

Packing Checklist

Spirit of Bhutan Tour

Come prepared for all kinds of weather! Choose dual-purpose, lightweight clothing that you can efficiently layer. Merino wool and synthetic fabrics like polar fleece are recommended over anything cotton or denim for their quick-drying and sweat-wicking capabilities.

If you're not sure what any of the items in the packing list are, please ask us or your nearest outdoor outfitter. We want you to be Girl Scout-prepared for your adventure ahead!

Women often tell us it was colder on the trek portion of this trip than they had anticipated. Please make sure you bring plenty of warm clothes (particularly for night time) as it can be below freezing in camp.

Hot tip:

Before your trip, become well-acquainted with your gear—especially your hiking boots, poles (if desired) and backpack. Wear your day pack on training hikes and gradually increase the weight that you are carrying so when you strike off on day one, your pack feels snug like your favorite pair of jeans!



Note: Formal, respectful attire is required to visit inside Taktshang monastery (Tiger's Nest) and Paro Dzong. Pants are preferred to skirts and shorts are not permitted, despite length. Shirts may be short-sleeved but they must have a collar or you must cover a collar-less shirt with a jacket. Any shoes with socks are acceptable—flip flops and sandals are not permitted.

General Items

- Rucksack or waterproof stuff sack (20L volume) to pack overnight trekking items. The horses will carry these bags so don't expect anything new to remain new-looking!
- Day pack (15 to 20L) to carry things you want access to during the day. A pack with a chest strap and/or hip straps will help alleviate strain.
- Waterproof cover for your day pack (or you may choose to waterproof the items inside you pack with an internal plastic bag, dry bag or Ziplocks for a budget-friendly option).
- Inflatable pillow (*only if you find it more comfortable to have the extra support when sleeping on flat ground—you can always fill a stuff sack with your fleece or socks for more oomph!)
- Hiking poles (These are provided but you're welcome to bring your own if you're partial.)

Clothing Items

- 1-2 pairs of quick-dry pants. Look for pants with several pockets and zip-off legs (instant presto shorts!)
- 1 pair of fleece pants (or merino wool base layer pants as suggested below)
- T-shirts (as desired, quick-dry are best for wicking sweat)
- Pants to be designated for monastery visits
- Collared shirt for monastery visits
- A casual/fancy outfit for the casual/fancier hotels
- Swimsuit (there will be an opportunity to experience a traditional hot stone bath on Day 1 and your accommodation in Zhiwaling has a sauna, steam room and hot stone bath as well)
- Pajamas (as desired)

- Sports bras or regular bras, as desired
- 2 longs-sleeve shirts
- 1 lightweight fleece
- Socks for each day—merino wool Smartwool or Darn Tough brands will be your BFFs
- Underwear (as desired)
- Thermal base layer (top and bottom) for camping (this set can double as your pajamas if you run cold!)
- Down or synthetic lightweight jacket (to keep you warm to 0C/32F!)
- Waterproof/windproof jacket and pants (look for jacket options with a hood and ventilation zippers for both jacket and pants)
- Buff, gloves, toque (for the Canadians) or wool hat
- Carabiners to attach items to the outside of your day pack (eg. water bottles or wet clothes)
- Lightweight hiking shoes or trail runners for everyday wear
- Hiking boots with ankle support (waterproof boots are recommended)
- Sandals or flip flops for use in camp (as desired)
- Thick hiking socks and silk sock liners to guard against blisters if you are prone
- Broad-brimmed hat or baseball hat
- Sunglasses with protective case

Other Items to Consider

- Headlamp with spare batteries
- Washing line (optional but can be handy)
- Small knife (be sure to pack in checked luggage)
- Water bottles (preferably metal) or alternatively a hydration pack such as CamelBak

- Sunscreen and lip balm with SPF
- Personal First Aid Kit (Ibuprofen/ASA, Band-aids, adhesive tape, antihistamines, anti-nausea tablets (especially motion sickness meds for long and windy bus rides), Polysporin, Imodium, throat lozenges, extra prescription medication you may be taking—pack it separately), blister kit if you're prone (2nd Skin, Compeeds or moleskin).
- Insect repellent
- Energy snacks and drinks: Snacks will be provided but you may wish to bring an emergency “hangry stash” if you have special dietary needs or personal favorites.
- Pencil and notebook/sketchbook, journal (if you do such things!)
- Toiletries (*don't forget your toothbrush!)
- Travel towel for camping night (medium-size, quick-dry)
- Biodegradable soap, shampoo (and laundry, if necessary)
- Toilet paper, tissues, wet wipes
- Water purification tablets or water filtration water bottle (bottled water will be provided in town and on the trek boiled water will be provided). It is unsafe to drink tap water in Bhutan.
- Camera and extra battery, memory card, charger, adaptor plug
- Books, mags, iPod—whatever you like to chill with
- Binoculars
- Alcohol-based sanitizer and face masks (if necessary)
- RAT Antigen test kits for self-monitoring (if necessary)

Essential Documents

- Passport: stored in a waterproof wallet/Ziploc bag
- Copies of your passport, medical insurance, air tickets (pack separate from the originals)

- Money: cash in local currency, credit/debit cards with pin number for cash withdrawals
- Air tickets and itinerary
- Approved Covid-19 Vaccination Certificate and/or QR code (if applicable)
- Negative Covid-19 PCR Test Results (if applicable)

Packing Notes

Luggage Logistics

Prepare for lost or delayed luggage by wearing or carrying on the items that are essential to your expedition (like your hiking boots and fleece!). When packing your carry-on try to include what you would need to be comfortable for your first few days in case your checked baggage is misrouted by the airline (rain gear, medications, itinerary, snacks, change of socks/underwear).

As a general rule, don't bring more than you can carry! This will help ensure smooth-as-pudding transfers in airports, through customs, hotels, and loading vans/trailers/boats. On adventure travel trips it is best to travel with one larger check-in bag and one carry-on bag. Most airlines have reduced the weight maximums for checked bags to 50lbs (22kg). Be sure to check with your airline for weight restrictions **and** carry-on allowances.

We recommend soft-sided luggage or a medium duffle bag or backpack of 30-50L(your checked bag) and a medium daypack of 20L(your carry-on bag) for most adventures.

You will also need a 20L bag (as mentioned above) to take on the trek (*you will leave the majority of your luggage back in town). Pack this bag (empty) and repack before the trek upon arrival.

For the overnight hike, pack your 20L bag with no more than 10-15 kg of contents (be mindful and respectful of the horses that will be carrying it!). Pack your day pack accordingly with the necessary items as you will not have access to your overnight bag while hiking.

Your Suggested Daypack Essentials are:

Insect repellent, SPF, lip balm, camera, binoculars, light rain jacket, water bottle, sunglasses, face mask (if necessary), hand sanitizer, snacks (*they will be provided), meds, an extra pair of socks, blister care (if prone), electrolyte powder (if you wish), toilet paper, Ziplock bag.

Laundry

We recommend bringing enough clothing to only have to do laundry once during your trip, if at all.

Resources for Buying Outdoor Gear & Clothing

- **Mountain Equipment Co-op, REI, SAIL, Atmosphere, Sportchek**
- **Borrow:** Why buy when you can borrow from a friend?
- **Variety/Value Village, Goodwill, Salvation Army** and online swap sites are also great places to find second-hand gear for a fraction of the price.
- **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rewear!**