

amankora

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The Amankora Experience

Amankora's five lodges across Bhutan's spectacular western and central valleys are perfectly placed to offer unique journeys of discovery through the Himalaya's sole surviving Buddhist kingdom.

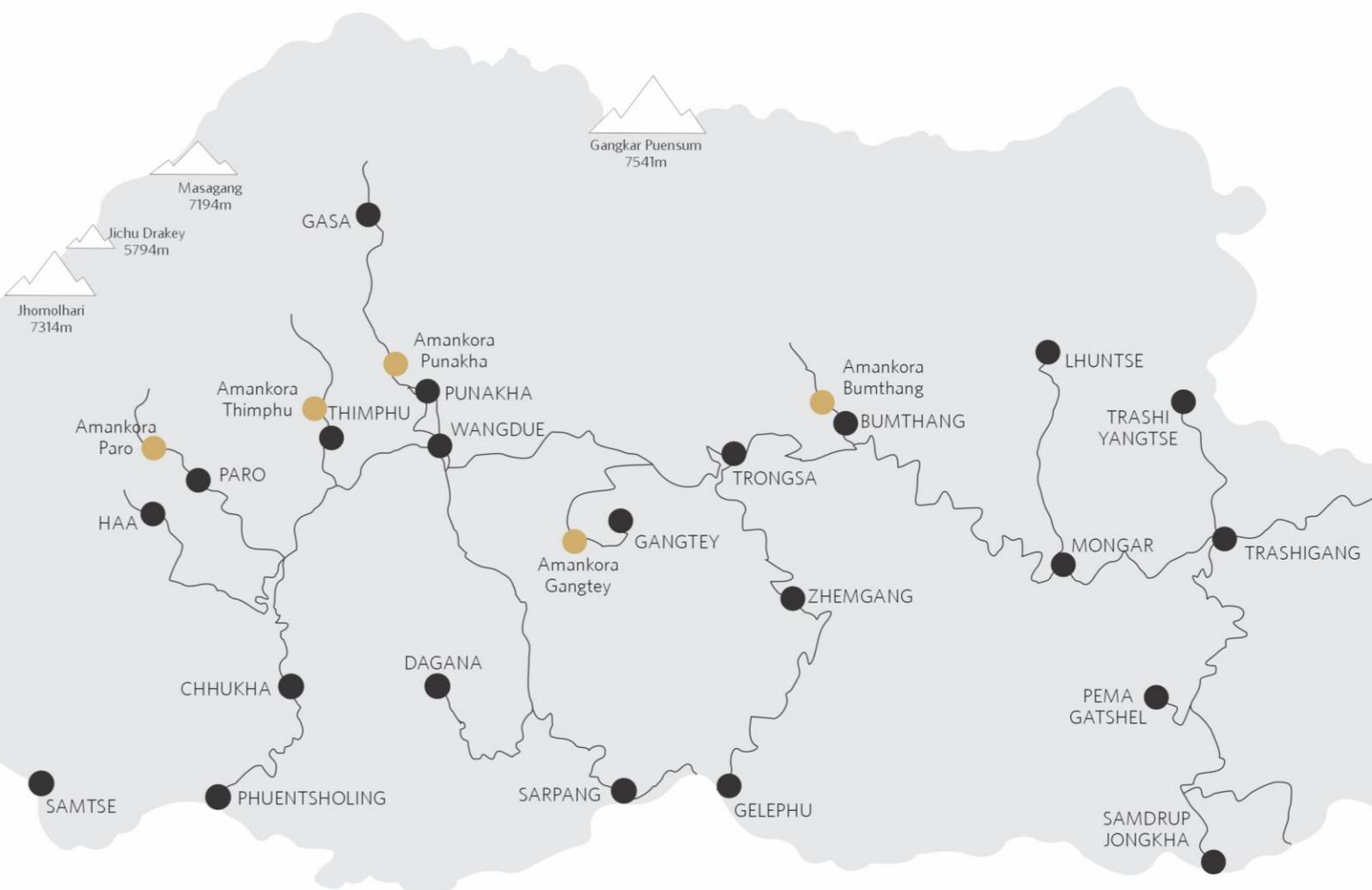
From Amankora Paro with its dramatic views of snow-capped Jhomolhari, take an evening stroll to the ruined fortress of Drukgyel Dzong or scale Paro's cliffs to the famous Tiger's Nest. Amankora Thimphu is a tranquil gateway to the capital's many attractions, while Amankora Punakha lies east of the Dochula Pass near the resplendent Punakha Dzong. Spot rare black-necked cranes from Amankora Gangtey and spend a quiet moment in the magnificent Goemba (monastery) it overlooks. Then explore the rich cottage industries that thrive in Amankora Bumthang's fertile valley.

In this guide, we present each valley's finest experiences, from immersive cultural, spiritual and culinary encounters to outdoor adventures making the most of the Kingdom's breathtaking scenery.

Some activities and excursions require planning, so we recommend discussing your interests with your guide a day in advance.

We look forward to introducing you to the Land of the Thunder Dragon and its people through these special activities.

The Amankora Journey





Amankora Paro

Amankora Paro shelters within a blue-pine forest with sublime mountain views, a 20-minute drive from Bhutan's international airport and Paro town.

A cultural tour of Paro should always start with a casual browse through the National Museum, housed in the Ta Dzong (Watch Tower) of the Rinpung Dzong. An intriguing collection of artifacts introduce the rich culture and heritage of the Kingdom.

A leisurely walk back into town crosses the scenic Nyamai Zampa, a traditional cantilever bridge. Continue to the town temples, Tshongdue Lhakhang and Drukchholing Lhakhang, with their fascinating altars and paintings. The unique design of Duntse Lhakhang plus a visit to the revered Kyichu Lhakhang (said to pin down the foot of a treacherous ogress), are the finishing touches to a day of cultural immersion. The town is also a treasure trove when it comes to art and shopping.



Spiritual & Cultural Immersion

Private Meditation and Blessing Ceremonies

A private, one-on-one meditation session with a local Lama - a Buddhist spiritual leader - can be arranged in the lodge. Blessings can be arranged in any of the *lhakhangs* or temples nearby. We are happy to share more about possible locations.

Thrisel

A one-hour blessing by a Lama using holy water sprinkled from a Bumpa to cleanse the mind, spirit and soul.

Tshewang

A one-hour ritual performed by multiple monks to promote longevity. The ceremony involves an abundance of prayers, mantras and final blessings using a Dorji (thunderbolt sceptre) as well as sacred scriptures touched to the head.

Rimdro

A full-day ceremony performed by 6-8 monks to grant longevity and prosperity and to fulfill personal requests. The monks chant holy texts and mantras to a symphony of drums, horns, cymbals and bells. Your actual presence is only required for a short while as the blessing continues from morning to night.

108 Butter Lamps Offering

This beautiful ceremony representing the dispelling of the darkness of ignorance can be experienced in a number of Paro's temples, monasteries and dzongs. Lighting each butter lamp (*karme*) is also a deeply meditative experience, aiding focus and reflection.



Prayer-Flag Printing

Ap Namgay from Chukha Village will help you print traditional Bhutanese prayer flags. We offer three different types of printing blocks.

Wind Horse (Lungta)

The prayer flag has the image of a horse (called Lungta in the local language) in the centre, carrying three flaming jewels on its back. The horse is a symbol of strength, speed and the transformation of bad fortune to good, while the flaming jewels symbolise the Buddha, the Dharma (Buddhist teachings) and the Sangha (Buddhist community). It is believed that there are approximately 400 traditional mantras around the Lungta, each dedicated to deities.

Tara (Mother of Liberation)

This flag has compassion for living beings that is stronger than a mother's love for her children. It helps to obtain ambitions and goals, protects against threats and guards her followers on their spiritual journey to enlightenment. Traditionally, prayer flags have been used to promote peace, compassion, strength and wisdom. Hanging them in high places sanctifies the air and carries the blessings depicted on the flags to all beings.

Amitayus (God of Longevity)

Amitayus, the Buddha of Limitless Life, is often in the flag's centre. Amitayus in Sanskrit translates as 'infinite life' and reflects his role as the god of boundless life who is worshipped to increase life span, improve wellbeing and remove life's obstacles. Health and longevity flags usually have a short version of the Buddha's long-life Sutra along with prayers and mantras.

In-house activity in our Living Room
6pm - 9pm on alternate evenings

Traditional Bhutanese Wedding Vow Renewal

The Bhutanese believe that only if the deities are at peace, will we have their blessings for good health, wealth and a long life together.

This vow renewal ceremony takes place at Paro's auspicious Kyichu Lhakhang temple, dating back to when the seeds of Buddhism were sown in Bhutan, making it one of the country's oldest and most sacred sites. It is believed to be one of 108 temples built in a single day by the Tibetan King Songtsen Gampo to subdue a demon lying across Tibet and Bhutan.

Khadhar

After breakfast at the lodge, you will be escorted to the beautiful seventh-century Kyichu Lhakhang for the wedding-vow renewal ceremony. On arrival at the temple, the groom and bride will exchange the traditional white scarves or *khadar*. Emblematic of the purity of the giver's heart, these scarves feature symbols of the Buddhist lucky signs, which are meant to bring good fortune, wealth and happiness.

Karme

After exchanging the *khadhars*, you will light a series of butter lamps to offer light to your deities. The lamps or *karme* are intended to dispel darkness and ignorance and bring wisdom and compassion into your shared lives.

Lhabsang and Thrisel

Inside the main temple, a spiritual cleansing, *lhabsang* will be performed by monks as an offering to the local deities. This will be followed by a holy water blessing - or *thrisel* - ceremony to cleanse the mind, spirit and soul under the guidance of a revered monk. The two ceremonies last about 30-45 minutes. After these activities, guests can continue sightseeing or return to the lodge and relax.



Gross National Happiness Lecture

Bhutan talks more about Gross National Happiness (GNH) than Gross National Product. GNH is considered as the measurement of performance for the well-being of all Bhutanese. This concept was introduced by the fourth Druk Gyalpo, His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, in the early 1980s and has been considered revolutionary by global leaders around the world. We can arrange for a private lecture with Kinzang Lheundup, a lecturer from Paro College of Education, who is an expert on the topic.

Wellness Experiences

Home to the largest Aman Spa in Bhutan, the Paro Lodge boasts a two-story spa structure with a dedicated yoga and movement studio, a steam room and treatment rooms with outdoor hot stone bath facilities. A Himalayan hot stone bath coupled with a body polish and wrap ritual is an experience not to be missed.

Himalayan Hot Stone Bath

Aman Spa Paro's own Himalayan hot stone bath is inspired by a traditional therapeutic treatment where natural river stones are heated and lowered into the bath to release beneficial minerals, while the local Khempa herb infuses the water with its healing properties.

We recommend beginning any spa treatment with a hot stone bath to release tension, relax the body and open the skin's pores. Kindly give us a few hours' notice to prepare the stones and the bath.

Hot Stone Bath with Body Polish and Wrap Ritual (Choice of three)

Grounding Body Polish and Wrap Ritual

A key ingredient in this ritual is amethyst powder, known for its gently sedative energy that promotes peacefulness and emotional stability. The full-body polish gently exfoliates the skin, brightens tone and improves texture, while the cocooning wrap initiates a period of stillness, leaving skin radiant.

Purifying Body Polish and Wrap Ritual

This ritual revives the spirit, tones the skin and induces a state of peace. One of the key ingredients is quartz, known as a master healer for its amplification of energy levels. Seaweed fucus oil, raw honey and essential oils are also applied, stimulating circulation and lymphatic drainage.

Nourishing Body Polish and Wrap Ritual

Encouraging the body to enter a phase of deep rest, this nutrient-rich treatment includes jade powder - known to hydrate, tone and rejuvenate - in both the scrub and wrap. The scrub also contains healing calendula oil, restorative amethyst powder, essential oils and Himalayan salts that soften the skin.

Morning Yoga

The benefits of yoga are manifold, helping to improve strength and flexibility, assisting with pain relief and stress release, and focusing the mind to encourage balance and equilibrium. Every morning our yoga teacher offers sessions suitable for all ability levels, incorporating guided breathing exercises and a series of *asanas* (yoga poses). There is no need to bring any equipment; just come as you are.

7am - 8am daily at the spa

Please confirm your participation with our team the evening before.



Culinary Journeys

Forest and Fortress Dinner

Dine under the stars within a pine forest overlooking the historic Drukgyel Dzong. To the soothing soundtrack of a gurgling stream, dinner tables are set in a clearing beside moss-covered rocks, under the canopy of fragrant Himalayan blue pine. Tables can also be set under a traditional Bhutanese dragon tent, gently lit with strings of lights and flickering lanterns.

Comfortable woolen shawls, fabric-wrapped hot water bottles and heaters will keep you warm on chillier evenings as you savour Amankora signature cocktails and canapés before a traditional Bhutanese dinner. A traditional dance performance or musical troupe can be arranged (additional charges apply).

Helicopter Breakfast at Twin Lakes

A helicopter ride and breakfast beside the Twin Lakes with Mount Jomolhari rearing behind is the most magical immersion in the region's pristine beauty. Your breakfast picnic will include freshly baked pastries, seasonal fruits and a variety of locally sourced delicacies. Sip a glass of champagne and locally brewed coffee by the lakeside while drinking in the breathtaking scenery.

Continue your memorable morning adventure after breakfast (time permitting), by exploring other sacred sites nearby. These could include Jomolhari Temple, the meditation caves of Milarepa and Gyalwa Lorepa, and the Spirit Lake of Tsheringma. Your return flight will provide stunning views of Lingzhi Yugyal Dzong (Bhutan's remotest fortress), Lingzhi Village and a panorama of the Himalayan Range.

Outdoor Dining

Amankora Paro offers several beautiful alfresco settings to dine in blissful seclusion. Whether you are seeking an intimate meal for two or a group celebration, we can tailor the menu to your preferences and ensure an affair to remember.

Framed by the living room structure with a pine forest on its fringes, the **Patio Courtyard** is an ideal setting for dining under the stars.

Or indulge in a distinctive experience at the **Firepit Terrace** overlooking the stream, pine forest, and local farmhouses.



Amankora Thimphu

Situated in the forested Thimphu Valley, home to Bhutan's capital city, Amankora Thimphu is tucked into the pine-scented woods of the Motithang area. Ideally placed for exploring Thimphu's museums, traditional shops and numerous cultural sites, it also serves as a quiet retreat, completely removed from the city's activities.

As the Kingdom's capital, home to 100,000 Bhutanese, Thimphu offers unique opportunities to explore Bhutanese culture in depth. Whether you are interested in Buddhism or astrology, want to learn more about weaving, sacred paintings or the local markets, or would like to gain insight into the abundant flora and fauna of Bhutan, we will ensure that your curiosity and interests are satisfied.

When planning your itinerary, we will include the most important museums, galleries, places of historic interest and activities to give you a diverse experience of the valley and its people. Don't miss your chance to play a round of golf on the country's only official golf course and you're sure to find a visit to Pangri Zampa Lhakhang, the city's astrology school, enlightening.



Active Adventures

High Altitude Golf

Golfing on Bhutan's only genuine golf course means playing amongst chortens and regal peaks with the Thimphu Dzong as a dramatic backdrop. The Royal Thimphu Golf Club is located above Tashi Chho Dzong, north of town.

This challenging nine-hole course is situated 2,350m (7,700ft) above sea level, which means that balls fly further in the thin mountain air. Tee times can be arranged by a member of our family.

Archery and Khuru (Traditional Darts)

While in Bhutan, we urge you to have a go at the country's national sport: archery. In the past, the hunting bows were made of long single pieces of bamboo, bound with leather. Now they have been replaced by modern versions and are solely used for sporting events. However, a version of the original bow is still used in local archery contests. We have several available and one of the team will be happy to offer instructions – or challenge you to a competition – any time you wish.

Complimentary activity for resident guests

Fishing

Even though fishing and hunting are considered illegal in Bhutan as they conflict with the beliefs of Buddhism, special permission can be given for recreational catch and release in the waters of Thimphu on days that do not conflict with the auspicious day of the Lunar calendar (nor during breeding season - November to February). The most common fish is the brown trout and the best seasons to catch them are spring and fall.

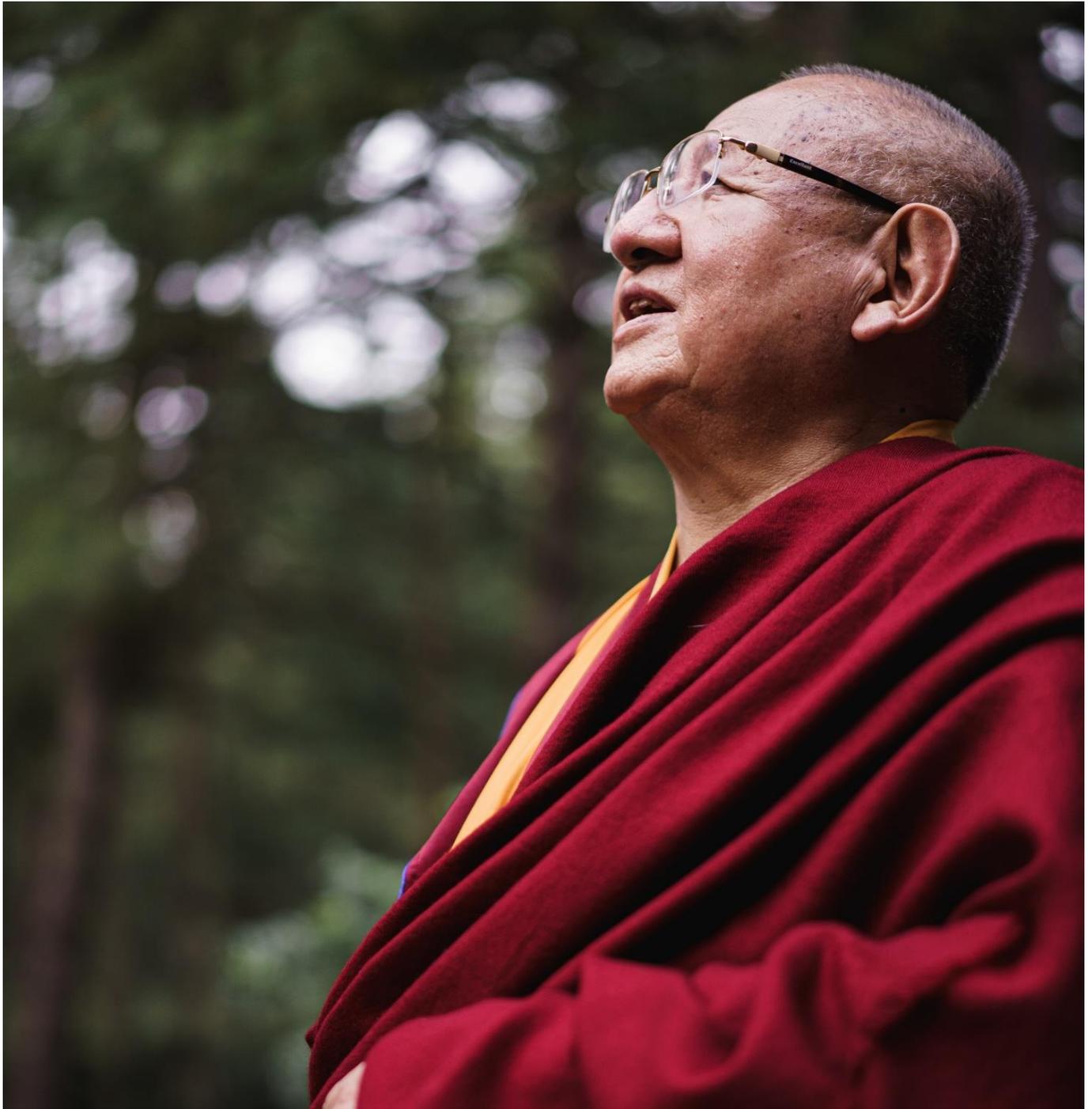
If you wish to try your luck, we would be happy to assist with the arrangements, including providing all fishing equipment and an experienced guide. We recommend providing at least three days' notice so we can be sure to arrange your experience on a suitable day.



Uncover Your Past and Future at the Astrology School - Pangri Zampa Lhakhang

Believed to be protected by a mermaid and powerful deity in the form of two giant trees, Pangri Zampa Lhakhang is idyllically located in the middle of a meadow by the river, a 20-minute drive from the lodge on the way to Tango and Cheri monasteries. The temple appeared in Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal's vision which directed him from Tibet to Bhutan. It was built by Ngawang Choegyel, the great-grandfather of the Zhabdrung, and was the Zhabdrung's residence when he arrived in Bhutan in 1616.

Today, the temple is used as an astrology centre of the state clergy and is the home to around 50 monks studying astrology. During a visit to Pangri Zampa, you can learn more about astrology and have your reading done upon request back at the lodge by one of the astrology graduates of the school.



Private Lecture on Bhutan and Buddhism with Mynak Trulku

Mynak Trulku is the 12th reincarnate lama of Mynak Rinpoche who is the spiritual leader of the Mynak province in the Eastern region of Tibet. Mynak Rinpoche has lived in Bhutan for over 30 years and worked in various capacities as the founder and director of the National Museum in Paro and the National Library in Thimphu. He has also represented Bhutan in various regional and international conferences lecturing on Bhutanese culture and spiritual affairs.



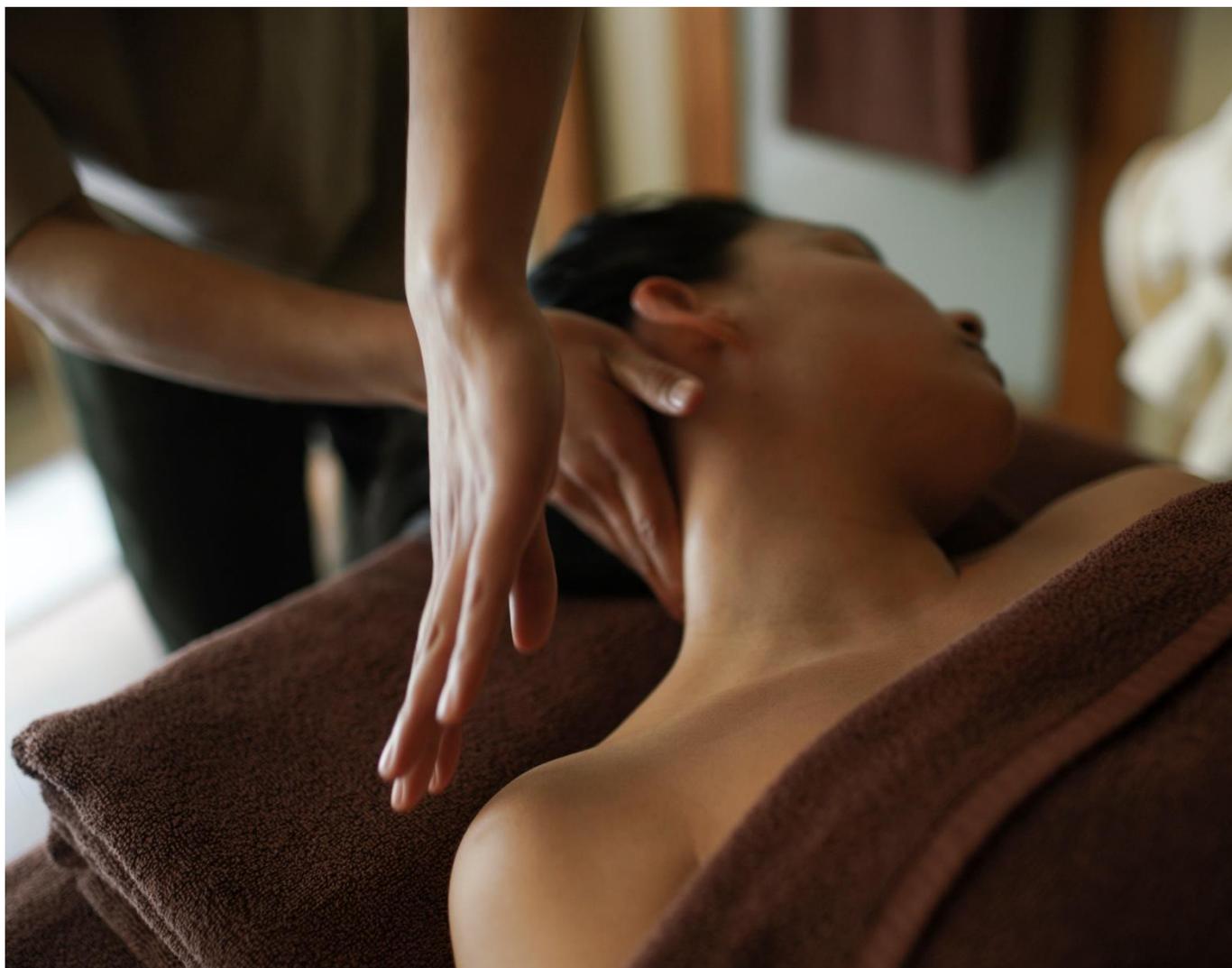
Learn Art with a Local Artist

Bhutan celebrates 13 official *zorig chusum* (arts and crafts) that include carpentry, masonry, weaving, carving and of course, painting. Zurig Chusum Institute is Bhutan's most important art school focusing on the 13 traditional arts and crafts.

Amankora Thimphu guests can now join a traditionally trained group of painters from the Institute who have opened a very successful painting studio known as High-Quality Painting. This exclusive art gallery and studio offers an opportunity to engage with the artists, try various traditional painting techniques and learn more about the history of Bhutanese art and its significance in everyday life.

The studio has done work on temples and sacred scrolls and specialises in traditional Bhutanese painting (based on strict iconographic rules and Buddhist texts). It also focuses on traditional mask making.

A private painting session with one of the artists can be arranged either at the lodge or in the artist's studio.



Wellness Experiences

The Jet Lag Reviver

Whether you're recovering from extensive travel or a hectic lifestyle, this signature ritual from Amankora Thimphu's Aman Spa will revive you from head to toe.

The treatment begins with a deeply relaxing hot stone massage focusing on deep pressure points. You will then enjoy a neck, shoulder and scalp massage to reduce tension and promote relaxation. A nourishing facial massage will re-energise the skin and leave you refreshed and revitalised, before foot reflexology promotes circulation and reduces any water retention.

The finishing touch is a short session of guided breathing to stimulate your lymphatic system to help your skin flush out toxins, to reduce swelling and inflammation and to minimise breakouts while promoting a healthy glow.

Morning Yoga

Join our experienced yoga teacher in the lodge library for an energising complimentary morning yoga session suitable for all ability levels. There is no need to bring any equipment; just come as you are. The session will include guided breathing followed by a series of *asanas* (yoga poses).

7am - 8am daily in the lodge library
Please confirm your participation with our team the evening before.

For guests seeking more specialised instructions, a private yoga session can be arranged at your convenience.



Amankora Punakha

Amankora Punakha lies east of the dramatic Dochu La Pass and just north of Punakha Dzong where the Mo Chhu and Po Chhu rivers meet. The lodge's central farmhouse and serene infinity swimming pool are surrounded by rice paddies and orchards with views over the valley that provides most of the Kingdom's fresh fruit and vegetables.

Punakha Valley is warm and fertile, its sub-tropical environment encouraging crops of oranges, mangoes and even bananas. Its lush setting ensures multiple routes for hiking and biking, while monasteries and farms reveal the Kingdom's spiritual and agricultural heritage to those eager to engage.

Let us know where your interests lie, and we will happily suggest a personalised itinerary for each day of your stay. Please note that the footpaths and animal tracks that crisscross the valley can become muddy during the rainy season. We recommend always wearing sturdy footwear when exploring.



Rafting and Kayaking

Spend a morning on the water and discover Bhutan from a whole new angle. If you are looking for an enjoyable and easy scenic float down the river with views of Changyul Valley and the old monument, Galem House, we recommend rafting on the Mo Chhu (Female River) that flows below the lodge. Kayaking is a swifter option but involves a little more individual effort!

The Pho Chhu (Male River) is for the more adventurous who wish to tackle some of the Kingdom's white water - either rafting or kayaking - while enjoying the pristine forests and farmland on its banks.

Rafting offers a more leisurely adventure, with a private raft accommodating up to 8 guests. Kayaking is for those looking for a solo challenge while still being part of a group.



Wellness Experiences

Morning Yoga

Join our experienced yoga teacher for an energising complimentary yoga session in our spa yoga and movement room suitable for all ability levels. There is no need to bring any equipment; just come as you are. The session will include guided breathing followed by a series of *asanas* (yoga poses).

7am - 8am daily at the spa

Please confirm your participation with our team the evening before.

For guests seeking more specialised instructions, a private yoga session can be arranged at your convenience.

Grounding Face Ritual

Developed to promote emotional healing and inner peace, this grounding face ritual incorporates quartz to facilitate healing, frankincense to aid rejuvenation and hyaluronic acid to boost cell hydration.

Lymphatic and muscular massage techniques stimulate circulation and raise vibrational energy, while acupuncture using heated Himalayan salt poultices leaves the skin radiant. The treatment ends with a Peruvian black mud and amethyst crystal mask and a Tibetan head massage.



Culinary Journeys

Private BBQ Lunch or Dinner by the Riverside

Just below the lodge at the edge of the Mo Chhu River is our favourite spot for a private BBQ lunch or dinner. Our Chef will prepare a tailor-made four-course menu while you sit in the shade of pine trees savouring the mountain views, the sounds of the river and the aromas emitting from the charcoal grill.

For an even more romantic experience, we recommend the BBQ dinner by candlelight, with lanterns and a bonfire lit as dusk falls and a million stars light up the sky.

Bhutanese Cooking Class

Discover the art of Bhutanese cooking by signing up for a private cooking class with our chef, who is happy to share his vast knowledge of and passion for Bhutanese cuisine. The class will take place in the former farmhouse kitchen, and you can choose what you'd like to make from a list of popular Bhutanese dishes. Take-home recipes will ensure you can recreate your masterpieces time and again for family and friends.

Breakfast at Khamsum Chorten

Get an early start to witness night become day as you venture on your morning walk towards the extraordinary Khamsum Chorten. From the lodge, the walking trail takes you through farmyards and rice paddies and offers a wonderful opportunity to witness local farming traditions.

Consecrated in 1999 and dedicated to the Fifth King, the three-level chorten is 30m (100ft) high and can be seen in the distance when approaching the lodge. Built over 8.5 years to remove negative forces and encourage harmony in an ever-changing world, it is filled with colourful symbols of protection.

While you enjoy the superb views of the valley from the chorten rooftop, your guide will have found the perfect picnic spot in the gardens for your continental breakfast in the morning sun.

Khamsum suspension bridge to Chorten: 30-45 minutes

Chorten to Lodge: 45-60 minutes

We recommend starting as early as you feel comfortable.



Amankora Gangtey

Amankora Gangtey rests in the seldom-visited valley of Phobjikha near the quaint village of Gangtey. From its forested knoll, the lodge boasts panoramic views across the gorge to the regal Gangtey Goemba, a 16th-century monastery, and easy access to the winter habitat of the rare, black-necked crane.

Wide and flat on a high, open plateau, Phobjikha Valley is one of the most beautiful in the Kingdom, offering breathtaking views in every direction, wherever you venture. To fully experience the natural splendour of the valley and its surroundings, we have compiled a list of incredible, personalised experiences ranging from interactions with the monks in Gangtey Goemba to a unique potato shed dinner.

As the footpaths and animal tracks that crisscross the valley can get very muddy in the rainy season, we recommend wearing sturdy footwear when exploring. We also recommend booking any experience at least a day or so in advance to ensure availability.



Offering a Meal to the Monks at Gangtey Goemba

Ranging in age from 7 to 40, 270 monks reside in the Gangtey Goemba/Shedra (Monastic Schools). While many come for religious and spiritual fulfilment or to complete the four, six- or nine-year courses in Nyingmapa Buddhism, others come because their families are too poor to keep them at home. The Shedra is also the home of nine young reincarnates. The Goemba/Shedra does not receive any financial support from the government, therefore it relies solely on sponsors to operate. Monks' meals are financed by the generous Gangtey Trulku Rinpoche, private sponsors and the villagers with whom the Goemba/Shedra has a reciprocal arrangement – food donations in return for daily prayers for peace and protection.

The three daily meals mainly consist of rice. Breakfast includes rice with *ezay* (chilli dip) and *suja* (butter tea). Lunch and dinner consist of rice and one curry.

Donating a meal to the monks is a generous and very rewarding gesture that you can personally get involved in. Our chef will gladly accompany you to the local shops in Gangtey where you can take part in purchasing rice and vegetables. You are also welcome to overlook the meal preparations in the kitchen before taking part in the meal service itself. Sometimes sponsors prefer to give a monetary donation and not take part in the meal service, which is also an option.



Spiritual Cleansing (Buddhist Fumigation)

It is a common belief in the Kingdom that every place has its local protective deity or spirit. To please the spirit and keep it happy, the Bhutanese fumigate every morning and during special *pujas* (religious ceremonies). It is also a ritual for self-cleansing, removing bad spirits and being blessed with good luck.

Spiritual cleansing involves the burning of selected herbs in a fumigation stupa. Our stupa is located at the top of the hill in front of the main entrance of the lodge. Should you wish to perform your own cleansing ceremony, this should take place early in the morning in the presence of a monk who will assist you in the ritual.



Wellness Experiences

Traditional Hot Stone Bath

Amankora Gangtey's Hot Stone Bath is situated in a candlelit stone hut on a hill, a 10-minute walk from the lodge. Bamboo doors allow full privacy or open to frame magnificent views of the Phobjikha Valley.

The wooden tub is filled with water, heated river stones which release beneficial minerals and the local healing Khempa herb. Sit back and unwind in the bath for as long as you wish while sipping on a cup of hot apple cider and watching the sunset or the stars.

Morning Yoga

Join our experienced yoga teacher for an energising complimentary morning yoga session, suitable for all ability levels. There is no need to bring any equipment; just come as you are. The session will include guided breathing followed by a series of *asanas* (yoga poses).

7am - 8am daily in the spa relaxation room
Please confirm your participation with our team the evening before.

For guests seeking more specialised instructions, a private yoga session can be arranged at your convenience.



Culinary Journeys

With Gangtey's homegrown potatoes, chillies and organic seasonal crops, the lodge's culinary journeys offer a gastronomic glimpse into the culture and landscapes that helped shape these flavours.

Vegan, vegetarian and other culinary options are available for all the lodge's private dining experiences. These include picnics and private dining indoors and out in various settings on and off the property.



Candlelit Potato Shed Dinner

Situated a 10-minute walk from the lodge is a stone potato shed, built to house the local farmers' autumn potato harvest. Amid all the spuds, we have mounted a *bukhari*, a traditional wood-burning oven, to make the shed comfortably warm. With Bhutanese wooden furniture and flickering candles, it makes the perfect setting for a romantic dinner.

Start your evening with some *ara*, the local wine, by the bonfire outside. Then savour a traditional Bhutanese meal inside to the accompaniment of a local musician.

We recommend wearing good shoes and warm clothes for this culinary journey, as the dirt road to the shed can become muddy in the rainy season. Please give us at least one day's notice.



Amankora Bumthang

Aman's easternmost lodge in the Kingdom, Amankora Bumthang rests adjacent to the First and Second King's palace, Wangdichholing, in the Choekhor Valley - one of four valleys that make up the Bumthang region. This region of sloping pine forests, apple orchards and fertile farmland is known for its cottage industries that produce the sought-after Bumthang butter, cheese, honey and a variety of fruit spirits and brandies.

The four valleys of Bumthang - Choekhor, Tang, Ura and Chhume - offer cultural and adventure experiences alike, whether you want to hike, bike, discover temples, watch wildlife, or learn more about the Bhutanese lifestyle and culture.

Situated at 2,580m (8,462ft) and steeped in history, Bumthang is considered by locals as the spiritual hub of the Kingdom. Here you will find some unique spiritual tests said to reveal how free of sin you are or whether you've lived up to the expectations of your parents. From chain mails carried around the altar room to tunnels and holes in stones, that when found with closed eyes, will indicate whether you are honest - Bumthang has it all and more.

Spiritual Experiences

Fire Blessing Ceremony at Jambay Lhakhang

Just a 10-minute drive from the lodge, Jambay Lhakhang is a beautiful temple dating back to the 7th century – a meaningful setting in which to experience the powerful fire blessing ceremony.

The ceremony starts with the temple's Lamas performing mesmerising rituals with sacred chanting believed to invoke divine energies and shower participants with blessings of abundant good health. The flickering flames of the ceremonial fire hold immense significance, serving as a conduit for divine energy and dispelling negativity, symbolising rebirth and instilling a sense of hope and renewal in all those present.

During the ceremony, feel free to offer up your own prayers. The Lamas will direct you to circle the fire three times to complete the ceremony, which will no doubt impart an abiding sense of inner peace.

Bhutanese Name-Giving Ceremony at Sey Lhakhang

A unique name-giving ceremony held in the private altar room at the monastery of Sey Lhakhang will see you receive your very own Bhutanese name. After you provide your date of birth, the Lama will perform a Buddhist name calculation and present you with a name, explaining its meaning. With your new name and its blessings, you will light butter lamps for well-being before being served traditional milk tea with Bhutanese snacks.

Bhutanese names are not caste related or gender specific and there is no such thing as a family name. This reflects Bhutan's cultural emphasis on the equality of all individuals.

Butter Lamp Lighting at Jambay Lhakhang

Jambay Lhakhang is one of the Kingdom's oldest and most significant temple monasteries, said to be one of the 108 founded by Tibetan King Songtsen Gampo in the 7th century to subdue a demoness obstructing Buddhism's spread. The temple is renowned for its annual Jambay Lhakhang Drup festival, featuring unique masked dances and rituals including the midnight Tercham, or Naked Dance. Masked dancers perform with no clothing, symbolising the shedding of ego and materialism to attain spiritual enlightenment.

Experience your own form of enlightenment by taking part in the lighting of 108 butter lamps inside the temple, a ritual symbolising the dispelling of darkness, negativity and obstacles. Then pause in this meditative space and absorb the peace as prayer wheels spin and the butter lamps glow.



Talk about Birds, Flora and Fauna with Ornithologist, Ap Sherab

If you are interested in learning more about the flora and fauna of our Kingdom, especially its birds, we would love you to meet our local specialist, Sherab. Sherab has spent 15 years researching the Kingdom's natural wonders and is an award-winning ornithologist. In addition to his fascinating lectures, Sherab also guides early-morning bird-watching tours around the valley, as well as forest hikes.



Culinary Journeys

Private BBQ by the Fire Pit

Our fire pit area is the perfect setting for a truly romantic dining experience. On a clear, starry night, we will set up a table by the fire and arrange a barbecue feast. The chef will cook for you, the musician will play, and you will have your own server who will make sure it will be an evening to remember.

Beer and Cheese Tasting at Red Panda Brewery

The Red Panda Brewery was started in 2006 by Fritz Maurer, originally Swiss, but a Bhutanese citizen since 1976. His brewery was the first established beer brewery in the country, and he is still the sole producer of the specialty Weissbier. A visit to the brewery includes a 30-minute tour of the premises to learn more about the production process of Red Panda, the beer ingredients, the history of the beer and the health benefits of this Bhutanese specialty. The tour concludes with a Red Panda beer and local cheese tasting in the brewery garden. For those who prefer non-alcoholic beverages, Bumthang-produced apple juice from the brewery across the road is also available.

The Red Panda Brewery is a 15-minute drive from the lodge. Please notify us one day in advance if you wish to go for the tour and tasting.

Making Khabzey Biscuits in a Farmhouse

Bhutanese biscuits are called Khabzey and come in many shapes and forms – flowers, hearts, knots, even the Bhutanese eight lucky signs. Making beautiful and tasty Khabzey is an artform and our local farmhouse grandmother is an expert with many years of experience.

If you would like to learn how to master this art in authentic surroundings, we will gladly arrange for a lesson in a local farmhouse while you enjoy tea and other snacks.



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