Smith Travel Presents

THE KINGDOM OF BHUTAN

OCTOBER 29 - NOVEMBER 7, 2015
Smith Lecturer

This tour will be accompanied by Jamie Hubbard, Yehan Numata Professor of Buddhist Studies, Director of the Concentration in Buddhist Studies, and Chair of the Religion Department at Smith College where he has taught since 1985. His main work is in ancient Chinese and Japanese Buddhism, primarily dealing with the relationship between text, rhetoric, and institution, particularly in the social-political realm involving questions of heresy and orthodoxy. Publications include The Manuscript Remains and Other Materials for the Study of the San-chieh Movement (2003), Absolute Delusion, Perfect Buddhahood: The Rise and Fall of a Chinese Heresy (2001), and Pruning the Bodhi Tree: The Storm Over Critical Buddhism (1997). He just finished a translation of a 6th century commentary on the Vimalakirti-nirdesa-sūtra. Further afield, he organized the Buddhism in Mongolia: Rebirth and Transformation conference held at Smith College in 2009, and a conference on Technologies of Awareness: Buddhism and the New Mind Sciences in 2010. He also enjoys the Burmese meditation traditions as they have been translated into the modern world in the practice of vipassana (insight meditation), mindfulness-based stress reduction, and the like.

Dear Smith Alumnae and Friends,

It is with great enthusiasm that Smith Travel is offering a trip to one of the most unique and isolated locations in the world; the Kingdom of Bhutan. This journey, accompanied by Jamie Hubbard, PhD., Professor and Chair of Religion at Smith and Yehan Numata Professor of Buddhist Studies, will take you through the last living Buddhist kingdom where the results of “Gross National Happiness” are immediately evident to the visitor. It is a place where the vitality of traditional culture and the purity and beauty of the natural environment make this one of the most appealing countries in the world. Facing the daunting challenges of modernization and globalization, Bhutan strives to balance economic development with the values of maintaining the integrity of spiritual and cultural traditions and good governance.

Throughout this journey we are also fortunate to have our national guide Mr. Kinga Dechen - recognized as one of the world’s top 10 guides, travel with us!

I hope you will join us on this program. To make your reservation, please call Smith Travel toll free at 800-225-2029.

With warm regards,

Elizabeth Bigwood
Director for Travel / Alumnae Association of Smith College
Smith Travel Presents

THE KINGDOM OF BHUTAN

Tour Cost: $6,280

For more information on this journey, please contact the Smith Travel office at (800) 225-2029 or alumtrav@smith.edu

DAY 1 | OCTOBER 29 | THIMPHU
Travelers must be ready to depart from Bangkok this morning at 6:30 a.m. bound for Paro, Bhutan. Upon arrival in Bhutan we will transfer to the capital city of Thimphu for lunch and an afternoon of sightseeing to include the colorful Memorial Chorten and the Painting School. We will also take a stroll down Thimphu’s main street lined with shops and restaurants. This is a colorful scene with local people wearing their traditional “ghos” (men) and “kiras” (women) and red-robed monks gathering along the way. Jumolhari Hotel (L,D)

DAY 2 | OCTOBER 30 | THIMPHU
This morning we will meet with Bhutan’s first female civil engineer, Ms. Dorji Choden, the country’s Minister of Work and Human Settlements to discuss the challenges the country of “Gross National Happiness” is facing in terms of growing urban infrastructure and development. From here we continue on to the famous Textile Museum, which is operated under the auspices of the fourth Queen Mother and lunch at the Folk Heritage Museum. In the afternoon we have scheduled a visit with the RENEW Organization (Respect, Educate, Nurture and Empower Women) of Bhutan. Jumolhari Hotel (B, L, D)

DAY 3 | OCTOBER 31 | PUNAKHA
The day begins with a visit to the Bhutan Nuns Foundation which plays a large role throughout Bhutan in empowering an educating Bhutanese girls and women. Afterwards, we depart Thimphu for Punakha, stopping en route on top of Dochula Pass where thousands of colorful prayer flags are hung between the trees. On a clear day you can see the entire Himalayan mountain range. Afternoon sightseeing in Punakha will focus on the famous Punakha Dzong, home to the monastic and administrative body of the region. Punakha Dzong is considered to be the most beautiful in the country and served as the venue for the coronation of the current young king. Later in the afternoon as the rolling hills of Punakha Valley are dipped in the golden hue of the setting sun, we will take a leisurely stroll to the Temple of Divine Madman for a breathtaking view of the surroundings. Zangdopelri Hotel (B, L, D)

DAY 4 | NOVEMBER 1 | TRONGSA
This will be a day of traveling as we journey east across two mountain passes and with a stop at Chendibji Chorten for a picnic lunch. Our destination, the charming town of Trongsa is set high in the mountains with a feel of a medieval village. Sherubling Lodge (B, L, D)
**DAY 5 | NOVEMBER 2 | BUMTHANG VALLEY | JAKAR**

A short morning drive will take us to Jakar and the Bumthang Valley, the cultural and historic heart of the kingdom. We will spend the day visiting some of the valley’s most sacred temples and monasteries where local people gather, make their offerings and turn the prayer wheels. Here, we might even be able to attend one of the chanting ceremonies which often take place inside the monasteries at the end of the day. Delicious home cooked meals are served at the Mountain Lodge where we will settle in for three nights. *Mountain Lodge (B,L,D)*

**DAY 6 | NOVEMBER 3 | BUMTHANG VALLEY | JAKAR**

The first stop this morning will be at Membarsho “Fire Lake” where the surroundings are covered with prayer flags and small clay offerings called tse tse are left behind by the local worshippers. It is said that secret treasures were once buried in the ground of the lake and the site has become a popular pilgrimage destination. A vegetarian lunch will be served at one of Bhutan’s largest nunneries where we will have a chance to interact with the nuns and learn more about their daily lives. Many of them will speak English and are happy to talk with you! The day concludes as we witness a Buddhist debating ceremony in the grounds of a nearby monastery. *Mountain Lodge (B,L,D)*

**DAY 7 | NOVEMBER 4 | BUMTHANG VALLEY | JAKAR**

Today will visit Ura, a tiny village of about 30 houses with a feeling as if time has stood still. We will spend time in the local village school, with the students and headmaster and will join them for lunch which we will donate to the school. Remainder of the day at leisure. *Mountain Lodge (B, L, D)*

**DAY 8 | NOVEMBER 5 | PARO**

We fly to Paro where our sightseeing will include a tour of the Paro National Museum which houses a magnificent collection of thangkas and offers a good insight into the complexity of Bhutanese iconography. We will also spend time at the Paro Dzong and the wonderful ancient temple of Avalokitshvara at Kyichu, one of the oldest in the country. *Uma Resort (B, L, D)*

**DAY 9 | NOVEMBER 6 | PARO**

Today marks the highlight of our trip... an excursion to the spectacularly located “Taktsang” also known as Tiger’s Nest, and one of the most venerated pilgrimage sites of the Himalayan world. It clings to sheer cliffs 3,000 feet above the valley and a visit to Taktsang is the dream of a lifetime for the devout. We return to Paro in the afternoon for a stroll through town. Our farewell dinner will be held in a tiny local restaurant owned by our good friend Ms. Sonam Trophel who makes the best tomato soup and ginger chicken in the country! *Uma Resort (B, L, D)*

**DAY 10 | NOVEMBER 7 | DEPARTURE**

The flight to Bangkok departs this morning scheduled to arrive in the late afternoon. *(B)*

*Trip Extensions:* Since your gateway city in Asia is Bangkok, we would be happy to arrange for a private trip extension to Southeast Asia including, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam or Myanmar.

*Note:* Round trip airfare between Bangkok and Paro is included in the trip price. We can also arrange for flights in and out of Bhutan via Delhi, Calcutta, Mumbai, Kathmandu and Singapore. However these flights are not daily. Your trip price will be adjusted accordingly should you choose different flights in and out of Paro, Bhutan.

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**RESERVE YOUR SPACE TODAY**

*Please note that space is limited on this departure, especially single rooms. We encourage you to reserve your space as soon as possible.*

*All registration forms and deposits must be sent to Smith Travel, AASC, 33 Elm Street, Northampton, MA 01063. You may also fax your registration to (413) 585 2015. Feel free to contact Smith Travel at (800) 225-2029 or alumtrav@smith.edu with any questions.*

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*UNIQUELY SMITH*
Please sign up through the following options:

*Mail your deposit with this form to Smith Travel, AASC, 33 Elm Street, Northampton, MA 01063. Checks should be made payable to Authentic Asia Tours and Travel
*Fax this form with completed credit card information to Smith Travel at (413) 585 2015.

Enclosed is my/our check for $_______ ($750 per person), payable to “Authentic Asia”, to reserve _______ place(s) on Smith College’s The Kingdom of Bhutan, October 29, 2015. Or, charge my/our deposit of $_______ ($750 per person) to my/our:

MASTERCARD ❑ VISA ❑ AMEX ❑ CARD NUMBER _____________________________ EXP. DATE _______ SECURITY CODE__________

CARD HOLDER SIGNATURE __________________________________________

BILLING ADDRESS ______________________________________________________

NAME (as in passport) __________________________________ DATE OF BIRTH __________

NAME (as in passport) __________________________________ DATE OF BIRTH __________

MAILING ADDRESS __________________________________ CITY __________ STATE _____ ZIP _________

PHONE (home) __________________________________ PHONE (cell) _______________________

EMAIL __________________________________ FAX __________________________________

ACCOMMODATIONS ❑ DOUBLE OCCUPANCY ($_____) ❑ SINGLE OCCUPANCY (plus $_____) 

WAIVER OF LIABILITY: By signing below I/we acknowledge and comply with the Terms and Conditions and Responsibilities stated in this brochure (both parties must sign and date).

SIGNATURE ___________________________ DATE __________________________

SIGNATURE ___________________________ DATE __________________________
Single Supplement (to be advised)

Included in Program Cost – Educational program of lectures and discussions by Professor Jamie Hubbard Ph.D of Smith College. Accommodations as listed, all flights in economy class within from Bangkok to Bhutan and within Bhutan, all meals as listed, all sightseeing and entrance fees as listed, service of a national guide, an Authentic Asia tour escort, all gratuities for included tours and meals, Burma visa on arrival fee, airport transfers in Paro, comprehensive pre-departure materials.

Not Included – International airfare in and out of Bangkok, beverages other than bottled water with meals (alcoholic beverages are included during the welcome and farewell dinners), all meals as indicated, trip insurance, items of purely personal nature such as excess baggage fees, telephone/faxsimile charges, medical fees, laundry and hotel room service.

Terms and Conditions – Payment Schedule: A deposit of $750 per person is required to reserve your space on the tour.

Payments – Checks should be made payable to AUTHENTIC ASIA Tours and Travel. All credit card charges will be processed by Authentic Asia Tours and Travel.

Registration Forms – All registration forms must be sent to Smith Travel, AASC, 33 Elm Street, Northampton, MA 01063.

Cancellations & Refunds – The tour deposit of $750 is non-refundable. The final invoice will be sent 75 days prior to departure and is due upon receipt. The following cancellation fees will apply:

If a written cancellation is received 75 to 45 days prior to departure 50% of the trip price will be refunded.

If a written cancellation is received 44 to 30 days prior to departure 25% of the trip price will be refunded.

If a written cancellation is received 29 – 14 days prior to departure 10% of the trip price will be refunded.

No refunds will be issued if the written cancellation is received less than 14 days prior to departure. No refunds shall be issued after the tour has commenced, or for leaving the tour early. No refunds shall be issued for missed, meals, sightseeing tours or any unused services. Insurance is highly recommended. You will receive travel insurance information from Smith Travel with your confirmation letter.

Eligibility – These trips are designed for alumnae of Smith College and accompanying members of the immediate families. Space permitting, a participating alumna may bring a non-Smith friend or couple. For further information about the trip please call Smith Travel at (800) 225-2029 or e-mail alumtrav@smith.edu.

Responsibility – Tour participants assume the responsibility to select a tour that is appropriate for his or her abilities, health, and interests.

Authentic Asia acts only in the capacity of agents for the hotels, airlines, bus, and ship lines or owners or contractors providing accommodations, transportation or other services. As a result, all coupons, receipts, or tickets are issued subject to the terms and conditions specified by the supplier. By acceptance of tour membership, the participant agrees that neither Authentic Asia nor any of its subsidiaries shall become liable or responsible for personal injury or illness, damage to person or property, loss, delay, or irregularity caused by persons not controlled by it, such as (without limitation) airlines, bus, and shipping companies, suppliers of accommodations or other services, or resulting from any acts of God, defects in vehicles, strikes, wars, whether declared or otherwise, civil disturbances, medical or customs regulations, acts of terrorism, epidemics, government restrictions, criminal or negligent acts of others, weather, or any other circumstances over which Authentic Asia has no control. Authentic Asia is not responsible for any additional expenses or liability sustained or incurred by the participant as a result of the above-mentioned causes.

Tour Participant acknowledges receipt of a copy of these Terms and Conditions and signifies acceptance of, and consents to all of the terms and conditions set forth herein, when registering for, or making payments on this tour.