes of the Black Mountains, the glacial valley is a designated conservation area and winter home of the endangered black-necked cranes. The quaint village is admired by the 16th-century monastery of Gangtey Goemba, which includes a school and quarters for monks and meditation facilities, and is home to the mind reincarnation of Pema Lingpa, one of the region's historically important Buddhist treasure discoverers.

Driving southwards through the open valley and traditional farms, guests arrive to the western valley slopes where the lodge is strategically positioned and showcases a 180-degree view of the valley and all its beauty.

Of course, one of the most exciting fascinations of this area is the black-necked cranes and our lodge is within walking distance to the Royal Society for Protection of Nature's Black-necked Crane Visitor Centre. With uniqueness to the fore, the lodge takes on a very special design and is referred to as the Traditional Birdwatching Bridge.



Some of the lodge details are:

- 8 Suites measuring 689 sq.ft. indoors (64 sq.m.) and 118 sq.ft. outdoors (11 sq.m.)
- 1 Two-Bedroom Villa measuring 2,260 sq.ft. indoors (210 sq.m.) and 205 sq.ft. outdoors (19 sq.m.)
- Arrival Deck for 10 guests
- Library for four guests
- Movie and Gaming room for six guests
- Living Room and Lounge for 16 guests
- All-day Dining Restaurant for 20 guests indoors
- Fire Pit Relaxation Area for 17 guests
- Six Senses Spa and Wellness Center with two single rooms, two Swedana areas, male and female locker facilities
- Parking
- Altitude: 9,678 feet (2,950 meters)
- Lodge land: 5 acres (2 hectares)
- GPS: 27°27'45.2"N 90°10'08.1"E

A stay in Phobjikha Valley begins with a casual stroll through the quaint village of Gangtey, taking in the simplicity of life in this remote mountain hideaway, before visiting the ancient altars and ramparts of the dominating Goemba. Beyond Gangtey, the seemingly endless valley floor offers numerous nature treks and mountain bike trails winding through the miniature forests of dwarf bamboo and across a trout filled brook. Throughout the winter black-necked cranes can be viewed from the lodge, the nearby Crane Center or a viewing hide situated near the main nesting and feeding grounds of these glorious creatures.



## BUMTHANG

Bumthang is the most easterly located lodge within Six Senses Bhutan and from Gangtey guests will enjoy a memorable drive with dramatic landscapes of terraced farmland, deep river valleys and precariously perched farmhouses viewed from the only east-west highway that has been ingeniously carved out of the mountain. The drive onward to Bumthang takes guests over the picturesque Yotong La Mountains and down into the Chhume Valley, home of Bhutan's famous Yathra weaving.

Located directly within a pine grove, the lodge has been carefully designed, thereby taking on the name Forest within a Forest. This highlights a unique lodge design that provides guests something very special to enjoy and stands out from the other lodges. Some of the lodge details are:

- 8 Suites measuring 780 sq.ft. indoors (72.5 sq.m.) and 205 sq.ft. outdoors (19 sq.m.)
- 1 Two-Bedroom Villa measuring 2,422 sq.ft. indoors (225 sq.m.) and 366 sq.ft. outdoors (34 sq.m.)
- Library for four guests
- Living Room and Lounge for 24 guests
- All-day Dining Restaurant for 24 guests indoors and 12 guests outdoors
- Six Senses Spa and Wellness Center with two single rooms, Hot Stone Bath facilities
- Parking
- Altitude: 8,860 feet (2,700 meters)
- Lodge land: 3 acres (1.2 hectares)
- GPS: 27°34'31.5"N 90°44'33.1"E

There's so much to discover in Bumthang, with special highlights being the neighboring palace, Wangdichhoeling, home to the late King Jigme Wangchuck, and the auspicious prayer wheels next door. Further up the valley is the grand Kurjey Lhakhang, considered one of Bhutan's most hallowed monuments, that was once the resting place of Guru Rimpoche, and Jambay Lhakhang, home to the early winter festivals that draw thousands of Bhutanese for their annual blessings. Heading back into town and across the Bumthang Chhu is the sin-alleviating Tamshing Monastery, followed by brief visits to the valley's unique cottage industries - Red Panda Brewery, Bumthang Cheese/Dairy Facility and the Bumthang Distillery, home to many distinctive spirits.





## PARO

Bordered by forested mountain peaks, Paro Valley is surely one of the most scenic settings within the Six Senses Bhutan journey. Paro Valley sits at an elevation of 7,382 feet (2,250 meters) and is a mix of small villages, historic buildings, monuments and wonderfully terraced fields growing crops of mostly rice, barley and wheat. Through the valley runs the Paro Chhu and nearby is the town of Paro. Established in the 1970s, it is a quaint town with just one main street and captures the essence of provincial Bhutanese life.

Perched directly above Paro National Museum within some 12th century ruins, the lodge enjoys views of the valley that will be forever etched within one's memory. To complement such an amazing site, the lodge has been uniquely designed to maximize its surrounding history and incredible valley views. Known as Stone Ruins, the Paro lodge has some wonderful destination dining experiences in which guests will surely indulge. Some of the lodge details are:

- 16 Suites measuring 646 sq.ft. indoors (60 sq.m.)
- 2 One-Bedroom Villas measuring 1,399 sq.ft. indoors (130 sq.m.) and 323 sq.ft. outdoors (30 sq.m.)
- 1 Two-Bedroom Villa measuring 2,798 sq.ft. indoors (260 sq.m.) and 1,055 sq. ft. outdoors (98 sq.m.)
- 1 Three-Bedroom Villa measuring 3,681 sq.ft. indoors (342 sq.m.) and 1,055 sq.ft. outdoors (98 sq.m.)
- Living Room for 24 guests indoors and 34 outdoors
- All-day Dining Restaurant for 56 guests indoors and 14 guests outdoors
- Bar for six guests
- Banquet facilities for 32 guests

- Destination dining within the ruins located around the lodge
- Six Senses Spa and Wellness Center with four single rooms, gym, outdoor sauna and cool dip, yoga room, relaxation area, private meditation area
- Indoor Pool
- Library for eight guests
- Boutique
- Parking
- Altitude: 8,780 feet (2,675 meters)
- Lodge land: 15 acres (6.1 hectares)
- GPS: 27°25'22.7"N 89°26'17.2"E

Paro Valley has a number of monasteries and monuments but none so dramatic as Taktsang Lhakhang, or Tiger's Nest. A highly revered monastery built on a sheer cliff face at a height of 9,678 feet (2,950 meters), it is widely visible from the floor of Paro Valley. In an excursion to the town of Paro itself, Paro National Museum displays an intriguing collection of artifacts that illustrate the rich culture and heritage of the Kingdom. A short stroll away is the dominating Paro Dzong, a prime example of Bhutanese architecture. From the dzong, a leisurely walk back into town crosses over a Bhutanese traditional cantilevered bridge and continues on to the A.D. 1525 town temple with its interesting altar and wall paintings.

Paro Valley is also the starting point for many of Bhutan's treks that cater to all ability levels, from short hour-long valley floor walks to more strenuous full-day hikes over mountain trails where trekkers can sight wild mountain goats, langur monkeys and the occasional leopard. Overnight treks can also be organized.



## HOW TO GET THERE

Bhutan's international airport at Paro is served by Druk Air and Bhutan Airlines with flights from Bangkok, Singapore, Kathmandu, Dhaka and four Indian cities including New Delhi. All lodges are accessed from Paro and interconnected by road, with a domestic flight also available between Paro and

Bumthang three days each week. Helicopter charters can also be arranged from Paro Airport and private jet assistance is available with Bhutan Air Services who will arrange for a navigator to sit with the pilot for the visual landing at Paro.

### Driving time between lodges\*

	Paro Int'l Airport	Paro	Thimphu	Punakha	Gangtey	Bumthang
Paro Int'l Airport		30 mins	90 mins	3 hrs 30 mins	4 hrs 30 mins	12 hrs
Paro	30 mins		120 mins	4 hrs	5 hrs	12 hrs 30 mins
Thimphu	90 mins	120 mins		2 hrs 30 mins	4 hrs	11 hrs
Punakha	3 hrs 30 mins	4 hrs	2 hrs 30 mins		3 hrs 30 mins	10 hrs
Gangtey	4 hrs 30 mins	5 hrs	4 hrs	3 hrs 30 mins		8 hrs
Bumthang	12 hrs	12 hrs 30 mins	11 hrs	10 hrs	8 hrs	

*\*Estimated time only and is subject to change due to road and weather condition.*









info@becuriou.com



+47 2407 6666



Tjuvholmen Allé 17, Oslo  
91 Wimpole St, London

## WHY CHOOSE US



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