

## Do's and Don'ts for Bhutan

**Immigration process:** All Indian tourists will have to acquire a permit to enter Bhutan and the immigration formalities are quite strict in the country. The immigration office is at Phuentsholing, and the ideal time to acquire the permit will take 2/3 hours. However it will also depend on the rush available on that particular day and also the pending permits issued from the previous day, so it might take a maximum of 5 hours too. Without acquiring these permits, tourists will not be allowed to travel ahead of Phuentsholing as they are checked at about 3 check posts on the way.

**Smoking & Drinking:** Strictly prohibited in public places

**Local Timings:** The Bhutan Standard time is half an hour ahead of Indian Standard Time (e.g: if it is 5.30 pm in India then it is 6.00 pm at Bhutan) and all the timings at Bhutan whether office, restaurant, sightseeing spots opening and closing times are according to BST.

**Indian Food:** Although the cooks are learning, most of them in the hotels are not well accustomed with Indian food items so the taste of the same food items in India to that made in Bhutan may be different. Also, chapatis and rotis etc may not be upto the standard expected all the time.

**Bhutanese Dish:** People in Bhutan usually have sparse meals compared to Indian meals. The traditional dishes are usually made with cheese (yak or cow milk) and chillies. It would be advisable to observe caution if your palette does not agree to spicy food or if you are lactose intolerant. However, rest assured the traditional Bhutanese is much healthier than average Indian cuisine.

**Language:** The Bhutanese people ideally know these four languages: Dzongkha, Nepali, English and Hindi. Thanks to the Television, people are learning Hindi well nowadays although they are not yet well versed, but most Bhutanese folks will be able to answer to you in English at least.

**People:** Bhutan is comparatively a laid back country and the people there are happy with what they have. The hospitality industry is picking up pace in the recent years but the level of efficiency may not be similar compared to the rest of the world. So while dealing with any hotel/restaurant staff or shopkeepers etc please try to maintain patience as they may be slow in their work but will ultimately get the work done.

**En route washrooms:** The population of Bhutan is very much less as compared to India so most of the road ways connecting the different districts (dzongkhags) will seem to be deserted but full of natural sceneries. As such, there are not many washrooms enroute or even if they do exist, they are not well maintained because there are not enough people there to act as caretakers. There are however washrooms at the enroute lunch sites and/ or sightseeing spots that you shall visit. You are therefore advised to consult the guide in advance so as to negate any discomfort during your travel.

**Dress Code:** Bhutan is a Buddhist country and most of the sightseeing spots have some or the other religious significance. Also since the overall outlook of Bhutan is conservative, there are some dress codes to be followed at certain sightseeing spots. Likewise In some Religious places like monasteries, Dzongs etc, you are not allowed to wear Cap/Sunglasses/Half sleeves shirt/t-shirt with round neck. If its half

sleeve, then it should be having collared neck and if its round neck, then it should full sleeves. For more information guests are advised to consult the Guide/Driver at the start of the day's sightseeing so as to avoid any confusion later.

**Documents required for Offline Immigration:**

- Passport valid for 9 Months before departure
- Passport size photograph with white background
- Travel Insurance
- Covid Double vaccination certificate

**Mandatory Documents for Immigration purpose in Phuentsholing and Paro Airport to be carried in person in Hard Copy format:**

- Passport valid for 9 Months before departure
- Covid Double Vaccination certificate
- Travel Insurance
- Passport size photograph with white background

**Note:** Guests have to carry above mentioned documents in person in Hard Copy at the time of Immigration Check.