



Earthbound Expeditions

Jhomolhari and Lingshi trek in Bhutan with Nepal

16 days, from US$4,867 per person

Duration	Group size	Country
16 days	**10 people**	**Bhutan**

Jhomolhari and Lingshi trek in Bhutan with Nepal Overview

Trekking in the Bhutan Himalaya. The Chomolhari trek takes you to the base camp of Mt. Jhomolhari, the most venerated peak in Bhutan, on the border between Bhutan and the Tibetan region of China.

Trekking in the Bhutan Himalaya
The Chomolhari trek in Bhutan takes you to the base camp of Mt. Jhomolhari, the most venerated peak in Bhutan, on the border between Bhutan and the Tibetan region of China. The trek gives you an experience of life at high altitude, where the pace of life is very different. The Chomolhari trek, also known as the Jhomolhari trek, starts at Drukgyel Dzong in Paro.

The Jhomolhari and Lingshi trek in Bhutan passes through small villages and farmland into a deep, forested valley that leads up to high alpine pastures where yak herders graze their animals. The trek shows you a wide variety of Bhutanese landscapes. The best time for the Chomolhari trek is from the end of March to June and from September to November. This 16-day trip includes 4 days in Nepal and 12 days in Bhutan, so you can see both countries. It is a fully supported camping trek with good meals and the hospitality of the people of Nepal and Bhutan. You can also combine this trip with a festival in Bhutan or Nepal.

Itinerary

Day 1

Arrive in Kathmandu, Nepal

An Earthbound Expeditions representative meets you at Tribhuvan International Airport, Kathmandu, holding an Earthbound Expeditions sign. We transfer you to your hotel, and the rest of the day is free to rest. Overnight at the hotel.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, arrival day Night: Hotel, Kathmandu Meals: None

Day 2

Kathmandu sightseeing and drive to Nagarkot

After breakfast, we go on a sightseeing tour of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Kathmandu: Swayambhunath, the oldest Buddhist stupa in the Kathmandu Valley, is home to many monkeys, which is why it is also known as the Monkey Temple, and has good views over the valley. Pashupatinath is a holy Hindu pilgrimage site and cremation ground, where you can see Hindu cremations taking place and sadhus, Hindu holy men with ash-covered bodies and matted hair. Boudhanath is one of the largest Buddhist stupas in the world and a centre of Tibetan Buddhism, where we can visit monasteries and watch monks chanting as they walk around the stupa. Patan Durbar Square is a medieval royal palace area in the city known for its fine arts, with metal and stone carving dating back to the 14th century and traditional Nepali architecture. Later, we drive for about 1.5 hours to Nagarkot, a hill station 32 km east of Kathmandu known for its sunrise and mountain views. From here you can see the Langtang range and other mountains, including Shishapangma, Dorje Lakpa and Gaurishankar, and on a very clear day a small part of Mt. Everest. The weather at Nagarkot is cool. Overnight at a hotel.

Altitude: 2,175 m On foot: Easy walking, 2–3 hrs Night: Hotel, Nagarkot Meals: Breakfast

Day 3

Sunrise at Nagarkot, Bhaktapur and return to Kathmandu

Wake early for the sunrise. After breakfast, we check out of the hotel and drive for about 40 minutes to Bhaktapur for a sightseeing tour of this World Heritage town. After about 2 hours in Bhaktapur, we return to Kathmandu and check in to the hotel. The rest of the day is free to prepare for the Bhutan trip, which starts tomorrow.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: Easy walking, 2–3 hrs Night: Hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Breakfast

Day 4

Fly from Kathmandu to Paro

Fly to Paro. On a clear day there are panoramic views of the Himalaya, including Everest. The approach through the Bhutanese foothills includes several steep turns before landing at the small airstrip of Paro International Airport. After immigration formalities, your guide meets you at the exit gate. We drive to the hotel, and in the afternoon visit the National Museum, housed in an old watchtower above Paro Dzong (a dzong is a fortress-monastery). The museum's collection includes fine thangkas (religious scroll paintings). We also visit Paro Dzong, built in 1644.

Altitude: 2,200 m On foot: Easy walking, 1–2 hrs Night: Hotel, Paro Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5

Paro Valley sightseeing

You can hike to Taktsang Monastery, one of the most sacred Buddhist sites. The walk of 3 to 4 hours through oak and pine forest leads to a viewpoint 1000 metres above the valley floor, where you can see the temple built on the side of the cliff. Overnight at a hotel.

Altitude: 2,200 m On foot: 3–4 hrs Night: Hotel, Paro Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 6

Drive to Shana and begin the trek to Sharna Zampa

The day begins with a drive of an hour and a half past Drukgyel Dzong and along the valley. Drukgyel Dzong was built to commemorate Bhutan's victory over the Tibetan armies and to guard the Paro valley against further attacks. We continue past Shana village to a military checkpoint, where the pack ponies are loaded with the gear for the trek. After lunch, we trek for about two and a half hours to our first campsite by the river.

Altitude: 2,870 m On foot: 2–3 hrs Night: Tented camp, Sharna Zampa Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7

Trek from Sharna Zampa to Soi Thangthangkha

We continue up the valley of the Paro River, which narrows as the trail climbs, winding up and down through dense forest of oak, pine and juniper. The trail becomes very rocky and strenuous, with many ascents and descents as we gradually gain altitude. As we approach the camp, we begin to see the snow-covered summit of Jhomolhari, a mountain sacred to the Bhutanese, if the weather is clear. This is a long, hard day with many ascents and descents and walking over rocks. We camp at Soi Thangthangkha.

Altitude: 3,610 m On foot: 22 km, 7–8 hrs Night: Tented camp, Soi Thangthangkha Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 8

Trek from Soi Thangthangkha to Jangothang

We continue along the Paro River on a demanding, rocky trail. The valley then widens into an open area surrounded by high snow-covered ridges. A few yak-herding families live in this area, and we may have the chance to try their dried yak cheese.

Altitude: 4,080 m On foot: 19 km, 5–6 hrs Night: Tented camp, Jangothang Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 9

Rest day at Jangothang

Today is a rest day. You can walk to the glaciers of Jhomolhari or up the ridge between Jhomolhari and Jichu Drake to about 16,500 ft, from where you have close views of both mountains.

Altitude: 4,080 m On foot: Optional 3–4 hrs Night: Tented camp, Jangothang Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 10

Trek from Jangothang to Soi Yaksa

Today you can either walk over the Bonte La (16,000 ft) or walk back down a short way and up another river valley to the camp. The route over the pass takes about 8 hours, with a steep climb followed by a descent of about 3 hours to the camp. The valley route has small ascents and descents and takes about 6 to 7 hours. The camp is at 12,450 ft. A free day at this campsite gives you time to rest, and possibly to visit a yak herder's home or hike in the surrounding mountains, where large herds of blue sheep have been seen.

Altitude: 3,800 m On foot: 16 km, 6–8 hrs Night: Tented camp, Soi Yaksa Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 11

Trek from Soi Yaksa to Thombu via Thombu La

Today's hike starts with a gentle climb to the top of the eastern ridge of the Soi Yaksa valley, which has views of a semicircle of mountains to the north. As we approach our lunch stop, the summits of Jhomolhari and Jichu Drake gradually reappear on the horizon. After lunch, we cross the Thombu La, a pass at 15,000 ft with panoramic views of the eastern Himalaya (on a clear day you can see Kanchenjunga, the third highest mountain in the world), before descending to our camp at Thombu (13,700 ft) by mid-afternoon. This area is rich yak pasture, and we will probably see nomadic yak herders camped in their traditional woollen tents.

Altitude: 4,180 m On foot: 11 km, 4–5 hrs Night: Tented camp, Thombu Shong Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 12

Trek from Thombu to Shana and drive to Thimphu (end of trek)

We leave the mountains by following a ridge, from which we can see the Paro valley to the south. We then descend steeply (4500 ft of elevation loss) for most of the afternoon and return to Shana. Here we say goodbye to our staff and ponies and take the van for the two-and-a-half-hour drive to Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan, at 2330 m in the Wang Chu valley. In the evening, we visit Tashichho Dzong, the fortress of the glorious religion, which houses the throne room of His Majesty the King.

Altitude: 2,320 m On foot: 13 km, 4–5 hrs Night: Hotel, Thimphu Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 13

Thimphu to Punakha

In the morning, visit the Memorial Chorten (stupa), built in memory of the late third king, followed by Kuensel Phodrang, where the tallest statue of the Buddha stands. There is a good view of the Thimphu Valley from here. In the afternoon, drive to Punakha (around 3 hours). The road zigzags up to the Dochula Pass (3050 metres), which has views of the snow-covered eastern Himalaya if the weather permits, then descends gradually through varied forest into the cultivated Punakha valley. Overnight at a hotel.

Altitude: 1,200 m On foot: None, 3 hr drive Night: Hotel, Punakha Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 14

Punakha to Paro

This morning, visit Chimi Lhakhang, a temple dedicated to Drukpa Kunley, known in the West as the Divine Madman. The temple is reached by a walk of about 20 minutes through paddy fields and past a few farmhouses. Visit Punakha Dzong, one of the most impressive dzongs in the country, at the confluence of the Pho Chu and Mo Chu rivers, whose names mean male river and female river. Punakha was formerly the capital of Bhutan. In the afternoon, drive to Paro over the Dochula Pass, which takes about 4 to 5 hours.

Altitude: 2,200 m On foot: None, 4–5 hr drive Night: Hotel, Paro Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 15

Fly from Paro to Kathmandu

Drive to the airport for your flight back to Kathmandu. We meet you on arrival and take you to your hotel in Kathmandu (breakfast and dinner included). You can choose to go sightseeing in Kathmandu Durbar Square or the Thamel area. In the evening, we invite you to a Nepali cultural show and dinner.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, flight day Night: Hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 16

Departure

We transfer you to the airport for your departure at the end of the Nepal and Bhutan tour.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, departure day Night: No overnight Meals: Breakfast

What's included

- All accommodation in Nepal and Bhutan.
- Full board meals in Bhutan.
- Private transfers.
- Sightseeing tour.
- Professional English-speaking tour guides.
- All airport pick-ups and transfers.
- Farewell dinner with a Nepali cultural show.
- Return flights from Kathmandu to Bhutan, with mountain views.
- Trekking and travel permits.
- Bhutan visa fees.
- Entrance fees to the main monuments in Bhutan.

Not included

- Personal travel insurance.
- All personal items.
- A few lunches and dinners.
- Tips for guides and drivers.
- Mountain and road rescue.
- Other emergency evacuations, which are charged if necessary.
- Expenses arising from illness, landslides, political disturbances, re-routing, flight cancellations and any other unforeseen events outside our control.
- Drinks, telephone bills, laundry, postage, etc.
- Nepal visa: USD 25.
- Kathmandu Valley heritage monument entrance fees: approximately USD 35, payable on arrival.

Photos, videos and reviews of this trip: earthbound.rajansimkhada.com/jhomolhari-and-lingshi-trek-in-bhutan