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TOURISM COUNCIL OF BHUTAN



TENTATIVE FESTIVAL DATES FOR 2015

SL#	FESTIVAL	PLACE	DATES
1.	NOMAD FESTIVAL	BUMTHANG	23 rd February
2.	BHUTAN INTERNATIONAL MARATHON	(Annual event organized by Bhutan Olympic Committee)	23 rd February
3.	PUNAKHA DRUBCHEN	Punakha Dzong, PUNAKHA	23 rd – 27 th February
4.	PUNAKHA TSHECHU	Punakha Dzong, PUNAKHA	28 th February – 2 nd March
5.	CHHORTEN KORA	Chorten Kora, TRASHIYANGTSHE	5 th March & 20 th March
6.	GOMPHU KORA	Gom Kora Lhakhang, TRASHIGANG	27 th – 29 th March
7.	GASA TSHECHU	Gasa Dzong, GASA	27 th – 30 th March
8.	PARO TSHECHU	Rinpung Dzong, PARO	31 st March – 4 th April
9.	TALO TSHECHU	Talagonpa, PUNAKHA	7 th April – 9 th April
10.	RHODODENDRON FESTIVAL	Lamperi Botanical Garden, Dochula, THIMPHU	18 th – 20 th April
11.	URA YAKCHOE	Ura Lhakhang, BUMTHANG	30 th April – 4 th May
12.	NIMALUNG TSHECHU	Nimalung Dratshang, Chummi, BUMTHANG	24 th – 26 th June
13.	KURJEY TSHECHU	Kurje Lhakhang, Choekhor	6 th June
14.	HAA SUMMER FESTIVAL	Town Festival Ground, HAA	5 th – 6 th July



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15.	MASUTAKE MUSHROOM FESTIVAL	Ura, BUMTHANG	23rd – 24th August
16.	TOUR OF THE DRAGON (BICYCLE RACE)	Bumthang to Thimphu	5th September
17.	THIMPHU DRUBCHEN	Tashi Chhodzong, THIMPHU	18th – 22nd September
18.	WANGDUE TSHECHU	Tencholing Army Ground, WANGDUEPHODRANG	21 st – 23 rd September
19.	TAMSHING PHALA CHHOEPA	Tamshing Lhakhang, Choekhor, BUMTHANG	22 nd – 24 th September
20.	THIMPHU TSHECHU	Tashi Chhodzong, THIMPHU	23 rd – 25 th September
21.	JOMOLHARI MOUNTAIN FESTIVAL	Dangojang	8 th – 9 th October
22.	PEMAGATSHEL TSHECHU	Pemagatshel Dzong, PEMAGATSHEL	20 th – 23 rd October
23.	CHHUKHA TSHECHU	Chhukha Dzong, CHHUKHA	21 st – 23 rd October
24.	THANGBI MANI	T angbi Lhakhang, Choekor, BUMTHANG	27 th – 29 th October
25.	JAMBAY LHAKHANG DRUP	Jambay Lhakhang, Choekhor, BUMTHANG	27 th – 31 st October
26.	PRAKHAR DUCHHOED	Prakar Lhakhang, Chummi, BUMTHANG	28 th – 30 th October
27.	BLACK NECKED CRANE FESTIVAL	Gangtey Gonpa, Phobjikha, WANGDUEPHODRANG	11th November



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28.	MONGAR TSHECHU	Mongar Dzong, MONGAR	18th – 21st November
29.	TRASHIGANG TSHECHU	Trashigang Dzong, TRASHIGANG	19th – 22nd November
30.	NALAKHAR TSHECHU	Ngaa Lhakhang, Choekhor, BUMTHANG	25th – 27th November
31.	DRUK WANGYEL TSHECHU	Dochula, THIMPHU	13th December
32.	TRONGSA TSHECHU	Trongsa Dzong, TRONGSA	20th – 22nd December
33.	LHUENTSE TSHECHU	Lhuentse Dzong, LHUENTSE	20th – 22nd December

Tshechu (Festival)(literally "day ten") are annual religious Bhutanese festivals held in each district of Bhutan on the tenth day of a month of the lunar Tibetan calendar. The month depends on the place. Tsechus are religious festivals of Bhutan. The Thimphu tsechu and the Paro tsechu are among the biggest of the tshechus in terms of participation and audience. Tsechus are large social gatherings, which perform the function of social bonding among people of remote and spread-out villages. Large markets also congregate at the fair locations, leading to brisk commerce.

Tshechu traditions

The focal point of the tshechus is the sacred Cham Dances, which are banned in neighboring. These costumed, masked dances typically are moral vignettes, or based on incidents from the life of the 9th century Nyingmapa teacher Padmasambhava and other saints.

Most tshechus also feature the unfurling of a thongdrel (or thangka) - a large tapestry typically depicting a seated Guru Rinpoche surrounded by holy beings, the mere viewing of which is said to cleanse the viewer of sin. The thongdrel is raised before dawn and rolled down by morning.

Because tshechus depend on the availability of masked dancers, registered dancers



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are subject to fine if they refuse to perform during festivals.

History of Tshechus

Padmasambhava, the great Buddhist scholar, visited Tibet and Bhutan in the 8th century and 9th century. He used to convert opponents of Buddhism by performing rites, reciting mantras and finally performing a dance of subjugation to conquer local spirits and gods. He visited Bhutan to aid the dying king Sindhu Raja.

Padmasambhava performed a series of such dances in the Bumthang valley to restore the health of the king. The grateful king helped spread Buddhism in Bhutan.

Padmasambhava organized the first tsechu in Bumthang, where the eight manifestations of Guru Rinpoche (Padmasambhava being the human form) were presented through eight forms of dances. These became the Chams (Dance) depicting the glory of Padmasambhava.