

Live & Breathe Bhutan 2013

A Photographers Journey

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20 days Bhutan

10 days Rajasthan Option

3rd Nov - 2nd Dec

Bookings Filling



Absorb Achieve Immerse Challenge

Immerse yourself...and your camera!... in a land and culture of stunning Himalayan scenery with people and a way of life that will touch your hearts forever. Combine your love of photography with the wonderful world of travel to this unique spiritual land.

Putting you in the Picture. Travel through remote locations in Bhutan that see few tourists on our customized photography adventure; visit schools and spend time with the children as part of a cultural program and donation of school supplies; capture farmers harvesting crops; watch the mists swirl in the valleys to reveal breathtaking mountain views; share a family's home for the day; experience the splashes of color and vibrancy of a festival; explore the sights and sounds of a market; be charmed by the smiles of monks; share a cooking lesson Bhutanese style; marvel over magnificent architectural sites; get a feel for the spirituality of Buddhism that threads its way into everyday life; relax in a hot stone bath after strolling through rustic rural villagesin the Land of the Thunder Dragon for 19 days !

Take home with You. A sense of spirituality, serenity, sounds of chanting, smiles both inside and out, scents of ema datse, success of learning new things, self confidence with your picture taking, and sheer delight from your travel experiences both in life and in your images you have captured that will stay with you for a long time to come on our fully guided *Live & Breathe Bhutan* journey with Informal Photography.

Planned for Photographers. Small group travel of 6-12, fully guided with Australian Professional Photographer, Sue Tanian, for informal one on one and group tuition for entire trip with the assistance of local English speaking guides. Notes accompany our customized itinerary which is designed with photographers in mind to make the most of a need for unhurried travel, learning time and

lighting conditions. A general level of fitness is required to make it more enjoyable. Landscapes, people, environmental portraits, children, farming, culture, ancient traditional architecture, amazing monasteries and breathtaking mountain passes will keep us busy! This is not a trekking tour but there is walking involved if you wish. We will have our own private transport and drivers allowing us more freedom, efficiency of time and flexibility.

Special Feature. *And as if visiting Bhutan's stunning sights to keep your cameras busy isn't enough an absolute highlight of Live & Breathe Bhutan are the feature sessions organized throughout the tour where you will get the opportunity to meet, talk with and photograph individual people of Bhutan who have their own stories to tell.....*





Live & Breathe Bhutan is for all experience levels with an aim to encouraging Beginners to Intermediate photographers with an emphasis on learning how to capture your images with the best use of your camera and compositional skills. Sue has been conducting workshops for over 15 years.

Camera type does not matter...this is about learning to use what you have to make the most of you the photographer! Photos are formed before your finger hits the button so learning to see will open up a whole new world of creative thinking! And is that what that button does!

Sessions are optional and informal, relaxed and fun with free time for those who wish. Non photographers very welcome indeed!

Bhutan has such a rich array of life, charm and beauty that you will come away with some **amazing pictures of this country and it's people** in your heart and in your camera!! What a wonderful classroom we will have! You will have the added advantage of travelling with other photographers alike which only helps to

further enhance your learning experience. Cultural awareness and sensitivity will be reflected in all that we do.

It is the ideal combination of holiday, school support, learning and travel where I look forward to sharing my passion for photography with you in this amazing place.

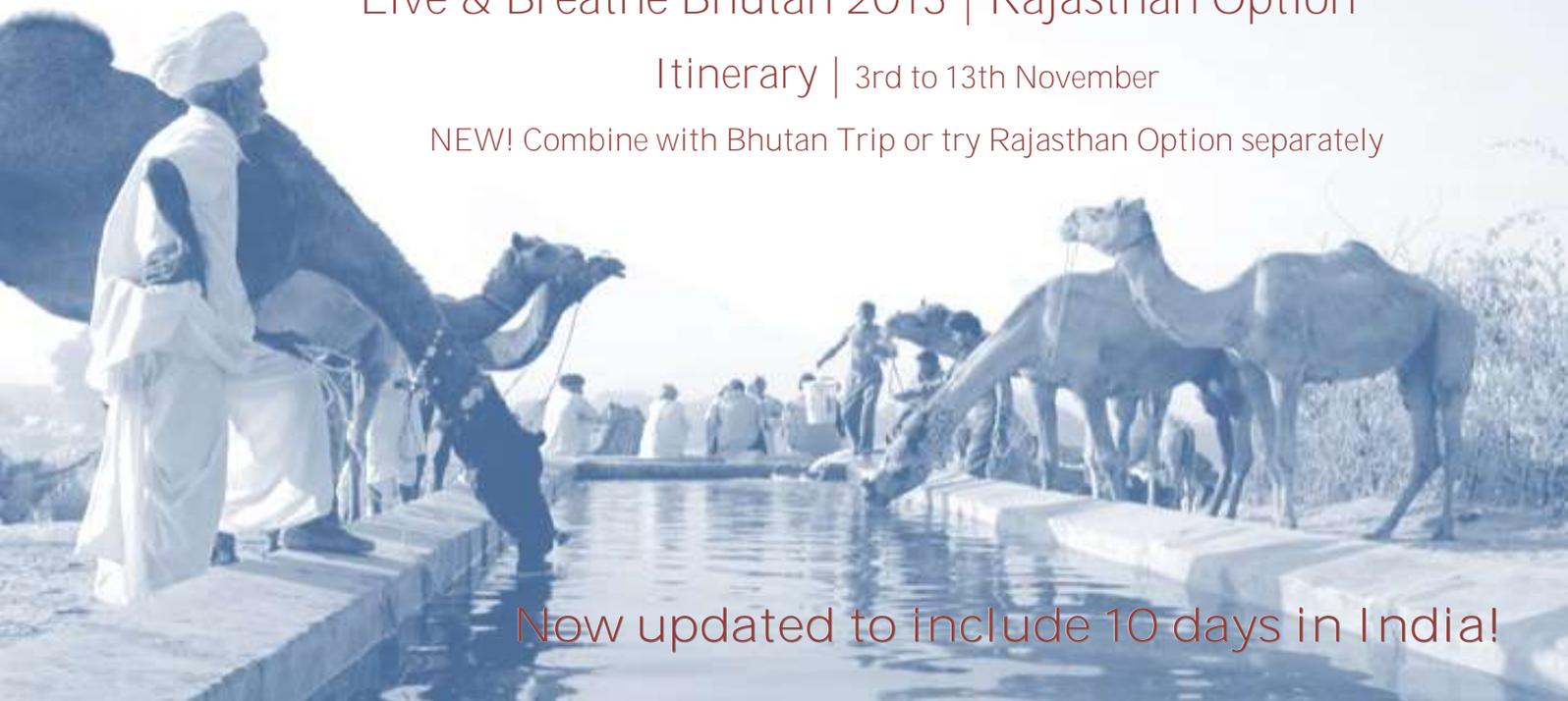
Travel in Bhutan is not luxury travel. Travel is slow and roads are winding. Life and conditions are not always as we know it. Rooms are basic but clean, service slow but friendly. All you need is a sense of adventure, a sense of wonderment with new experiences, and plenty of memory cards for your camera!
Live & Breathe Bhutan!



Live & Breathe Bhutan 2013 | Rajasthan Option

Itinerary | 3rd to 13th November

NEW! Combine with Bhutan Trip or try Rajasthan Option separately



Now updated to include 10 days in India!

Day 01 & 02 | New Delhi to Agra | 3rd-4th Nov | Sunday-Monday

Welcome to India! On arrival to New Delhi airport our tour starts by driving towards the amazing Taj Mahal. Enjoy Dawali celebrations with a local family. Early start to see the Taj Mahal by sunrise, visit Agra Fort and Fatehpur Sikri, Taj by sunset.

Overnight | Agra

Day 03 | Agra to Jaipur | 5th Nov | Tuesday

More sunrise photography & river boat ride for different viewpoints. A chance to visit the national park at Bharatpur enroute if we wish and the fascinating 1000 yr old Abhaneri Stepwell.

Overnight | Jaipur

Day 04 | Jaipur to Jodhpur | 6th Nov | Wednesday

Fancy an elephant ride to Amber Fort? Enjoy wonderful views over the pink city from the Hawa Mahal, a truly magnificent sandstone structure from 1799 and the ideal place to watch life go by. Drive to Jodhpur. Take a walk in the old town.

Overnight | Jodhpur

Day 05 | Jodhpur | 7th Nov | Thursday

Early morning walk in the old city to catch the goings-on of a new day. It is an excellent place for photography with its blue walls, narrow streets, traditional dress and the fantastically chaotic bazaars. Visit Mahrangarh Fort and Jaswant Thada. Later in the day we will be enthralled by the sights and sounds of the bustling bazaars famous for their textiles, gems, carpets and spice shops. Dinner on the rooftop of a fort...wow! Music, dancing, candlelight...and views to stun.

Overnight : Jodhpur

Day 06 | Jodhpur to Pushkar | 8th Nov | Friday

Another chance to watch and photograph the sunrise over the Blue City as it comes to life before we start our journey to one of the holiest cities in Rajasthan-Pushkar!

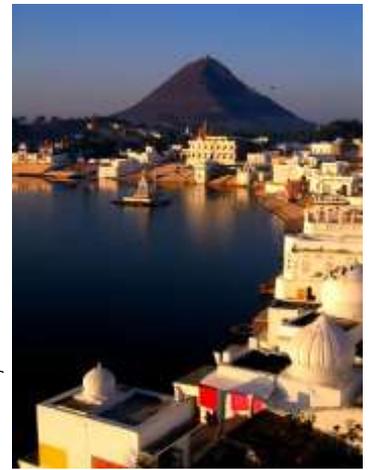
Pushkar is renowned for its colourful and culturally entertaining cattle and camel fair. Women wearing colourful local dresses and men in their fluorescent turbans can be seen everywhere trading their livestock...50,000 animals in fact! Those cameras will be kept busy! You will enjoy our stay in luxury tented accommodation in a quieter area set amongst an orchard but still close to the action.

Overnight : Pushkar

Day 07 | Pushkar | 9th Nov | Saturday

Herders, nomads, camels, horses, cattle, farmers and traders appear from out of the desert to set up camp. Most trading takes place in these first days. This is the best time for photography of people and animals as you can move around more freely. You may like to hire a camel cart to explore the car-free zones where you can get right in to the heart of trading action with excellent photo opportunities. Although not part of your itinerary you **may even want to book a hot air balloon flight for a bird's eye view in the early morning light.**

Overnight : Pushkar



Day 08 | Pushkar | 10th Nov | Sunday

The fair rolls in to a carnival like atmosphere with all the carnival activities such as camel racing, tug-of-war, moustache and turban competitions and stalls of fabrics, jewellery, food, colourful traditional wall paintings, wrestling, fine Marwari horses being put through their paces, singing and dancing. Cultural shows and competitions for the local farmers with local artists providing entertainment and memorable nights around the campfire.

Overnight: Pushkar

Day 09 | Pushkar | 11th Nov | Monday

The fair also is a time of high religious significance where thousands of pilgrims throng to the town to take a holy dip in the sacred Pushkar lake to wash off their bad karma and to give a fresh start to their karmic lives. There are spiritual walks around the lake and the lighting of lanterns looks a wondrous sight as they float on the water in the fading light of day. Visit the temples and take in all the atmosphere. The last night for those just doing the Rajasthan Option.

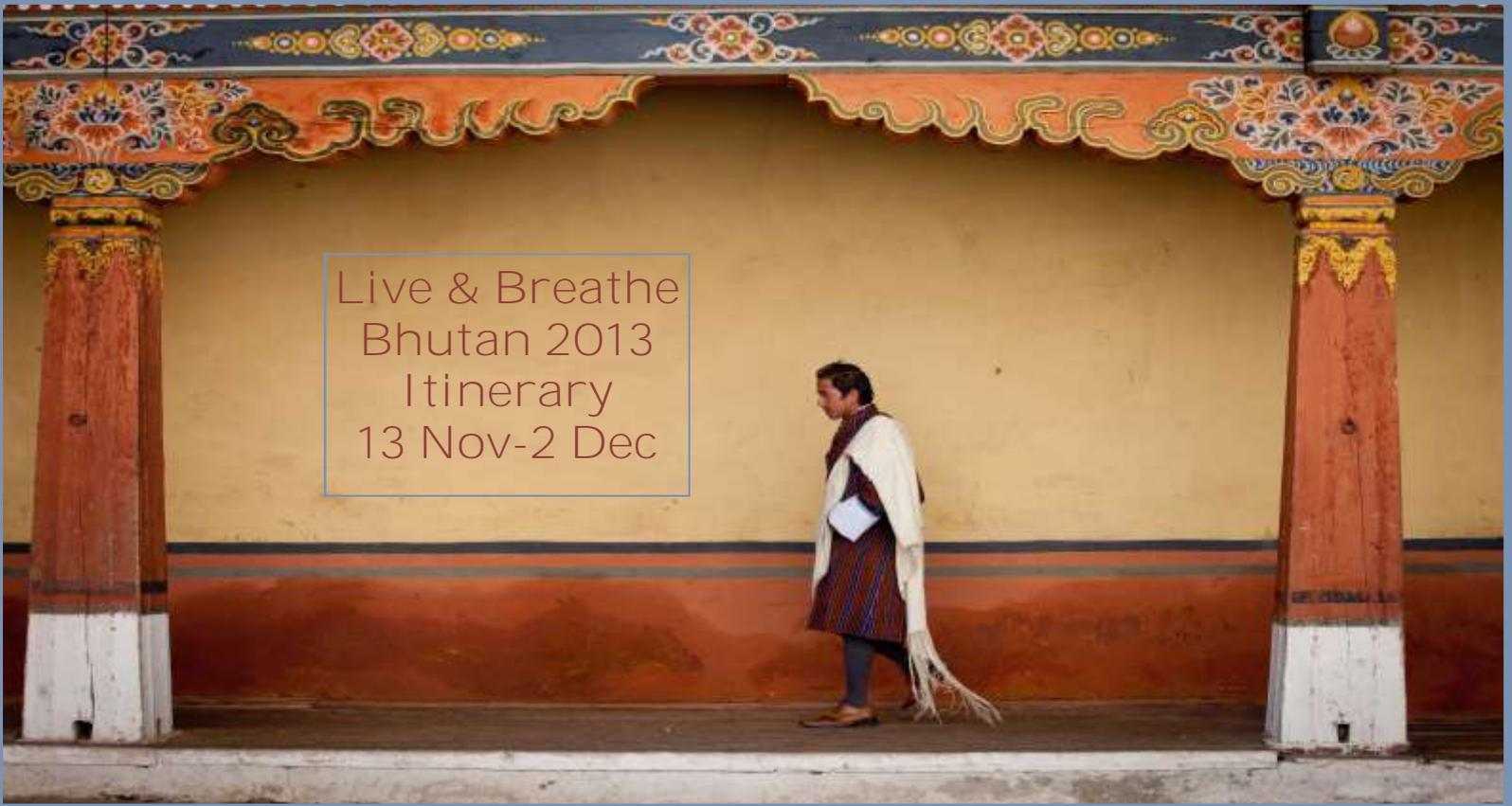
Overnight: Pushkar

Day 10 | Pushkar to Delhi | 12th Nov | Tuesday

A final morning at Pushkar before we head to Ajmer to board the executive class train journey back to Delhi for our last night in glorious India for those continuing on to the Land of the Thunder Dragon! End of the Rajasthan Option and transfers to airport for those heading home after a farewell dinner.

Overnight: Delhi
(Bhutan tour only)





Live & Breathe
Bhutan 2013
Itinerary
13 Nov-2 Dec

Day 01 | Delhi to Bhutan | 13th Nov | Wednesday

Transfer to airport for flight to Bhutan. Upon arrival in amazing Bhutan transfer to our hotel in the capital of Thimphu (1 hr) and take the afternoon to visit the Memorial Chorten with religious people chanting as they circle the stupa. View the largest Buddha statue. Visit Thimphu fortress.

Overnight: Thimphu | Alt: 2300m

Day 02 | Thimphu | 14th Nov | Thursday

Handmade Paper Factory, School of Arts & Crafts, National Library, Folk Museum. Traditional Medicines Institute. Dechenphodrang Monastic School, Zilukha nunnery, unusual national treasure the Takin. Afternoon hike to Tango/Cheri monastery. Wonderful opportunity to photograph the students and monks.

Overnight | Thimphu | Alt: 2300m

Day 03 | Thimphu to Punakha (3hrs) | 15th Nov | Friday

Morning around Thimphu and afternoon drive to Punakha over the Dochula Pass 3200mts. Walk around the 108 stupas and enjoy the view of the mountain chains. Continue to the warm valley of Punakha.

Overnight | Punakha | Alt: 1350m

Day 04 | Punakha | 16th Nov | Saturday

Morning walk to the nunnery with great views. Punakha Dzong, Souvenir making centre and afternoon to Chimi Lhakhang.

Overnight | Punakha | Alt: 1350m

Day 05 | Punakha to Jakar (8 hrs) | 17th Nov | Sunday

Today will be our longest drive for the trip but we will be taking in many stops to visit villages and see life as it is with some beautiful landscapes to photograph along the way.

Overnight| Jakar | Alt: 2650m

Day 06 | Jakar Festival | 18th Nov | Monday

Get those cameras ready! Morning visit the Nalaxhar Festival full of colour, action, beauty and all the activities that go with a festival. Colourful mask dances, singing, music, people and entertaining 'clowns' will keep you busy. Afternoon explore Jakar.

Overnight| Jakar | Alt: 2650m

Day 07 | Jakar Festival | 19th Nov | Tuesday

Take in more action at the festival this morning mixing with the locals. Stroll around Jakar taking in the sights.

Overnight| Jakar | Alt: 2650m

Day 08 | Jakar to Tang (2hrs) | 20th Nov | Wednesday

Morning to Ngaa lakhang temple followed by picturesque drive to Tang. Have an option of a hike at the end of the road to the guesthouse.

Overnight| O'Chholing Guest House | Alt: 2800m

Day 09 | Tang Village Activity | 21st Nov | Thursday

Today we get to join in with local villagers for a prayer flag hoisting ceremony for your good merits, archery, khuru (dart) throwing, dancing, singing then lunching with the villagers. This is a wonderful time to interact with the local people. A day to remember. Visit the impressive museum. Smiles, laughter and an overwhelming feeling of love for all things Bhutanese will ensure this day will be captured not only by your cameras but in your hearts too. The Bhutanese have a cheeky sense of humour you will love!

Overnight| O'Chholing Guest House | Alt: 2800m

Day 10 | Tang to Trongsa (4.5hrs) | 22nd Nov | Friday

Morning drive and visit the museum/Dzong

Overnight | Trongsa | Alt: 2200m



Day 11 | Trongsa to Tingtibi, Shemgang (5hrs) | 23rd Nov | Saturday

Drive to Tingtibi to experience some wildlife photography. Enroute visit Kuenga Rabten, the winter palace of the 2nd King and the rustic village of Eusha.

Overnight | Tent Camping | Alt: 200m

Day 12 | Tingtibi | 24th Nov | Sunday

Morning start to location where we hope to find Golden Langur monkeys and Horn Bill birds to photograph. We were enthralled by these monkeys leaping through the lush forests and quite excited to capture them mid-leap with our cameras.

Overnight| Tent Camping | Alt: 200m



Day 13 | Tingtibi to Phobjikha (7hrs) | 25th Nov | Monday

Start our journey back to the remote valley of Phobjikha with rustic villages and landscapes.

Overnight | Phobjikha | Alt: 2900m

Day 14 | Phobjikha | 26th Nov | Tuesday

Take a beautiful hike along the nature trail visiting Gangtey Goempa temple. A real highlight of our journey will be a lunchtime cooking class in a village farm house. This will be fun as we learn cooking Bhutanese style! This area is the home of the endangered Black Necked crane. Nature and landscape lovers will enjoy this region. Strolling through this peaceful village and lovely valley will delight. The lodge is basic but traditional and is one of my favourite places with wall paintings, carvings, and cosy wood stoves to keep you warm.

Overnight | Phobjikha | Alt: 2900m

Day 15 | Phobjikha to Hebesa (1.5hrs) | 27th Nov | Wednesday

Drive to the remote community school and enjoy a stroll around the area and visit their unique temple...the one that moved many of us to tears! It was truly a wonderful experience. Stunning views to take your breath away.

Overnight | Tent Camping | Alt: 1500m

Day 16 | Hebesa to Punakha (1.5hrs) | 28th Nov | Thursday

Another true highlight will be the time we spend with the gorgeous children from this remote school where you will love interacting with the students and taking part in a photo shoot of their classroom photos. Enjoy a cultural program with the school that we have started to support by way of school supplies purchased in Bhutan.

Overnight | Punakha | Alt: 1350m



Day 17 | Punakha to Paro | 29th Nov | Friday

Morning drive to Paro over Dochula Pass for our magnificent afternoon hike to Tiger's Nest monastery (2hrs uphill). This is the most revered temple in the country that literally hangs on a granite cliff overlooking Paro Valley. A welcome teahouse awaits nearing the top for those who wish to rest. I was humbled on my last walk here by a gorgeous man nearing 80 who had dreamed all his life of taking the pilgrimage to this site...he had the biggest toothy grin you could imagine!

Overnight | Paro | Alt: 2200m

Day 18 & 19 | Paro | 30th Nov | Saturday & Sunday

Full day excursion to Chelela Pass, one of the highest motorable roads in Bhutan, with views of the Himalayas and colourful spiritual prayer flags make this a special place. On a clear day you can view the highest snowy mountain peak in Bhutan, Mt Jumolhari 7300m. Farewell dinner with bonfire.

Overnight | Paro | Alt: 2200m

Day 20 | Paro to Kolkata | 2nd Dec | Monday

"Laso la" Bhutan and our wonderful guides. Say our sad farewell to beautiful Bhutan as we depart for our flight to Kolkata (Calcutta) for our return journey. Option for overnight stay in divine accommodation to freshen up for the flight home the next day. Dine to your hearts content on delicious cuisine (we have been known to disappear in a mountain of food for hours here!), amazing shopping on your doorstep, or simply laze by the pool. A wonderful way to relax and absorb our amazing journey of the last weeks.

Optional Overnight | Kolkata



Live & Breathe Bhutan 2013 with Rajasthan Option

Photography Tour Price

10 day Rajasthan Option & 20 day Bhutan \$9205

(combine & save \$375!)

Rajasthan Option Only \$2200

Bhutan Only \$7380

Rajasthan Option Includes : Stylish Accommodation, all breakfasts, all meals during stay in Pushkar, English speaking guide, transportation in air-conditioned Toyota Innova vehicle, assistance at arrival and departure points, executive class train fare Ajmer-Delhi, taxes, tolls, drivers allowance, professional photographer with one-on-one & group tuition, workshop notes.

Rajasthan Option Excludes : personal expenses such as tips, laundry, phone, beverages, any extra meals, entrance to monuments, optional activities, International airfare, visa (double entry India visa needed if combining with Bhutan tour), vaccinations & medical, travel insurance with emergency evacuation (compulsory).

Bhutan Tour Includes : International flight Delhi-Paro-Kolkata, all accommodation, all meals, bottled water, all transportation in our own vehicles, English speaking Bhutanese guides, taxes, gifts, school donation, cultural activity, visa, entry fees to sites, professional photographer with one-on-one & group tuition, workshop notes.

Bhutan Tour Excludes : International airfare arriving Delhi and departing Kolkata, travel insurance with emergency evacuation (compulsory), personal expenses, laundry, beverages, extra activities, tips, extra gifts, vaccinations & medical, optional last night in Kolkata (please advise Sue)

*Passport must have more than 6 months of validity

**Bookings confirmed upon payment of deposit.

Please contact Sue for Booking Forms, Payments & Details.

Email: informalphotography@wideband.net.au

or Phone: 0407355670 or 03 51924686

Please ask if we can assist in flight bookings, visa applications and tour needs.

Informal Photography offsets its air travel carbon usage with a tree planting program and provides a printer friendly version of your itinerary on the website.

www.informalphotography.com.au

FAQs

Q. What will the temperatures be?

- A. Rajasthan will be approaching winter and post-monsoon with temps averaging between 13-30 C. Bhutan will be starting to get cooler with quite chilly nights and comfortable day temps of 16-24C.

Q. Why is Bhutan dearer than most Asian countries to visit?

- A. A daily tariff is imposed to help regulate tourism that covers most of your daily living and travelling costs. It is a nice thought to know that by visiting Bhutan you are contributing to the education and health systems of their country and supporting local businesses.

Q. What do I take?

- A. Upon booking you will receive a list of recommended items to take. Dressing in layers, as bushwalkers do, with easy drying clothes and travelling light will benefit yourself not to mention the young men and women that carry our luggage from the vehicles to our rooms! Suitcases are allowed but try to keep them to a medium size. Check in luggage limit is 20kg and 7kg for carry-on luggage. Modest clothing is a must! Covering legs with long pants or skirts and shoulders and arms with sleeves or wrap around the monasteries is required....leave tight fitting and revealing clothing at home please!

Q. What money do I take?

- A. Generally US Dollars is easiest. ATMs are fickle if you can get them at all. Credit cards are limited. In reality you will need little money in Bhutan as everything is paid for...some for laundry, souvenirs, beverages and incidentals. Small denominations of Indian rupees are fine.

Q. What can I expect?

- A. Drink bottled or boiled water only. Some lodgings are basic but clean, service slow but friendly. Enjoy Indian, Chinese and continental food buffet style..and chilies! International roaming available in nearly all areas of Bhutan. Sunrise 6.30am and sunset 5pm. Noon in Bhutan is 5pm in Melbourne. Bhutan is one of the safest countries in the world to travel. Some elevations of over 3000m but sleep generally around 2300 and lower. Learn what is respectful from your guide. Internet available at some hotels. Learn about Gross National Happiness. Population is 75% rural. Bring earplugs...the dogs of Bhutan sleep by day and bark by night! Visit your doctor for travel health and vaccination advice and take antibiotics and all medication with you from home. Expect power outages...keep batteries charged whenever you can. Be prepared that life in India and Bhutan is not how we live at home so some culture change will be expected. It is thrilling, moving, simple, fun and at times full on! An absolute delight for the senses and your camera! Remote travel. Charming people. Strictly no photography in temples. Traditional dress for foreigners is happily accepted. Do not give sweets or money to children.

India and Bhutan will surprise, delight, excite, sometimes overwhelm and without doubt will totally absorb your senses!



Live & Breathe Bhutan with Rajasthan Option looks forward to sharing your journey!



www.informalphotography.com.au