



Tiger's Nest Monastery, Bhutan

Obstetrics and Gynaecology in Nepal and Bhutan

19 – 30 April 2020





The “Artist’s City” of Patan, Nepal

Nepal and Bhutan both possess extraordinarily rich cultures and history, as well as some of the most spectacular landscapes in the world; from lush subtropical forest to soaring Himalayan peaks. Nepal boasts distinctive ethnic groups and languages, striking architecture, vivid colours and vibrant street life, making it a treat for the senses. Bhutan is unlike anywhere else in the world; a mountain kingdom with a Gross National Happiness Index, which its kings rank more highly than Gross Domestic Product. One of the last great Buddhist kingdoms, Bhutan is simultaneously protective of its traditions – such as its national sport of archery - as well as having an educated and outward looking population.

Throughout the tour there will be several professional visits looking at obstetrics and gynaecology and its development in Nepal and Bhutan, as well as visits to projects designed to help and empower women.

The tour starts in historic Kathmandu, a city that is an exhilarating sensory overload of sounds, sights and smells, crammed with extraordinary cultural and artistic treasures that rival anything

to be found in Europe. Visit majestic Durbar Square with its stepped temples, pagodas and palaces, the Old Royal Darjeeling Palace and the Temple of the Kumari Devi, the real-life child goddess who reigns until the onset of puberty. Visit magnificent Bodnath Stupa just outside Kathmandu, one of the largest Tibetan stupas in the world, and the great Buddhist temple of Swayambhunath. You will also visit the Tibetan Monastery and the Eastern Ghats before a welcome dinner in the evening.

Next morning visit the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Kathmandu Medical College, while partners visit Bhaktapur City, known as



Mother and baby in Nepal



Rooftops of Kathmandu

the City of Devotees. After lunch explore the fabulous artistic and architectural heritage of Patan, which contains the most visually stunning display of Newari architecture in Nepal.

The following day visit a government-run women's hospital while partners spend the morning at leisure. In the afternoon visit the Himalayan Mountain Rescue Association to hear about their work and how they treat medical conditions in extreme environments.

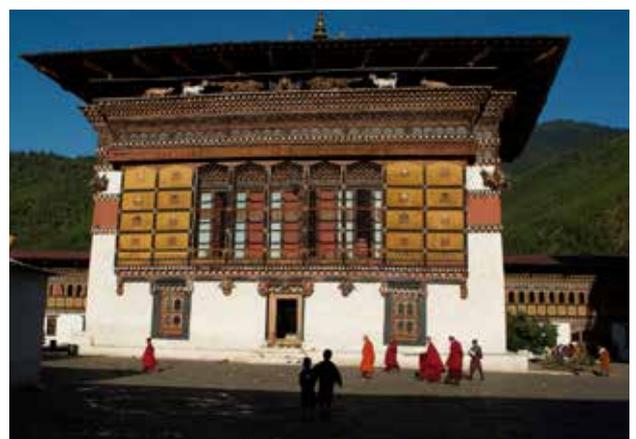
The next morning fly to Bhutan. Arrive in historic Paro, set within a wide and verdant valley, and meet your Bhutanese guide before driving to Thimphu - an unusual capital city with just 100,000 inhabitants. Still deeply traditional, the few cars in the city are directed by white-gloved traffic policeman in ornate booths instead of traffic lights. Spend the afternoon on a walking tour of this charming city, including the local market.

Make a visit to the National Folk Heritage Museum the next morning for a fascinating glimpse into the history and traditional culture of Bhutan, followed by lunch at the museum's Bhutanese restaurant. In the afternoon visit RENEW Centre, an organisation dedicated to the empowerment of women and children in Bhutan.

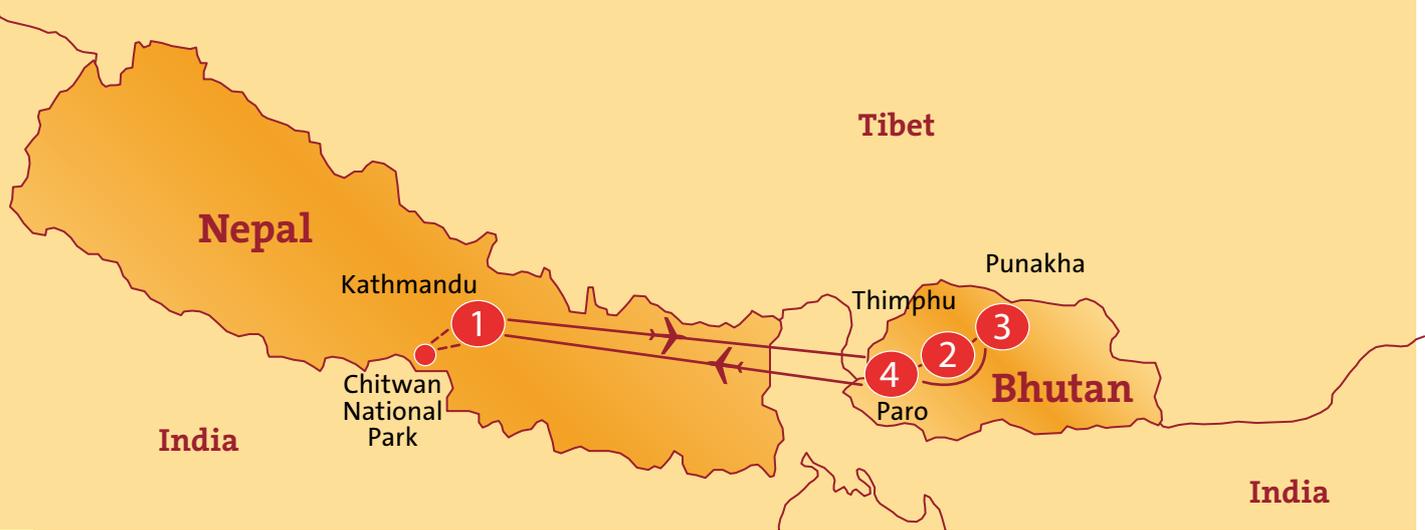
After breakfast the following day visit the National Chorten, a lovely example of Buddhist architecture and artwork with its paintings and

intricate sculptures, before driving to Punakha via the Dochula Pass. On a clear day this pass offers panoramic views of the snow-capped Bhutanese Himalayas, as well as being the site of 108 chortens built by the Queen Mother in 2003. In Punakha visit a government hospital that uses traditional Bhutanese medicine.

Next day explore the Punakha Valley, a fertile area that enjoys a balmy, mild climate where peaches, chillies and bananas thrive. It also served as the royal winter capital for many years, so it boasts some of the most impressive buildings in the country. Visit Punakha Dzong, or fortress, which is one of the most magnificent dzongs in Bhutan. The interior of the dzong is decorated with intricately carved wooden window frames and balconies in vivid colours. Continue to Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten - a lovely example of traditional Bhutanese architecture overlooking paddy fields - and Kabisa Valley before continuing to Talo Nunnery, which provides education, health and welfare to the local nuns of the area.



Women in Bhutan - Credit: Abhishek Hajela (top);
Thimphu, Bhutan (above)



Next morning make the scenic drive back to Paro. In the afternoon visit a government hospital and take a tour of its obstetrics and gynaecology department and meet with staff.

Next morning head up to the dramatic Taktsang (Tiger's Nest) Monastery, perched on the face of a sheer 1000 metre high cliff high in the mountains. The monastery is approached on foot, which takes around 2 hours with a break at a cafeteria on the way up. In the afternoon visit the large Paro Dzong, a stunning example of Bhutanese architecture, and the excellent National Museum, containing a rich blend of Bhutanese art and creative traditions from the past and present. Continue to the Buddhist temple of Kyichu Lhakhang, one of Bhutan's oldest and most beautiful temples.

Fly back to Kathmandu for a final afternoon at leisure before your farewell dinner. For early risers there is the option to take a morning flight for a view of Everest and the Himalayas before departing for the airport the following day.

Chitwan National Park Extension

Fly to Bharatpur airport and transfer to the plains and jungles of Chitwan National Park. The World Heritage listed reserve is home to tigers and rhinos and protects over 932 square km of forest, marshland and rippling grassland. It is one of the best wildlife viewing national parks in Asia and there are excellent chances of spotting one horned rhino, deer and monkeys as well as a huge variety of different bird species.

On arrival check into your lodge (there are two options available) with the rest of the day at leisure. The next day take part in the many activities that the lodge has to offer, including jungle walks, bird watching, ox cart rides, canoeing or visiting a local village. Fly back to Kathmandu the following day.



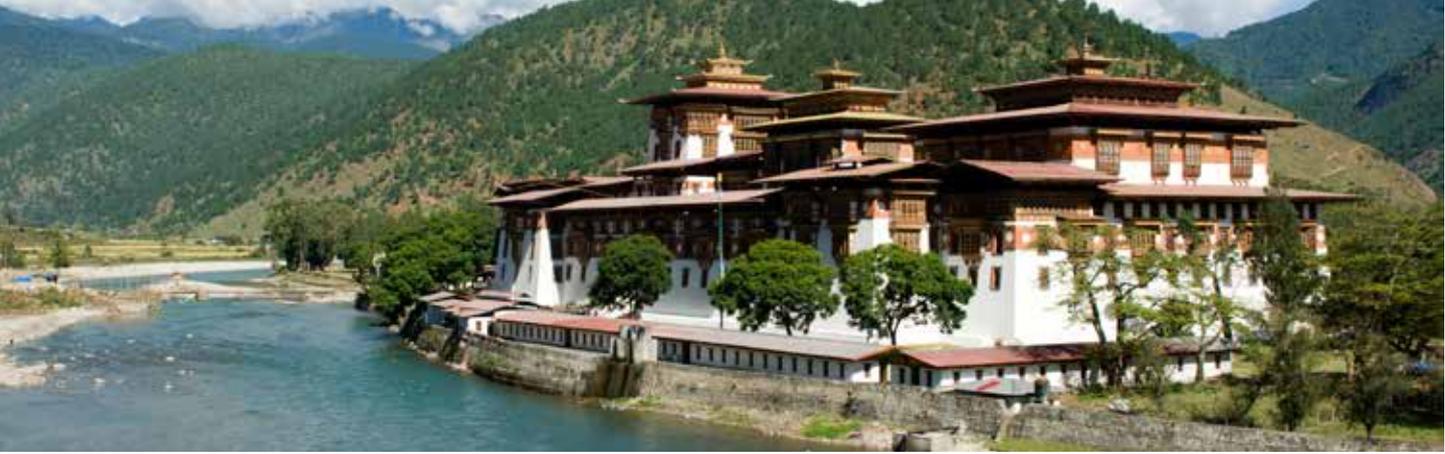
Itinerary 19 – 30 April 2020

B = Breakfast **L** = Lunch **D** = Dinner

4 nights Kathmandu – 2 nights Thimphu – 2 nights Punakha – 2 nights Paro – 1 night Kathmandu

19 Apr (Sun) Kathmandu D	Pm	Visit Kabisa Valley and continue to Talo Nunnery, which provides education, health and welfare to the local nuns of the area	
Pm	Arrive Kathmandu and transfer to the Yak and Yeti Hotel		
Eve	Dinner at the hotel		
20 Apr (Mon) Kathmandu D	Am	Full day tour of Kathmandu, including Durbar Square and the Royal Palace, and see the temple of the Living Goddess. Onto Bodnath Stupa, Swayambunath and the Tibetan Monastery. Visit the eastern ghats	
Eve	Welcome dinner at Mul Chowk restaurant		
21 Apr (Tues) Kathmandu B D	Am	Visit Kathmandu Medical College, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology. Partners will visit Bhaktapur, the City of Devotees	
Pm	Continue to the 'Artists' City' of Patan		
22 Apr (Wed) Kathmandu B D	Am	Visit to a government-run women's hospital. Partners at leisure	
Pm	Visit to the Himalayan Rescue Association to hear about their work treating medical conditions in extreme environments		
23 Apr (Thur) Kathmandu / Paro / Thimphu B D	Am	Morning flight to Paro in Bhutan and meet your Bhutanese guide	
Pm	Drive to Thimphu, the capital city. Walking tour of the town visiting the local market		
24 Apr (Fri) Thimphu B L D	Am	Morning visit to the National Folk Heritage Museum. Traditional Bhutanese lunch at the museum's restaurant	
Pm	Visit RENEW centre, an organisation dedicated to the empowerment of women and children in Bhutan		
25 Apr (Sat) Thimphu / Punakha B L D	Am	Visit the National Memorial Chorten	
Pm	Drive to Punakha, visiting Dochula Pass on the way. Visit a government hospital that uses traditional Bhutanese medicine		
26 Apr (Sun) Punakha B L D	Am	Visit Punakha Dzong and continue to Khamsum Yulley Namgyal Chorten	
27 Apr (Mon) Punakha / Paro B L D	Am	Drive back to Paro	
Pm	Visit Paro government hospital and its obstetrics and gynaecology department		
28 Apr (Tues) Paro B L D	Am	Visit the Tiger's Nest Monastery by foot*	
Pm	Visit the Paro Dzong and National Museum and the Buddhist temple of Kyichu Lhakhang		
29 Apr (Wed) Paro / Kathmandu B D	Am	Fly back to Kathmandu	
Pm	Afternoon at leisure		
Eve	Farewell dinner		
30 Apr (Thur) Kathmandu B	Am	Option of morning flight for a view of Everest	
Pm	Depart for airport or take extension to Chitwan		
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<h2>Extension to Chitwan</h2>			
<h3>30 April – 3 May 2020</h3>			
30 Apr (Thur) Kathmandu / Chitwan B D	Am	Option of morning flight for a view of Everest. Fly to Bharatpur airport	
Pm	Transfer to your lodge (there are two options available) and at leisure		
1 May (Fri) Chitwan National Park B L D	Am	Activities within the park	
2 May (Sat) Chitwan National Park / Kathmandu B D	Am	Fly back to Kathmandu	
Pm	Afternoon at leisure		
3 May (Sun) Kathmandu B	Am	Morning at leisure before going to the airport	

* The visit to the Tiger's Nest Monastery is by foot. It is uphill and takes approximately 2 hours. There is a café half way where those who do not feel up to the rest of the walk can wait. Alternatively, you can hire a horse to take you to the café.



Punakha Dzong, Bhutan

Hotels

Yak and Yeti Hotel (Kathmandu)

The Yak and Yeti hotel is situated in the heart of Kathmandu. The original hotel building is a heritage palace and brings history to life with its many wood carvings and decorative style. The hotel has a range of facilities including a pool, gym and vast gardens. The rooms are classic contemporary in style and are air conditioned. The hotel also has two restaurants and a piano bar.



Hotels in Bhutan

The names of the hotels in Bhutan will be confirmed in your joining instructions one month before travel. Due to the way the hotels operate in Bhutan we are not able to confirm them at the time of printing. The hotels will all be medium grade, clean and simply furnished in a traditional style with private facilities. The hotels will all be well located for sightseeing and exploring.



Extension Hotels

Jungle Village Resort (Chitwan National Park)

Located in the north of the National Park on the bank of the Rapti River, the lodge is surrounded by forest. The air-conditioned rooms are situated in cottages with private balconies. The lodge itself has a restaurant offering a variety of cuisines for lunch and dinner and a bar area to relax in.



Kasara Resort (Chitwan National Park)

Enjoy simple luxury in a natural setting in the heart of Chitwan National Park. The comfortable air-conditioned rooms come with a private water garden courtyard and a sun deck as well as indoor-outdoor bathing. The hotel also has a restaurant, bar and lounge as well as a spa.

Yak and Yeti hotel room, Kathmandu (top); Jungle Village Resort room, Chitwan; The reception at Kasara, Chitwan (above)

Tour Leader

Richard Warren is a consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist from the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital. He is a generalist in obstetrics and gynaecology with particular interest in menstrual irregularity, menorrhagia, hormone replacement, premenstrual syndrome and prolapse. He has local, regional and national involvement with training and education. He has served many years on RCOG Committees and RCOG Council and he is the past Honorary Secretary of the RCOG. He has been chairman of the RCOG Workforce Advisory Committee and has previously led very successful tours to South India, South Africa and Cuba with his wife, Jane. Both Richard and Jane have travelled widely and have a number of excellent personal and professional contacts in various destinations.

Flights

International flights and transfers are not included in the price of the tour, but we can help you organise these. For more information about flight options and prices, please contact either the London or the Melbourne office.

Bhaktapur City, Kathmandu (below); Bhutanese monks (bottom)



Tour price USD \$5,370 per person (excluding international flights and airport transfers)

The cost includes:

- 5 nights' accommodation in Nepal in a 4-star hotel; 6 nights' accommodation in Bhutan in 3- and 4-star hotels in twin share rooms with en suite facilities

Single supplement: USD \$776

- Tour leaders (Ric and Jane Warren)
- Comprehensive briefing notes
- Breakfast and dinner in Nepal and full board in Bhutan
- A full programme of cultural sightseeing and professional visits
- All admission fees
- National English-speaking guides in Nepal and Bhutan
- Flights from Kathmandu – Paro return
- All tips
- Visa for Bhutan

The cost excludes:

- International flights and airport transfers
- Meals not mentioned and drinks with meals
- All optional tours, excursions and visits
- Travel insurance
- Visa for Nepal

The cost of the extension staying at Jungle Villa Resort in Chitwan is USD \$1,003 per person

Single supplement: USD \$242

The cost of the extension staying at Kasara Resort in Chitwan is USD \$1,166 per person

Single supplement: USD \$302

The cost includes:

2 nights' accommodation in Chitwan National Park, 1 night accommodation in Kathmandu at the Yak and Yeti Hotel, Return flights Kathmandu to Bharatpur, all transport to and from Chitwan National Park, meals as per the itinerary, a range of daily activities in Chitwan National Park.

The cost excludes:

Meals not mentioned, drinks, any optional activities or tours, tips.

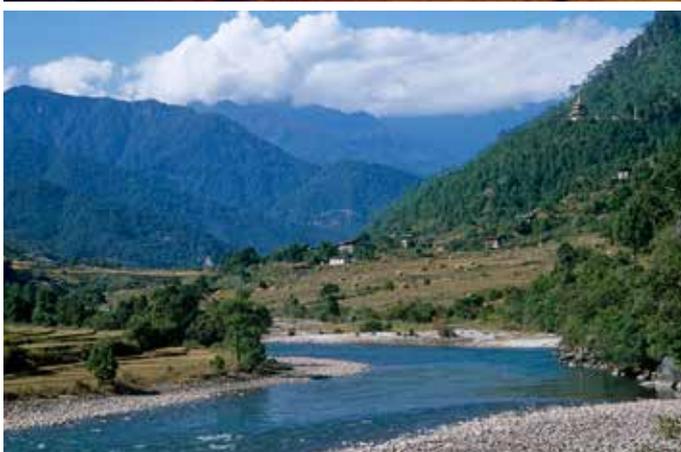
About Us

To travel with us is to dig below the surface, revealing the deeper destination. Of course, you will visit the great historical sites; marvel at the wonders of architecture and engineering; be moved by the riches of culture and art; and experience the most spectacular landscapes in the world. What we also do is make sure that you see the country as it is today, giving you privileged access that independent travel and other tour companies rarely get close to. We give you a variety of experiences, from the sublime to the humble, in the company of intelligent, curious, like-minded people. And while we can be worthy, we also make sure that you have a lot of fun.

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The Himalayas from Kathmandu Valley (top); Patan, Nepal;
Punakha Valley, Bhutan; Archery, the national sport in Bhutan (above)



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tours

