



AMANKORA

365 Days of Happiness
2026 Calendar

Daily Doses of Bliss in Bhutan

Bhutan is a global pioneer, the first nation of the world to systematically measure its success not by the strength of its economy but by the happiness of its people. Such a unique approach befits a country unlike any other - a wild, spiritual and majestic mountain kingdom where tranquility reigns and everything is off the beaten track. Whether travelers visit in the height of spring and summer, when the Himalayas are carpeted with wildflowers, in the vibrantly changing colours of autumn or in the depths of winter, when cobalt skies segue into spectacular starscapes - Bhutan is a year-round revelation.

With the same latitude as Miami, Florida, the Kingdom of Bhutan exists in a tropical plane, but because of its unique topography and varying altitudes, it enjoys four seasons in most high valleys, is on a constant state of winter in elevations above 4,500 meters and is warm year-round in lower altitudes. Discover the kingdom in 4 seasons of wonders and explorations, 5 valleys with varying altitudes and attitudes, 12 months of bliss, 365 days of happiness. The best time to visit is anytime. Come.



January

As the coldest month of the year, January brings in some snowfall in most valleys, but be quick - take a photo of that otherworldly scene of the Tiger's Nest or the big Buddha Dordenma with a dusting of snow as the bright Himalayan sun melts most of the ice by midday. The rest of the time, the valleys remain pleasant for a cultural discovery or a nature hike. For avid stargazers and night photography enthusiasts, January brings the clearest skies to the Himalayan landscapes. The days too are just as perfect to capture on frame, with crystal clear cloudless skies and a brand of captivating blue that will bring out the Yves Klein in anyone.

International New Year - January 1

New Year in Bhutan is a low-key celebration, but what could be more spectacular and enlightening than seeing the first light of the year amid the roof of the world where the highest unclimbed mountains in the world greet you with blessings of infinite possibilities.

Winter Solstice (Nyilo) - January 2

A celebration marked by offerings and songs, the Nyilo is a religious holiday marked by temple visits and songs. Amankora Thimphu regularly hosts a children's choir to celebrate Nyilo with traditional songs in the Living Room and Dining Room.

Traditional Day of Offering - January 14

A local celebration traditionally directed towards the unifier of the Kingdom of Bhutan in the 17th century, this day is marked by the Bhutanese adorning their best gho and kira attires, picnics, household feasts and offerings to temples.



February

February rings in romantic interludes and Bhutan has plenty of offerings in the way of love - from hikes to aptly named temples like Cheri and Tang Monasteries, sweeping stays in Amankora Gangtey - home to the fiercely love-loyal black-necked cranes, candlelit dinners at the traditional potato sheds and relaxing traditional hot stone baths for couples. In Punakha’s Chimi Lhakhang, locals visit the temple to incur blessings to conceive a child and in Bumthang, a three-time “kora” wearing an ancient iron chain jacket around Tamshing Lhakhang, is believed to bring in eternal love.

International Valentine’s Day February 14

For couples traveling around the Amankora circuit on Valentine’s Day, special romantic dinners can be arranged, and for those seeking to reaffirm their union, blessing ceremonies and renewal of vows can be done in the five Amankora lodges and different cultural sites around the valleys.

Lunar New Year February 17

Amankora’s five lodges ring in the new zodiac Year of the Horse with evenings of celebrations featuring an Asian feast, astrology readings and cultural performances.

Birth Anniversary of His Majesty the King February 21 to 23

Celebrating the birth anniversary of His Majesty King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck ignites the fire of thanksgiving in every Bhutanese for their beloved king. Marked by three full days of festivities around the country, the valleys come alive with public programmes of dances, fairs, feasts and songs.

Festival of Mahakali, Trongsa February 22 to 24

A distinct festival unique to Trongsa, a beautiful town between Gangtey and Bumthang, honouring the nation’s guardian deity Pelden Lhamo or Mahakali.

Punakha Drubchen February 24 to 26

Days before the festival, the Punakha Drubchen is held to showcase the history and mythical narratives of the construction of the Punakha Dzong to the public. Sacred masked dances and folk dances are performed by the central monastic body and citizens of the district.

Punakha Tsechu February 27 to March 01

The main festival of Punakha Valley showcases more performances and bright parades of locals in their most colourful ghos and kiras, but the highlight of the festivities is the unfurling of the thongdrol, a large tapestry of Guru Rinpoche - Bhutan’s most revered religious icon.



March

The month of March sees the awakening of the valleys as spring stirs them from their winter slumber. As the dry earth and barren trees see their first buds and initial blasts of green, the festival season too starts to unfold in the kingdom, with colourful performances and ceremonies showcasing the rich tapestry of Bhutanese culture.

**Tharpaling Thongdrol (Unfurling of the Holy Scroll) Chumi, Bumthang
March 03**

Similar to the unfurling of the giant scroll in Punakha’s Tsechu, except for the dances and grand festivities. Instead, this sacred applique silk scroll with elaborate Buddhist imagery features Jowo Jampa and Kuenkhen Longchen Rabjam is presented once a year to the public and this unfurling is meant to bring good karma with the scroll’s presence. This sacred ceremony is marked by 10 days of prayers and Buddhist ceremonies by the monks of Tharpaling Lhakhang to the people of Chumi Valley.

**Tangsibi Mani, Bumthang
March 04 to 06**

The festival takes place at Tangsibi Tashiling Lhakhang in Ura, Bumthang. Its origins can be traced back to the Tibetan Treasure discoverer, Sherab Mebar, who visited Bhutan and established himself at this very location.

**Talo Tsechu, Punakha
March 26 to 28**

A three-day festival of masked and Atsara dances, the festivity gathers the villages around Talo Monastery in Punakha. Unlike the Punakha, Thimphu and Paro Tsechus that draw in large crowds and visitors, this intimate festival is as authentic as it is fully undiscovered.

**Gasa Tsechu
March 26 to 28**

A festival set in Gasa, one of Bhutan’s most stunning districts, this celebration is held in a community boasting the country’s highest elevation. The culture of the Highlander communities and their distinct dances and songs make this a truly unique spectacle to witness.

**Paro Tsechu
March 29 to April 02**

If you ask any Bhutanese, no festival marks their calendars in deep red more than the Paro Tsechu. The Rinpung Dzong comes alive with dances and songs, but the main highlight is the locals donning their most colourful and expensive kiras and ghos, earning the festival the moniker “Bhutan Fashion Week.”



April

Spring takes on its most elaborate and colourful forms in April and all over Bhutan, the mountains and valleys showcase flamboyance with entire forests and fields of wildflowers in every shape and shade. Festivals too, begin to turn sleepy valleys into vivid displays of dances, ceremonies and rituals.

Rhododendron Festival, Dochula, Thimphu **April 13 to 14**

With over 46 species of Rhododendron flowers that thrive in Bhutan, this festival marks the vivid natural display of these flowering trees. All over Bhutan, many mountains and forest trails are carpeted with these beautiful flowers with colours ranging from white, pink, red to purple.

Ura Yakchoe, Bumthang **April 28 to May 02**

Another small but unique festival in a picturesque village in Bhutan's eastern valleys, this celebration held in Ura Lhakhang is highlighted by invoking and escorting of Yidam Chana Dorjee (a holy Buddhist deity) from Gaythen to Ura.

Domkhar Tsechu, Bumthang **April 26 to 28**

A three-day festival celebrated since the 1700s as initiated by Serkhong Truelkhu in western Bumthang's Domkhar Village. The colourful and historical festivities are marked by sacred chams and masked dances deriving their origins from Tertön Pema Lingpa. On the last day of the feast, large scrolls are unfurled to bring blessings to the citizens of the village and the visiting revelers.



May

The peak of spring reaches its zenith in May and as warmer winds turn the cold into cool, the valleys reach a level of lushness that would captivate every outdoor type of visitor. It is at this time when nature hikes are at their most stunning and everywhere you wander seems to put you perfectly on the frame of a postcard.

Birth Anniversary of the Third Druk Gyalpo, King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck May 2

A holiday to honour the birthday, memory and accomplishments of Bhutan's third king. His Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuck was largely responsible for opening Bhutan to the outside world for paving the way for its first wave of modernisation.

Lord Buddha's Parinirvana May 23

A sacred holiday honouring Buddha's nirvana or gaining enlightenment. Many Bhutanese will go on pilgrimage to holy sites and temples are set with ceremonies to bless pilgrims. Some of the country's holiest relics and statuaries are also put on display. The Phajoding Temple high above Amankora is a holy site to celebrate this occasion.



June

If the month of June was literature, it would probably be Shakespeare’s sonnets. This transition month between spring and summer brings forth a rhythmic turning of pages when flowers suddenly turn to fruits, the mountains turn into an electric shade of green and the first harvests of the season give every kitchen and dining table songs to warble about.

**Birth Anniversary of Guru Rinpoche
June 16**

Apart from the Tsechu in Kurjey Temple, Bumthang, the whole kingdom joins in celebrating across the valleys to honour their most revered religious figure with temple ceremonies and offerings. Having been credited for founding the Tiger’s Nest and many other important religious edifices in Bhutan, a pilgrimage to these monuments is an important task to accomplish for many Bhutanese.

**Kurjey Tsechu, Bumthang
June 24**

Celebrated in one of Bumthang Valley’s most sacred temples, this one-day celebration pays tribute to Guru Rinpoche, credited for bringing Buddhism to Bhutan. Tantric dancing and ceremonies are performed the whole day, capped by the display of the large sacred scroll.

**Nimalung Tsechu, Bumthang
June 22 to 24**

A three-day festivity of Cham and masked dances performed by monks of Nimalung Dratshan, highlighted by the unfurling of the sacred Guru Tshengye Thongdrol scroll on the last day.



July

While monsoon blesses the grounds of neighbouring India and Bangladesh vastly, here in Bhutan the rains come in short, poetic breaths - watering the mountains and the valleys with symbolic sprinkles of water and the rest of the day sees the sunshine radiantly lighting up the lush landscapes while dramatic mists lurk nearby as dramatic veils to the setting.

First Sermon of Lord Buddha July 10

As a deeply devout Buddhist nation, Bhutan celebrates the First Sermon of Lord Buddha as a national holiday. Thousands of Bhutanese flock the temples and religious sites on this day, embarking on sacred pilgrimages and making offerings to mark the first time that Buddha codified the “Four Noble Truths” of Buddhism and the day he began teaching these doctrines. Temples are beautifully adorned to welcome the faithful and to celebrate the triumph of Buddhism through Buddha’s teachings.

Haa Summer Festival July 12 to 14 (*tentative dates)

A day trip away from Paro is the scenic valley of Haa in Bhutan’s western edges. This summer festival is a lively celebration of the valley’s cuisine, nomadic culture and western Bhutanese traditional lifestyles through fairs, floral displays, songs, dancing, food showcases, traditional sports, performances and open houses in villages. One of the country’s least visited areas, Haa maintains a sense of authentic Bhutanese way of life and a day here rewards visitors with gems awaiting discovery.



August

After a month of light rains sprinkling the grounds, the valleys and mountains in August erupt in fifty shades of green, fully revealing the undisputed title of Bhutan as the world's last Shangri-la. Waterfalls cascade aplenty on mountainsides amid lush carpets of foliage, birds and wildlife adorn the storybook landscapes and in Punakha, the Mo Chhu and Po Chhu Rivers both roar with spectacular rapids and river current from the melting glacial ice - creating the perfect rides for rafting, a signature adventure for the valley.

Mushroom Festival, Thimphu **August 15 to 16**

Genekha, a secluded village in Thimphu Valley known for its mushrooms plays host to this unique festival. Mushroom foraging excursions are organised together with cultural performances and mushroom cooking classes.

Matsutake Festival, Bumthang **August 15 to 16**

Highly prized in Western cuisine, the best Matsutake mushrooms grow aplenty in Bhutan and this tasty fungus is a big part of local cuisine. In Bumthang's Ura Valley, a festival is held when the Matsutake mushroom is at the peak of harvests, where mushroom picking excursions are held with mushroom identification workshops, dancing, songs and of course a feast of food featuring the celebrated fungi.



September

The cool breeze of September officially signals the arrival of autumn and the kingdom’s festival season kicks off with colour and flair. Around the kingdom, the valleys explode with celebrations and traditional ceremonies from the smallest village temple to the largest dzongs.

Tour of the Dragon Cycling Race September 02

An incredible journey of Bhutan on two wheels with the world’s toughest cycling race. Amankora offers a package for participants including stays, training and logistics.

Wangdue Tsechu September 19 to 21

Widely known for the Raksha Mangcham or the Dance of the Ox, this three-day festival in the kingdom’s “Valley of the Wind” is a distinct display of culture in central Bhutan.

Thimphu Drubchen September 17

Consecration day and ceremonies leading to the capital’s biggest festival, the Thimphu Tshechu.

Thimphu Tsechu September 21 to 23

The capital’s biggest festival is marked by elaborate dances, songs and ceremonies in the setting of Tashichho Dzong, the royal and national seat of administration in Bhutan. Members of Bhutan’s highest royal and monastic orders as well as government officials and international dignitaries attend the festival.



September

Tamsing Phala Choepa, Bumthang **September 21 to 23**

People from all over Bhutan gather in Bumthang for this three-day festivity to witness the dances of Terton (treasure discoverer) Perma Lingpa performed by the monks and people of Tamsing. One of the highlights is the Phagchham or the Pig Dance and the Pholay Molay Cham.

Dechenphug Tsechu, Thimphu **September 21 to 23**

A private royal temple closed to foreigners, Dechenpug opens its doors wide open to everybody once a year only on this bright and colourful festival.

Gangtey Tsechu **September 24 to 26**

Held in the courtyard of the historic Gangtey Goempa, this Tsechu showcases sacred masked dances, cultural performances and tantric ceremonies. The costumes and revelry accentuated in this festival are a true delight for any photographer and reveler.

Thangbi Mewang, Bumthang **September 26 to 27**

This two-day festival celebrates the rich heritage and cultural tapestry of the ancient Thangbi Lhakhang. The focal point of the event is the Mewang ceremony, in which Gomchens lead purification rituals while attendees leap over the flames seeking absolution from past wrongs. Legend has it that successfully jumping over the fire thrice shields one from misfortune for the entire year. Following the ceremony, mask dances and folk performances grace the temple's courtyard.

Blessed Rainy Day (Thue Bup) **September 23**

A holiday marking the end of the rains in the Himalayas. Rain or any water from sacred lakes and rivers is collected on this day and used as a bath to cleanse and sanctify one of bad karma.



October

As autumn swings in full force, Bhutan's colours transform into bright swaths of orange, yellows and crimsons and the festivals unfolding around the valleys seem to echo the bright outlook of nature's show.

Jhomolhari Mountain Festival **October 14 to 15**

One of Bhutan's most remote festival sites, the Jhomolhari Base Camp where the festival unfolds is a two-night trek for a one-way journey (approximately 6-8 hours of hiking per day) and another two-night journey on the way back.

Jakar Tsechu **October 18 to 21**

As Bumthang's main administrative valley, Jakar is an important center in the east. Its three-day festival held in the historic Jakar Dzong is a colourful mélange of dances, songs and traditional performances both from the monastic body of the district and the villages nearby.

Jambay Lhakhang Drup, Bumthang **October 26 to 29**

The biggest crowd drawers of this popular festival are the fire dances, purification rituals and naked dances performed in Jambay Lhakhang, one of Bhutan's oldest temples.

Prakhar Duchhoed, Bumthang **October 27 to 29**

Held in the scenic Chumi Valley at a temple believed to have been built with the help of langurs or white monkeys, the festival highlights this unique tale through dances and songs.



November

The month of November marks the peak and the end of the fall season in the Himalayas. As the riot of colours sweeps through its final days in the kingdom, the religious festivals and royal holidays also reach their zenith.

Coronation Anniversary of His Majesty the King November 1

A commemoration of the current king’s coronation in November 2008, the year that also marked the 100 years of monarchy in Bhutan.

Birth Anniversary of the 4th Druk Gyalpo November 11

A celebration of the beloved 4th King His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck’s birthday. This day, the nation pays tribute to the milestones of his majesty who has ruled the country since 1972 until his abdication in 2006 in favour of his son, the current king.

Black Necked Crane Festival, Gangtey November 11

One of Bhutan’s most celebrated festivals, this occasion celebrates the endangered black-necked cranes as they arrive from Tibet for the winter to roost across Phobjika Valley. For years, the cranes arrive through the valley by flying and encircling the Gangtey Monastery, earning them the moniker “heavenly birds.” Featuring sacred dances as well as folk dances of songs, the highlight of the festival is the Crane Dance performed by the children of the local school. The uniqueness of the festival is tied to its celebration as a tool to promote nature conservation in Bhutan.

A high-angle view of a modern outdoor lounge area at dusk. The space features a large, L-shaped sofa with light-colored cushions and a stone base. Two wooden tables, one rectangular and one round, are set with glassware and lit candles. A fire pit with a roaring fire is visible on the right. The area is surrounded by dense greenery and a stone wall.

Druk Wangyel Tsechu, Dochula, Thimphu
December 13

Bhutan National Day
December 17

Jambay Lhakhang Singye Cham, Bumthang
December 24

Nalakhar Tshechu, Bumthang
December 24 to 26

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day
December 24 to 25

**New Year's Eve Celebration
December 31**

Focused on recollections of the year and let Amankora's five lodges be your home as you embark on a journey for the new year where we will organise blessing ceremonies, cultural performances, a feast of flavours and a deeply enriching celebration for blessed beginnings.

Festival and cultural event dates stated in this calendar are not final and are subject to changes by the festival organizers, monastic body and the governing districts of the Kingdom of Bhutan.

Reconfirmation with our Aman Reservations team at least a month before your holiday to the kingdom coinciding with specific festivals you wish to see and experience is essential.

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