

## Samtengang Winter Trek

<b>Trip code</b>	
<b>Package name</b>	Samtengang Winter Trek
<b>Duration</b>	4
<b>Max. elevation</b>	2850 m
<b>Level</b>	MODERATE
<b>Transportation</b>	Private vehicals depending on group size during the tour and trek.
<b>Accomodation</b>	3***hotel, Lodge twin sharing bed basis during the tour and trek.
<b>Starts at</b>	Limukha
<b>Ends at</b>	Thimphu
<b>Trip route</b>	Limukha - Chimsanga - Samtengngng - Thimphu.
<b>Cost</b>	USD 1,250 per person

## Highlights

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## Overview

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Winter is perhaps the best time to visit Bhutan and view an aspect of the country not usually seen by most visitors. Advent of winter brings about peace and tranquility in the region, as life in Bhutan settles down quietly in preparation of the winter months. Samtengang Winter Trek is one of the easier lower altitude treks in Bhutan. This winter trekking requires average level of physical fitness, however if you have passion towards trekking, hiking, jungle walk and meeting new people along their culture and tradition then this trek is the best trek for you.

Winter season is the best opportune time to visit Bhutan and experience a tranquil facade of the country. This winter trek offers short and easy trekking option in Bhutan with pleasant feeling of freshness and greenery along the cultural essence of local tradition. It is a fairly easy trek as the altitude ranges between 1100 – 2350 meters and the climate is warm throughout the hike. The path takes you through forests of rhododendron and oak, through the villages of Sha and Chungsakha and across the longest foot bridge in Bhutan.

Samtengang is a town in Wang due Phodrang District in central Bhutan. It is repeatedly mentioned in old literature regarding travelling, plant exploring and hunting in Bhutan. Even the booklets 'The Ballad of Pemi Tshewang Tashi' and 'A Wind Borne Feather' by Karma Ura will tell you more about the historical background of the area. As the name suggests, Samtengang winter trek is best experienced during winter season when the skies are clear and unobstructive views of Himalayas can be seen. Visit to monasteries, temples and Dzong are the additional attraction of this Samtengang winter trek. The path takes you through forests of rhododendron and oak, through the villages of Sha and Chungsakha and across the longest foot bridge in Bhutan.

Beginning your voyage from a scenic flight to Paro, we will be picked up by one of the representatives of Bhutan who will escort you to your respective hotel. Followed by a sightseeing tour on the next day, you will visit National museum of Paro, Paro Dzong, Drukgyel Dzong, Taktsang monastery and many historical places in Paro. You will also get an opportunity to enjoy the stunning view of the monastery, where Guru Padmasambhava landed on the back of a tigress in the 8th century. On the next day, we drive about 2 hours to reach Thimphu. Thimphu is the capital city of Bhutan and have the superb views of the forests, Rocky Mountains & scattered village. We pass through Semtokha Dzong built in 1629 by Zhandrung Ngawang Namgyal (The man who unified Bhutan). Staying overnight in Thimphu, the next day we move ahead to reach Khuruthang. Khuruthang is a little new town which lies 4 km south of Punakha. From Khuruthang, our trek starts. We commence our trek towards Limukha, Chungsakha and finally to Samtengang. Samtengang is our trekking destination. After observing the village and spending overnight, we trek forward towards Wangdue and further drive to Thimphu. The next day, we will catch up a flight from Paro towards our home town.

We have designed this itinerary especially for the people who are subsidized by the time limitation and want to explore the Bhutan's main cities, observe their life style, customs and traditions with only few days for trekking. However, this itinerary can be modified as per your requirement. While this trek is available throughout the winter the best times to embark on it are between March / April and September / October.

## Trip Itinerary

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### **Day 1 : Drive Khuruthang to Limukha (2220 m) and commence trek – approx. 6 hrs. walk.**

On the very first day of our trek, we drive a few kilometers to the suspension bridge which is believed to be the longest suspension bridge in Bhutan where your trek begins. The trail leads

you into the valley of Shengana and a gradual climb through the chir pine forest takes you into the valley of Limukha. Enroute, you will visit Dompala village and pass by paddy fields, forest of pines and rhododendron. You will spend overnight at Limukha.

## **Day 2 : Trek Limukha/Chungsakha (1435 m) – approx. 5hrs walk.**

Today your day starts with a steep climb (150m) up to a small ridge (2370m) through a cold dense forest. Cross this ridge and descend steeply into a small side valley where a small stream is crossed. The trail is surrounded by beautiful birdsong and oak and rhododendron forest follow an unclear trail covered by slippery leaches. En route, you will visit an old temple which was used by DrukpaKuenley as his winter residence in 15th century. Chungsakha is a small village of about 10 houses. You will find a holy stone and an impressive Cypress tree here that are reminders of DrukpaKuenley, the “Divine Mad Man” whose teaching methods often shocked monks and lay people. We can observe the life of Bhutanese and we can also visit the farmer’s house. On the hillside above the monastery are several small meditations cells. The village has one Lhakhang with a simple but atmospheric chapel on the first floor. The monastery has a festival every three years with masked dances and singing. The campsite will be in front of Lhakhang.

## **Day 3 : Trek Chungsakha / Samtengang (2050 m)– approx. 4hrs walk.**

After breakfast, we continue our trek towards Samtengang and enjoy the fresh wind blowing through the pines. This is a wonderful trail climbing up to Samtengang Village. Samtengang is mentioned again and again in old literature regarding travelling/exploring/plant hunting in Bhutan. It was the old stopping place on the first day out from Wangdue for people travelling east-west (and vice versa). The booklet “The Ballad of PemiTshewangTashi”: A Wind Borne Feather’ by Karma Ura will tell you more about the history of the area. You will walk through a narrow gorge to the other side at 2000meter and look down towards a holy lake, Lutshokha (TshoShokha). Afterwards continue on to the campsite, located on the other side of the lake and other 20min beyond it. It is a beautiful flat campsite (2050m) in the forest below the village of Samtengang. Overnight at Samtengang village.

## **Day 4 : Trek Samtengang to Wangdue/ Thimphu.**

Today, we will descend to the road and find a suspension bridge crossing the BaeChhu (1500m). The trail from here is clear and moderately steep passing through several villages. The trail goes through small deeply eroded gorges, which will be very slippery in the rain. In December, the Daphne flower will start to flower. The trail now takes you through the village of ShaWangdue District. On this day’s trail we can see the paddy fields, Bhutanese people, farmhouses, village of ShaWangdue, lake and many more. After lunch, drive to Wangdue and visit Wangdue Dzong which was founded by Zhandrung in 1639. It is situated on a hill with a commanding view of the valley. It is believed that protective deity, yeshey Gonpo told Zhabdrug Rimpoche that if he builds a Dzong on the ridge he would be able to bring the whole country under his power. Wangdue means to bring under one’s power, and then drive towards Thimphu. Overnight at Thimphu.

## Inclusions

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### What is included?

- Airport pick up & drop by private vehicle as your require.
- Private vehicals for round trip.
- Standard accommodation twin sharing bed basis for the duration of tour.
- All meals fixed breakfast, lunch & dinner with Tea and Coffee for whole duration of your stay in Bhutan.
- Mineral water supply for the trip.
- Local licensed English speaking Bhutan Tour & Trekking Guides.
- All sightseeing tours, Monument /Museum entrance Fees as per itinerary.
- Country Presentation & Tour Briefing on arrival evening.
- Bhutan Visa Fees and Visa Processing assistance.
- The required number of trekking & touring staff.
- All trekking access, route permits logistics & fees.
- Government tax which goes to the country's health & education projects.

### What isn't included?

- Your travel insurance.
- Bottled/alcoholic/cold drinks room service.
- International airfares and airport departure tax.
- Personal Equipment.
- Tips to staffs-Tipping is expected.
- Any others expenses which are not mentioned on Price Includes section.

### Complimentary