

*Yaks n' Yetis!*

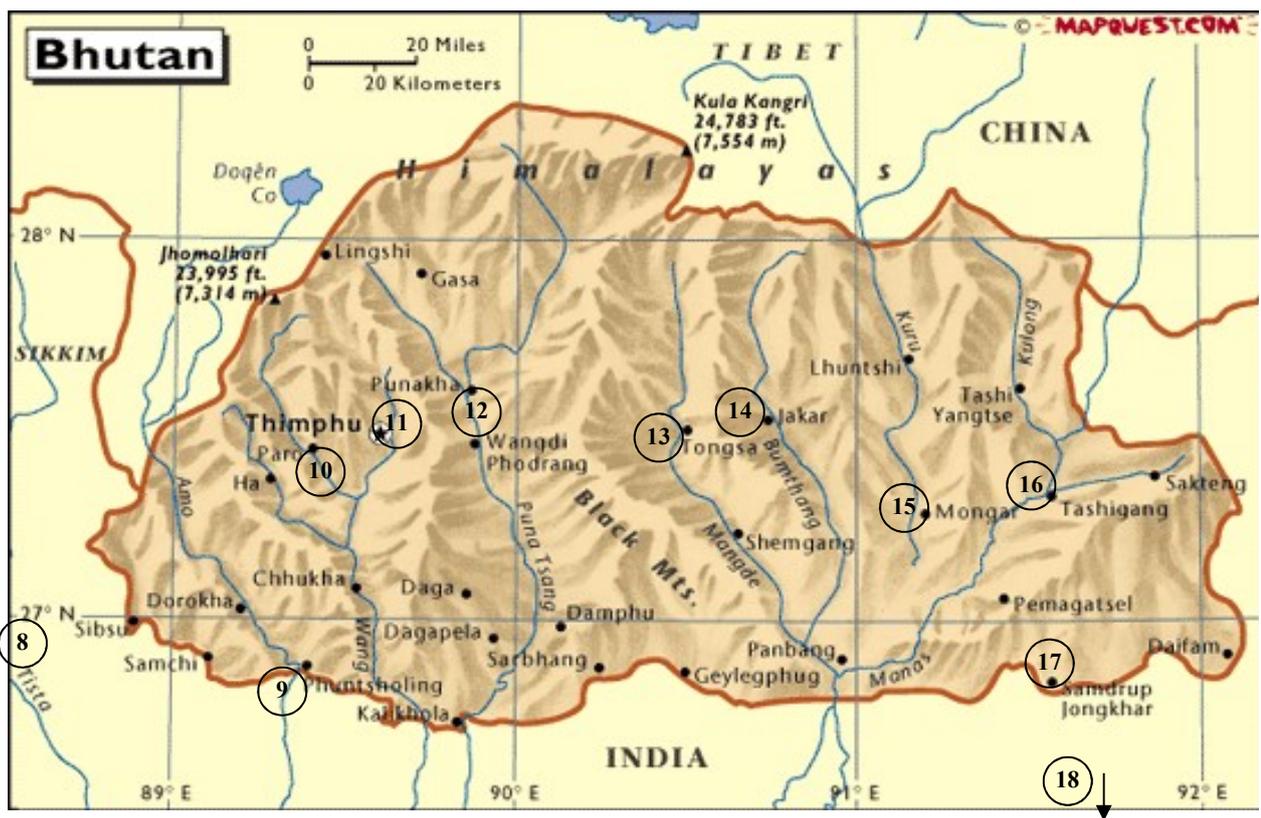
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[www.WorldOnWheels.tours](http://www.WorldOnWheels.tours)

*Life is a  
**DARING ADVENTURE**  
or nothing at all!*

# Yaks 'n' Yetis Motorcycle Tour



Overnight Destinations / Places of Interest				
(Nepal)		(India)	(Bhutan)	
1. Kathmandu	5. Hetauda	9. Phuentsholing	13. Trongsa	17. S Jongkhar
2. Everest flight	6. Biratnagar	10. Paro	14. Jakar	18. Guwahati
3. Pokhara	7. Darjeeling	11. Thimpu	15. Mongar	
4. Lumbini	8. Teesta	12. Punakha	16. Trashigang	



# *Yaks 'n' Yetis Motorcycle Tour*

## Itinerary for March 2020

Day	Date	Details	Distance
1 S	Mar 01	Arrange your flights to arrive in the Nepali capital of Kathmandu sometime today	
2 M	02	* Optional Everest joyflight, explore Kathmandu; take delivery of bikes in the pm	
3 T	03	A gentle first day's ride to the 'Trekker Mecca' of Pokhara	200k
4 W	04	* Rest day lakeside in Pokhara; optional ride to Sarangkot, optional paragliding!	--
5 T	05	Descend to the Terai lowlands of Nepal, to Buddha's birthplace of Lumbini	190k
6 F	06	East along the great northern Gangetic plain to Hetauda	200k
7 S	07	Long but straightforward ride to Biratnagar in the east of the country	320k
8 S	08	Cross the border into India, proceed via backroads to the hill capital of Darjeeling	240k
9 M	09	* Darjeeling Zoo, Himalayan Mountaineering Institute	--
10 T	10	Darjeeling to Teesta Bazaar via backroads, then on to the border of Bhutan	190k
11 W	11	A steady climb all day from Phuentsholing into the Himalayan foothills at Paro	170k
12 T	12	* A 'rest day' climbing to Tigers Nest monastery on a cliff high above Paro	--
13 F	13	Short ride to the capital Thimpu; ½ day exploring	60k
14 S	14	To the sensational Punakha dzong, on the confluence of two rivers	110k
15 S	15	Through forested mountain passes to the mighty Trongsa dzong	120k
16 M	16	To the provincial capital of Jakar in the Bumthang region; ½ day exploring	90k
17 T	17	Crossing our highest pass in Bhutan, Thrumsing La at 3780m, east to Mongar	190k
18 W	18	½ day ride to Trashigang in time for a look around	90k
19 T	19	To the exit border post of Samdrup Jongkhar; back into India again	180k
20 F	20	Through the Assam tea gardens to the state capital of Guwahati	100k
21 S	21	Motorcycle tour ends; domestic flight late morning from Guwahati to Delhi	----- 2,450k

\* indicates consecutive night in same hotel, allowing for laundry, etc.

### Departure Date

For our Yaks 'n' Yetis tour through Nepal, India and Bhutan, you'll need to arrange your flights to arrive in Kathmandu on or by **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020**. Please see further discussion on International Flights herein.

### Tour Operator

This Motorcycle Safari is one of several itineraries offered by **World On Wheels**, Australia's only professional tour operator specialising solely in international motorcycle adventures. Operating for 20+ years as **Ferris Wheels**, Mike Ferris pioneered the Himalayan Motorcycle Safari concept in 1994 with his first crossing of the world's greatest mountain range by an Australian group of riders. In 1995, by now a qualified travel agent, he took his first commercial safari to the Khardung La in Ladakh (India), at 5,602 metres the highest road in the world. Mike and Denise Ferris now operate and personally lead annual **World On Wheels** motorcycle safaris to diverse destinations such as the Indian Himalaya, Turkey, Morocco, the Andes, the Dalmatian coastline, Iceland, Mexico-Guatemala-Belize, and the Baltic States, as well as this one through Nepal and Bhutan, all of approximately three weeks in duration.

**Be aware that this itinerary is a guide only and may need to change due to weather, road conditions or other factors. Please be flexible, but rest assured your Tour Leader will make the final day-to-day decisions only after consultation with our respective agents in Delhi, Kathmandu and Thimpu, local authorities and of course, group members.**



## Package Price

The Yaks 'n' Yetis tour price, excluding airfares and **joining in Kathmandu**, is US\$7,500-00. Riders must have an unrestricted rider's licence. Pillions are welcome and we also have a limited number of seats available in our support vehicle, a 15-seater minibus which accompanies the riders for the Safari – price for pillion or passenger is US\$7,000-00. Please note that our prices are subject to exchange rates and we reserve the right to alter any pricing, pursuant to Clause 9 of our Terms and Conditions herewith, up to the date of final payment.

In this itinerary our tour prices are shown in US\$ for greatest stability and we ask for the equivalent in AU\$ at the prevailing daily exchange rate. The website to be used for daily foreign exchange calculations is: [www.westpac.com.au/business-banking/services/foreign-exchange-rates/](http://www.westpac.com.au/business-banking/services/foreign-exchange-rates/) We request a US\$1,000 deposit and will invoice you in US\$ thereafter for the remaining balance, but you have some flexibility as to when to pay. Final payment will be due 60 days before the tour date, but if you choose to pay us say 90 or 120 days beforehand because you feel the forex rate is favourable, this works well for everyone all round.

## Price includes

- Full motorbike rental for the duration of the Safari (modern 500cc Enfield Bullet)
- Clean, friendly, mid-range accommodation throughout the Safari, nights 1 to 20 inclusive
- Twin-share basis; (single room supplement, additional US\$900-00) <sup>1</sup>
- A scenic one-hour joy flight from Kathmandu to the face of Mt Everest !
- All meals except on rest days, when we encourage you to explore on your own
- Experienced guide, local agent and Enfield mechanics
- Minibus support vehicle and driver, for luggage transport and assistance
- Spare parts, tools, medicines, first aid equipment
- All fuel costs, maintenance and repairs, third party insurance for the bikes
- Domestic flight from Guwahati to Delhi at conclusion of the tour
- A complimentary *World On Wheels* Safari shirt, luggage tags, Nepal and Bhutan maps

<sup>1</sup> Accommodation is provided on a twin-share basis and if you're on your own we'll do our best to bunk you in with an acceptable roommate (same gender, similar age). But if you're the last person to book, there's obviously a 50-50 chance you'll have to take a room on your own and will therefore be liable for the single room supplement. So the moral of the story is, book early or bring your own roommate with you. Or preferably both!

## Price excludes

- International airfares to/from Nepal/Delhi (approx. Au\$2000-00)
- Travel insurance policy covering use of motorbike (approx. Au\$169-00 for 20 days) <sup>2</sup>
- Tourist visas for Nepal, India, Bhutan (currently US\$30-00, Au\$75-00, and US\$30-00 respectively)
- Medical examination and vaccinations before departure (recommended)
- Expenses of a personal nature such as postage, laundry, souvenirs and drinks
- Tips for our support staff at the end of the tour; optional but appreciated; US\$100-00 suggested <sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Please note that a motorcycle safari overseas must be considered one of life's more adventurous pursuits and therefore personal travel insurance is mandatory. If you already have existing travel insurance, you will need to ensure it covers use of a motorcycle of 500cc capacity. Or if you prefer, we can arrange comprehensive travel insurance for you (Australian clients only) for approximately Au\$169-00. **Be aware**, however, that any travel insurance ceases immediately on return to your own country, even if on-going medical treatment or surgery is required. Private health cover or government Medicare automatically resumes at that point.



<sup>3</sup>A note on tips. We recognize tipping is not generally part of the antipodean psyche, but it is pretty much expected in most other parts of the world. Daily hotel porters will expect a small reward for carrying your bags to your room, and our mechanics, drivers and support staff anticipate reasonable tips to supplement their modest wages whilst on tour with us. We suggest something like US\$100-00 is affordable for your three weeks (about US\$5-00 per day), distributed amongst the crew. If you've had a good time, we would encourage you to donate generously! (... if you haven't, please let us know).

## **Our benevolent side**

It is important to us to make a positive contribution to some of the less privileged communities that we visit. Our strongest connection is with India, and in focusing our efforts we have decided certain care facilities therein are most deserving of our care and support. We provide financial support and facilitate the donation of clothing to the Ganga Brijghat Charitable Trust, a registered help center for poor and underprivileged people at Brijghat, on the shores of the Ganga (the holy river Ganges), about 90k east of Delhi. This shelter was established and is administered by Srimata Kunti Devi, a lady in her 70's and mother of our business partner in New Delhi.

## **International Flights**

You will have to arrange your own airfares through your preferred travel agent, or you may wish to take advantage of an arrangement we have with our local agent, Press & James Travel Associates. Phone 02 9979 5235 or email [natasha\\_dann@travel-associates.com.au](mailto:natasha_dann@travel-associates.com.au) and mention you're joining the *World On Wheels 'Yaks 'n' Yetis'* tour; they have a copy of this itinerary and can arrange your route and flights as well as any stopovers or extensions you desire. We recommend you book at least six months ahead, and full payment is generally required six weeks before your departure. You need to fly into Kathmandu and return out of Delhi. This is called an 'open jaw' ticket. Please note the domestic flight from Guwahati to Delhi **is included** in our package price.

## **Food & Health**

Quality of food can obviously be a concern when visiting exotic foreign lands. We take care in selecting clean and reputable establishments for our meals and the local fare is not always as fiery and spicy as some people would have you believe. Our clients are often pleasantly surprised by the delicious meals available. Even so, an occasional upset stomach cannot always be avoided in remote areas, so we advise initial caution and we carry various medicines to ensure as much comfort as possible. Participants in any of our adventure activities are obviously expected to have a reasonably high level of health, fitness and capability, but **in all cases a consultation with your doctor is recommended** in order to identify necessary vaccinations and precautions, particularly if traveling overseas for the first time. Please note that when it comes to malaria medication, it is our experience that the commonly experienced side effects of such a strong medication outweigh the potential benefit, for what is a very low risk likelihood of contracting this disease.

## **Climate & Clothing**

Our tour is scheduled for spring, possibly the best time for touring in this part of the Himalaya. But it can also be quite cool in Bhutan, and single-digit temperatures but almost zero chance of rain will be the order of the day. At times there will be little shade available, so plenty of sunscreen, sunglasses, hats and long sleeves will also be required. Jeans and our long-sleeved *World On Wheels* shirts tend to be the norm, with strong boots and riding gloves. Helmets should be brought with you from home, full-face or open-face a matter of personal preference. The modern flip-top lids offer the convenience of both.

Professional quality riding gear such as Cordura jackets, overpants and other protective clothing is an excellent investment and will go a long way to ensuring your comfort in what may sometimes be adverse conditions. Jackets are particularly versatile if they have a zip-in / zip-out padded liner for extra warmth and protection. But if you're



susceptible to the cold, then maybe a good set of thermal underwear would also come in handy. A couple of other products we've used for several years and are happy to endorse are the Kevlar-lined jeans and clothing from Draggin Jeans in Melbourne ([www.dragginjeans.com.au](http://www.dragginjeans.com.au)) and those Velcro alternatives to 'occy' straps from Andy Strapz ([www.andystrapz.com](http://www.andystrapz.com)).

And while we're giving plugs, we'd like to suggest you consider a Rider Improvement course, regardless of your experience or perceived ability on a motorcycle, to brush up on your skills prior to joining an international riding safari. We've recently teamed up with motoDNA as our Adventure Training partner. An Australian outfit boasting an impressive array of hugely talented instructors (Mark McVeigh, Chris Vermeulen, Garry McCoy, Peter Goddard, Kevin Magee, Mark Willis...) they have the skills and the syllabus to get the most out of your riding ability, which will give you the weapons you need to survive and enjoy your next ride, whether it be the daily commute or an international adventure with *World On Wheels*. They offer track training, road training, off-road courses, bush bashing, sand and water techniques, you name it, in venues along Australia's east coast.

### **Other important information you should note**

The Indian subcontinent is not everyone's 'cup of tea'. It can be an extreme assault on the senses. In order to fully appreciate its true beauty you will need the ability to leave behind western values and to turn a blind eye to some of the harsher aspects of life in third-world, developing nations. If you can do this, you will find it truly a rewarding experience.

The riding conditions are also sometimes arduous and whilst 200k or so would *appear* to be quite an easy day's ride, this is not always so. Some days will require us to be on the road by 8:00am to beat the morning traffic, and the days can be long and tiring. It is obviously expected that you are able to handle a motorbike competently and are fit and strong enough to cope with some demanding conditions. An important part of this is your mental approach and attitude. If you are the type of person who prefers lounging by the poolside with a dry martini, then perhaps this motorcycle safari is not for you. Try Club Med instead !

India and Nepal, and occasionally Bhutan, suffer from occasional power shortages, so don't automatically anticipate a long hot shower every single day. Be prepared to rough it a bit, be prepared to accept delays and hastily changed plans, be prepared to be tolerant of some grinding bureaucracy and ineptitude. Be flexible and above all, bring your sense of humour.

But let's not pull any punches here. This is not a trip for the faint-hearted; you'll notice there are only 4 'rest' days out of 18 on the bikes, and some of these rest days consist of strenuous (but optional) activities. And a tour such as this is potentially a dangerous undertaking; it's inherent in the very nature of the trip. You'll be on an unfamiliar bike, on unfamiliar roads in unfamiliar traffic conditions. It is important for you to recognize this and accept ultimate responsibility, firstly for joining and secondly for riding in a circumspect manner for the duration of the tour. Please read and acknowledge Paragraph 16 of our Terms and Conditions! (End of sermon)

### **The Classic 'Royal' Enfield Bullet**

Originally manufactured by The Royal Enfield Motorcycle Co of Redditch, Worcestershire, production ceased in Great Britain due to financial difficulties in the mid-1950s. The Indian subsidiary acquired the production line, transferred operations to Madras and simply continued to build Enfield Bullets without bothering to change any original design specifications. To this day they continue to churn out brand new, 60 year old bikes!

The Enfield is a true classic, with the single cylinder 500cc engine producing a deep, throaty rumble and powerful torque that have prompted some to christen it the two-wheeled tractor. At idle speed you can audibly count the engine revolutions per minute. High speed is not what the Enfield is about (any faster than about 60kph in India is suicidal anyway!), it's about aesthetics, comfort and style. Riding an Enfield gives a pure, unadulterated



pleasure - particularly through the stunning scenery where you're going. It is the perfect bike for touring in this part of the world, taking the rough roads easily in its stride. Our late-model Enfields now have the modern conventional left-foot gears, right-foot brake configuration.

## Detailed Daily Itinerary

**Day 1** Your flights need to get you into Kathmandu today. It's not quite the mystical magical capital it was in its heyday of the 60's and 70's but it still has an *olde worlde* charm to its dilapidated facade. The traffic is chaotic, the congestion is crazy, but the temples are exquisite, the people gorgeous, the atmosphere electrifying. We're taking you a little closer to the edge of your comfort zone.

There are two other large cities in the Kathmandu Valley, but they are so close as to be almost suburbs of Kathmandu itself. Patan is just across the river and Bhaktapur is only 12k away; depending on your arrival flight we can visit one or both to examine their ancient temples and splendid artisan works, much of which is still being produced in the local streets and bazaars today. Another option is the huge Bodhnath (Boudha) Stupa, the largest in Nepal and one of the world's largest. It is the main religious centre for Nepal's considerable Tibetan population. Then there are the shops!! Don't be afraid to bargain *hard*, as the prices are often inflated and very negotiable.

**Day 2** For your first full day on tour, how about a scenic joyflight to Mt. Everest? The whole majestic panorama of the world's greatest mountain range spreads out before us for an hour, and it is a totally captivating experience. Then when we come back down to earth, we have the rest of the day to explore Kathmandu's bustling bazaars and streets, visit the city's Durbar Square, roam through the surrounding area of Thamel, drop in for a quick drink at the *Rum Doodle Bar* (the traditional watering hole for mountaineering expedition teams) or simply relax in the garden of our hotel.

And in the afternoon we'll introduce you to the Royal Enfield 500cc Bullet, your weapon of choice for the next three weeks. There'll be a briefing in the hotel car park, followed by a short familiarisation run to acquaint you with the nostalgia of golden-era Brit Biking.

**Day 3** We have to leave early to escape Kathmandu before the traffic gets into full swing. Heading to the Trekker Mecca destination of Pokhara, the scenery along the route is spectacular, with terraced hills, rushing rivers, steep gorges and green hills back-dropped by the magnificent Himalaya. Be careful not to run into the back of a fellow rider when, in the latter part of the ride, you come around a corner and there in all its glory is Machhapuchare (the Fishtail Mountain), lit to perfection by the slanting rays of the afternoon sunshine.

**Day 4** Many popular Himalayan treks start from Pokhara, including the Annapurna Circuit, Jomson Trail and Dhaulagiri Base Camp treks for the serious walker. We take a half-day ride up a nearby ridge to Sarangkot for a bird's-eye view of Machhapuchare, Annapurna and Pokhara with its picturesque Phewa Tal (lake). For the energetic or adventurous there's the option of trying your hand at paragliding – a more spectacular setting would be difficult to imagine! For the serious shopper, there's some pretty serious souvenir hunting to be done in the markets this afternoon.

**Day 5** sees us heading out of the mountains to the Terai, as the lowlands of Nepal are known. Although very much the 'poor cousin' of Nepal's main attraction (the Himalaya) and thus to a large extent ignored, the Terai has its own beauty and is a very fertile and prosperous area, home to half the population. We pass through mud-walled villages, rice paddies and thatched houses built high above the floodplains of the numerous rivers bursting out of the foothills. The plains are a mere 100m above sea level, but over 1000 km away from the rivers' final destination, the Bay of Bengal. Our destination for the night is Lumbini, the revered birthplace of Lord Buddha, and the subsequent huge temple complex is very close to our hotel.



**Day 6** Huge tracts of these floodplains were uninhabitable until the early 1950's, when a successful malaria eradication program was introduced. The subsequent land-grab rush from the hill tribes saw much of the wilderness cultivated almost overnight, which in turn had a devastating effect on the habitat of large animals such as the tiger and the Indian one-horned rhino. We traverse the northern extremities of the great Gangetic plain to the small trading centre of Hetauda, on the main Tribhuvan Highway coming out of India.

**Day 7** We continue through the eastern Terai for a long day's ride to Biratnagar. On the way if the skies are clear, Everest can be seen again on the northern horizon, standing proud of her companions. Sagarmatha she is known as in these parts, the Mother Goddess of the Universe. The road and the ride is straightforward and we usually just turn everyone loose on such a day. See you in the beer garden at the hotel this afternoon!

**Day 8** involves the potentially bureaucratic hassle of crossing into India. Passports and visas will be double-checked, road tax has to be paid, bike ownership and registration papers will be double-checked, our staff will be scrutinised..! Always a time-consuming exercise, but soon enough we'll be into the next chapter of this tour. We're off to Darjeeling, following some of the same route as the narrow-gauge 'Toy Train' up into the hills. The only (non-tourist) steam locomotive still in active service in India criss-crosses the road dozens of times and is a very impressive sight and sound accompanying us on the final part of our climb.

**Day 9** If you feel like an early start, we can amble along to the nearby lookout to watch the sun rise over the Himalayan massif including Mt. Kangchenjunga, 3<sup>rd</sup> highest peak in the world. We shall then visit the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, established by Darjeeling's most famous son, Tenzing Norgay following his ascent of Everest with Edmund Hillary in 1953, and the associated Darjeeling Zoo, centre of the world breeding program for the endangered and stunningly beautiful snow leopard.

**Day 10** After some small backroads winding from Darjeeling to Teesta Bazaar, we're on Highway 31 most of the way across the Great Gangetic Plateau, crossing a few more rivers as they burst forth from the mountains just above us. These rivers of course, all end up crossing into Bangladesh where they annually wreak havoc in this low-lying, impoverished country. Our destination tonight is the border town of Phuentsholing, where we cross and spend the night on the Bhutan side of the border, because the hotels are much nicer!

**Day 11** Border formalities are refreshingly straightforward and efficient, so we'll soon be on our way into Bhutan. The first thing we'll notice upon leaving India is, there's virtually no traffic! The few vehicles we do encounter are well-maintained and well-mannered. The roads are great, the scenery is spectacular, the air is clean and fresh. We have a couple of 'foreigner registration' check-posts to pass through today but they don't slow us much as we wind our way along to third-largest town of Paro.

**Day 12** we shall spend in and around Paro. As well as boasting the only airport in the country, the National Museum is also located here, housing an impressive collection of artefacts. Just a few k's out of town for the more physically inclined, is the start of an arduous 4-hour trek up to the spectacular Tiger's Nest *dzong* perched high on a rocky ledge. Optional of course, but it just has to be done!

**Day 13** sees us heading off to the capital, Thimpu, and it's a short enough ride to give us the afternoon doing some local sightseeing and souvenir shopping, as Thimpu is about the only commercial centre in the country. We'll visit a viewpoint overlooking the town and then the nearby 'zoo' containing maybe half a dozen takin. This strange beast, the national animal of Bhutan, is said to be the result of a god known as The Divine Madman having a huge feast, getting a little intoxicated, and sticking the head of a goat on the body of an ox.

**Day 14** has us rolling out of Thimpu in the direction of Punakha, which has a stupendous *dzong* on the confluence of two rivers. (To get there we must first of all conquer our first serious mountain pass in Bhutan, the Dochu La



at just over 3,000 metres). The *dzong* is the administrative head of both state and religion for the district, and this one is nothing short of sensational. We can spend a couple of hours strolling through its courtyards and temples.

**Day 15** keeps us heading east, through rhododendron forests and another pass (Pele La 3,300 m), as we come to Trongsa with yet another magnificent *dzong*, perhaps the most spectacular in the country, an imposing fortress of a structure built on several levels up a hillside. We can have a look around if you're not already *dzonged* out at this stage (you will have passed 5 or 6 by now), and our hotel is just outside of town.

**Day 16** has us, guess what, climbing another pass, the Yutong La (3,400m) then we arrive at Jakar in the wilderness of the Bumthang Valley in time to check into our hotel and have a look around the town. The region is renowned for its local cheese production and perhaps we can find a small factory open for a visit.

**Day 17** will probably see a cold start to the day (sometimes we've had ice on the seats of the Enfields...) so have your hand warmers in your pockets. We're getting into more remote areas now and it's another long day but we spend most of it riding through a national park on superb roads with no traffic. Overnight is a spotless little town called Mongar, the capital of the same-named district.

**Day 18** is a more leisurely-paced day. With only 90k to Trashigang, we can cover this before lunch and then have the afternoon to stroll around and enjoy the second-largest town in Bhutan. A good time to catch up with writing those promised postcards back home, or watching the locals practicing their archery skills, or sitting in the tiny town square, a great place to enjoy an evening drink and watch the locals going about their business.

**Day 19** is, dare we say it, another superlative day in the saddle on the road less travelled. We head directly south for nearly 200k, completing our traverse of Bhutan from one border to the other. Traffic out here is so rare that some of the locals take off their hat at the sight of an approaching car. Our destination is the frontier town of Samdrup Jongkhar which, whilst still actually in Bhutan, has a distinctly Indian feel to it...

**Day 20** has us registering at the Indian side of the border crossing, which for some reason takes about five times as long as on the other side. We have a fairly short ride through more of the ubiquitous tea gardens to Guwahati, the state capital of Assam. It's a fairly typical Indian 'small city' of about a million people and we'll need to bunch up and follow our minibus in order to find the hotel. We scrub up for a cleansing ale and a celebratory farewell dinner – we've certainly earned it.

**Day 21** Kiss the bikes goodbye as we head to Guwahati airport for the domestic flight to Delhi. We'll arrive in the early afternoon, in plenty of time for most of the international departures heading to Singapore, Bangkok, etc which usually leave late in the evening. It's been fun, so long, please go tell 100 friends!

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We invite you to do your own further research online; Google and Wikipedia have a wealth of information on all that we have touched upon briefly here.

Further trip notes including a list of essential clothing and equipment to take, health considerations, visa formalities, etc, will be sent upon receipt of a completed Booking Form and deposit. Please contact our office any time for further information via email: [Adventure@WorldOnWheels.Tours](mailto:Adventure@WorldOnWheels.Tours)