



VMFA

VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

HIMALAYAN KINGDOMS: NEPAL & BHUTAN

November 1-15, 2019

15 days from \$5,874 total price from Washington, DC
(\$5,095 air & land inclusive plus \$779 airline taxes and fees)



This tour is provided by
Odysseys Unlimited,
six-time honoree
Travel & Leisure's World's
Best Tour Operators award.

**An Exclusive Small Group Tour for
Members of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts**
*With Dr. John Henry Rice, E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter
Curator of South Asian and Islamic Art*

VMFA

VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

Dear VMFA Members,

Join VMFA on an exclusive 15-day small group journey to the distant and devout Himalayan kingdoms of Nepal and Bhutan. Traveling with you will be **Dr. John Henry Rice, E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Curator of South Asian and Islamic Art.**

Your tour begins in Kathmandu, where you visit iconic Swayambhunath, then you tour Patan Durbar Square, a UNESCO site. Traveling through the beautiful Kathmandu Valley – home to seven UNESCO sites – enjoy a small group highlight: lunch in a local family’s home. Revered Boudhanath and Pashupatinath Temple are next. After touring ancient Bhaktapur, travel to hilltop Nagarkot, a village commanding a spectacular Himalayan vista. Next is Thimphu, Bhutan, where you tour the city and enjoy a home-hosted dinner. Raise prayer flags at Dochula Pass, take an exhilarating river rafting trip, and tour historic Paro. Your tour concludes with a final highlight: a visit to the sacred cliffside Tiger’s Nest Monastery.

Space on this program is limited to 24 VMFA members. We expect it will fill quickly; your early reservations are encouraged.

Sincerely,



Adele “Hutch” Livingston
Coordinator of Member Travel

VMFA RESERVATION FORM – HIMALAYAN KINGDOMS: NEPAL & BHUTAN

Enclosed is my/our deposit for \$_____ (\$500 per person) for ____ person(s) on **Himalayan Kingdoms: Nepal & Bhutan** departing **November 1, 2019**. I/We understand the final payment is due at least 95 days prior to departure. Payment may be made by American Express, Discover, MasterCard, VISA, or by personal check. **Please make check payable to Odysseys Unlimited, Inc., and send, with completed reservation form, to: Odysseys Unlimited, Inc., Attn: Special Interest Groups, One Newton Place, 275 Washington Street, Suite 300, Newton, MA 02458. You may also call Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. toll-free at 888-370-6765, or you may fax your reservation to 617-454-9199.**

Full Passport Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Gender _____

Full Passport Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Gender _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Home Phone (_____) _____ Cell Phone (_____) _____

E-mail(s) _____ Badge Name(s) _____

Please book my/our air from _____ I/We request a Business Class upgrade

I will share a room with _____

Please Note: The undersigned has read the schedule of activities for **Himalayan Kingdoms: Nepal & Bhutan, November 1-15, 2019**, and agrees that their signature below represents their acceptance of the General Terms and Conditions.

Signature(s) _____ Date _____

Method of Payment Check American Express Discover MasterCard VISA

Account # _____ Security Code _____ Exp. Date _____

Name of Cardholder _____

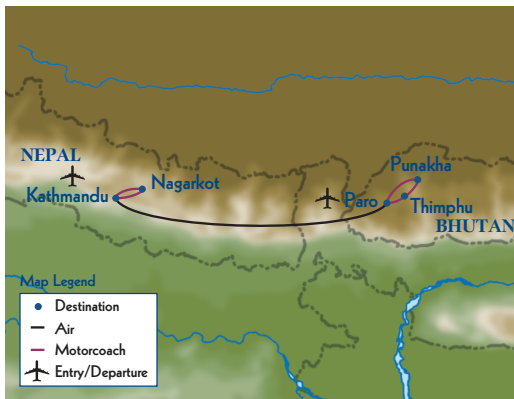
Signature _____

Final invoicing will be sent by our tour operator, Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. The balance of the program price must be paid to Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. Final payment is due 95 days prior to departure, and is payable by check or credit card.

HIMALAYAN KINGDOMS: NEPAL & BHUTAN

15 days from \$5,874 total price from Washington, DC
(\$5,095 air & land inclusive plus \$779 airline taxes and fees)

On this exhilarating journey, we discover two distant and devout lands, different in fact yet similar in spirit. Hinduism in Nepal and Buddhism in Bhutan suffuse all aspects of life; in both, tradition and belief abide – and surrounding Himalayan scenery casts a truly awe-inspiring spell.



Day 1: Depart U.S. for Kathmandu, Nepal

Day 2: Arrive Kathmandu We reach Kathmandu, Nepal's capital and largest city, tonight and transfer to our hotel.

Day 3: Kathmandu This morning we meet our fellow travelers and Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director for a briefing about the journey ahead. Nestled high in the storied Himalayas, Nepal contains eight of the world's ten highest mountains, including majestic Everest. We get our first look at this land-locked Himalayan nation in Durbar Square, a jumble of ancient temples, palaces, courtyards, and streets. Next we visit hilltop Swayambhunath, the iconic Buddhist temple dating to about 500 BCE. A 365-step climb brings us to the sacred UNESCO stupa, with its white dome, gilded spire, and all-seeing "eyes" of the Buddha. This afternoon we travel through Kathmandu Valley to Patan, Nepal's third largest city known for its rich culture and artistic tradition. On a walking tour through the UNESCO site of Patan Durbar Square, we see some of the city's many Buddhist monuments and Hindu temples. Late afternoon we return to our hotel, where tonight we enjoy a welcome dinner. *B,D*

Day 4: Kathmandu Today we see different aspects of Nepali life up close. First, we travel through the beautiful Kathmandu Valley to hilltop Kopan Monastery, home to 360 monks and lamas. With majestic views of the valley below, the monastery and associated nunnery welcome seekers and visitors to study, meditate, and learn about the Mahayana Buddhism practiced here. After our visit we enjoy a small group highlight as we share lunch with a local family in their home. Later we visit Shechen Clinic and Hospice, a humanitarian project that provides sustainable medical services to local residents. Then we tour Boudhanath, a UNESCO site and Nepal's largest and most important Buddhist stupa. With its massive mandala and huge white dome, 15th-century Boudhanath draws millions of religious devotees, seekers, and tourists. Tonight we enjoy dinner at a local restaurant. *B,L,D*

Avg. High (°F)	Nov	Dec
Kathmandu	74	67
Thimphu	64	58
Paro	57	52

Your Small Group Tour Highlights

Opportunity to visit two Himalayan countries • Kathmandu touring • Kathmandu Valley excursion • Visit to Buddhist monastery • Lunch with a Nepalese family in their home • Patan's traditional arts and handicrafts • Hindu shrine at Pashupatinath Temple • Thimphu touring • Dinner with a Bhutanese family • Raising prayer flags at Dochula Pass • Punakha river rafting trip • Beautiful Punakha Dzong • Historic Paro • Tiger's Nest Monastery excursion

Day	Itinerary	Hotel	Rating
1	Depart U.S. for Kathmandu		
2-4	Kathmandu	Hyatt Regency Kathmandu	Deluxe
5-6	Nagarkot	Club Himalaya Nagarkot	Sup. First Class
7-8	Thimphu	Druk Hotel	Sup. First Class
9-10	Punakha	Khuru Resort	First Class
11-13	Paro	Zhiwa Ling	Sup. First Class
14	Paro/Kathmandu/Depart for U.S.	Hyatt Regency Kathmandu (day room)	Deluxe
15	Arrive U.S.		

Ratings are based on the Hotel & Travel Index, the travel industry standard reference.

Cover photo: On our Day 9 visit to Dochula Pass, we raise prayer flags in the Buddhist tradition.



We climb to Tiger's Nest Monastery on Day 13.

Day 5: Kathmandu/Nagarkot Leaving Kathmandu today, we stop at Nepal's oldest and holiest Hindu shrine, ornate Pashupatinath Temple. At this UNESCO site we see *sadhus* and sages who, in following the lifestyle of Lord Shiva, wear loincloths and cover themselves with ashes. We also may witness cremation ceremonies along the river banks; displaying appropriate respect to the mourners is requested of all visitors. Traveling on, we reach Bhaktapur, another UNESCO site and the least developed of the valley's three cities. Virtually a living open-air museum with its unspoiled ancient square and warrens of medieval streets, Bhaktapur is known for its fine artisans and many temples. We have time to explore then continue the scenic drive to Nagarkot, a hilltop village commanding a spectacular vista of Nepal's major Himalayan peaks. *B,L*

Day 6: Nagarkot Early this morning we have an opportunity for an unforgettable experience: watching the sun rise over the fabled Himalaya from the hotel's rooftop observatory. When Kathmandu Valley below is obscured by cloud cover, Nagarkot feels like an island amid an ocean of clouds. Later, we embark on an easy walk around the village, where we have the chance to meet local people. The remainder of the day is at leisure amid the stunning Himalayan scenery. *B,D*

Day 7: Nagarkot/Kathmandu/Thimphu, Bhutan We have another chance to see the sun rise over the peaks sacred in both Buddhism and Hinduism. Then we return to Kathmandu for the flight to Bhutan. Upon arrival in the Dragon Kingdom, we travel to the capital of Thimphu and our hotel, where we dine tonight. *B,D*

Day 8: Thimphu Today's excursion begins at a local factory where paper is made by hand in the traditional way, followed by the Textile Museum, housing exquisite

weavings from the 16th century to modern times. Later we visit Tashichho Dzong, the historic fortress and monastery that today houses temples and government offices, including those of the king; then Memorial Chorten, one of Bhutan's best-loved religious landmarks. Tonight we attend a Bhutanese cultural performance then dine in the home of a local family. *B,L,D*

Day 9: Thimphu/Punakha En route to Punakha today, we visit Kunselphodrang, the recently built Buddha Point where the world's largest sitting Buddha presides over the Thimphu valley. Then we set out for Punakha via Dochula Pass (alt. 10,000 feet), which offers views of snow-topped Himalayan peaks and where we follow the sacred tradition of raising prayer flags in the name of peace and compassion. We eat lunch here then continue on our way, stopping to visit a local rice farming village. Next: Chimi Lhakhang, the temple built by the "Divine Madman" in 1499, now a pilgrimage site for couples struggling with infertility. Late this afternoon we reach Punakha, which sits at the confluence of the Mo Chu ("Mother") and Pho Chu ("Father") rivers in a sub-tropical valley. *B,L,D*

Day 10: Punakha We embark this morning on an exhilarating rafting trip on the Mo Chu River. This afternoon we visit Punakha Dzong, winter home of the central monastic community and one of the country's most attractive fortress monasteries, set on a spit of land where the rivers meet. *B,L,D*

Day 11: Punakha/Thimphu/Paro We set out early to see more of Thimphu, including the National Library, with an immense collection of Buddhist manuscripts; and the Painting School, where students learn traditional Bhutanese arts. Late afternoon we depart for Paro, nestled in the center of a valley dotted with rice paddies, wheat fields, and scattered settlements. *B,L,D*

“HAPPINESS NEVER DECREASES
BY BEING SHARED.”

– GAUTAMA BUDDHA

Day 12: Paro We begin our tour of this historic town at Ta-Dzong, the national museum showcasing Bhutan’s rich cultural heritage dating from at least 2000 BCE to the present day; then Rinpung Dzong, a superb example of Bhutanese architecture. After lunch we visit the sacred 7th-century pilgrimage temple of Kyichu Lhakhang. We dine together tonight at our hotel. *B,L,D*



Young Buddhist monks

Day 13: Paro/ Tiger’s Nest Monastery

Today we embark on a highlight of any trip to Bhutan: a visit to Paro Taktsang, the sacred Tiger’s Nest monastery and temple complex perched on a cliff some 3,000 feet above the upper Paro Valley – itself at an altitude of 10,200 feet. We

embark on our scenic uphill hike early this morning (rental horses are available to take visitors about two-thirds of the way). Those not wishing to climb all the way up can enjoy excellent views of Tiger’s Nest from a way station cafeteria. Late afternoon we return to our hotel; tonight we celebrate our Himalayan adventure over a farewell dinner at a local restaurant. *B,L,D*

Day 14: Paro/Kathmandu, Nepal/Depart for U.S.

We fly this morning to Kathmandu, where we have day rooms and opportunities for exploring on our own, before our mid-afternoon departure for the airport and our overnight flights to the U.S. *B,L*

Day 15: Arrive U.S. We arrive in the U.S. and connect with our flights home.

Your Tour Price Includes

- Round-trip air transportation from listed cities; all flights within itinerary
- 12 nights’ accommodations in Deluxe, Superior First Class, and First Class hotels
- 31 meals: 12 breakfasts, 9 lunches, 10 dinners
- Services of Odysseys Unlimited Tour Directors
- Extensive sightseeing as described
- Private motorcoach transportation throughout your trip
- Luggage handling for one bag per person
- Gratuities for local guides, dining room servers, airport and hotel porters, and all drivers

Museum Host



Dr. John Henry Rice, E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Curator of South Asian and Islamic Art, joined the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in 2008 as Associate Curator. He received a PhD and MA in the history of art from the University of Pennsylvania, and a BA in art and architectural history from Wesleyan University. A specialist in medieval and early modern South Indian art and architecture, his first task at VMFA was to lead the reinstallation of its world-class South Asian and Himalayan collections in five new galleries. Dr. Rice is the co-curator of the upcoming major exhibition of Himalayan art, *Awaken: A Tibetan Buddhist Journey Toward Enlightenment* (April 27–August 18, 2019), that will showcase VMFA’s superb Tibetan and Nepalese material.

Tour Departs: November 1, 2019

Prices include int’l airfare and all taxes, surcharges, and fees.

Boston, New York, Washington, DC	\$5,874
Atlanta, Baltimore, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Miami, Orlando, Philadelphia, Tampa	\$6,274
Charlotte, Cincinnati, Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, San Francisco	\$6,374
Denver, Phoenix, Portland (OR), Seattle	\$6,474
Land Only (transfers not included)	\$4,695

Please call if your city is not listed. Prices are per person based on double occupancy and include airline taxes, surcharges, and fees of \$779, which are subject to change until final payment is made.

Single travelers please add \$1,195. (Please note: single spaces are on request only. Inquire about availability.) All tour prices above (excluding airline taxes, surcharges, and fees) are guaranteed. Depending on flight schedules, certain U.S. departure cities may require an overnight stay at the gateway city airport at your expense.

Business Class upgrade on round-trip Trans-Atlantic flight: \$5,595 per person in addition to the above costs (upgrade is subject to availability and pricing is subject to change).

Please note: This trip involves considerable walking uphill and on uneven terrain. You should be in good physical condition to enjoy the tour to the fullest. While the elevations are not severe, the relatively high altitude of Nagarkot (7,000 feet) and Thimphu and Paro (both 7,500 feet) could pose problems for travelers with certain health conditions. You should consult your physician if you have concerns.

For reservations and information, please call Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. toll-free at 888-370-6765

Monday–Friday, 9:00 AM–7:00 PM, Eastern Time

For further information, contact VMFA Member Travel at 804-340-1519

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Please read this information carefully, as payment of a \$500 deposit per person represents your acceptance of the following Terms and Conditions.

Not Included in Tour Price

Airfare when purchasing a Land Only package; costs of passports and visas; personal expenses such as beverages, laundry, room service, and meals not specified; airport transfers when purchasing a Land Only package; communication charges; optional sightseeing; gratuities to your Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director, which are at your discretion (suggested gratuities \$10-\$15 per traveler, per day); and travel protection insurance. Additional baggage fees may apply and are subject to change at any time. You should confirm directly with your airline(s) prior to departure.

Cancellations, Refunds, and Changes

If you must cancel your trip, the effective date of cancellation will be upon Odysseys Unlimited, Inc.'s receipt of your notification. Refunds for cancellations are subject to the following per person changes: **cancel 95 days or more before departure: \$200 change; cancel 94-65 days before departure: 25% of tour price; cancel 64-45 days before departure: 50% of tour price; cancel 44-30 days before departure: 75% of tour price; cancel 29-0 days before departure: no refund.** If you make any changes to your reservation from 94 to 30 days prior to departure, Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. will apply a \$100 per person administrative fee, in addition to any fees or penalties imposed by third parties. Changes are subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed. If your reservation changes from double occupancy to single occupancy for any reason, you will be charged the single supplement. **No changes are allowed within 30 days of departure. Upon reservation, you must provide your full legal name as it appears on your passport, as well as your date of birth and gender. In the event an airline ticket is issued with incorrect information you have provided, you will be responsible for charges associated with the ticket's reissue.**

Responsibility

The liability of VMFA, as sponsor, and Odysseys Unlimited, Inc., as tour operator, is strictly limited. Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. purchases transportation, hotel accommodations, and restaurant and other services from independent suppliers not under our control. We serve only as agents for these suppliers in securing tour arrangements, and therefore will not accept responsibility for wrongful, negligent, or arbitrary acts or omissions of these independent contractors, or of their employees, agents, servants, or representatives. VMFA and Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. are not liable for injury, damage, loss, accident, or delay that may be caused by events not within our control, including, without limitation, acts of terrorism, war, strikes, the defect of any vehicle, or the negligence or default of any third party. All coupons, receipts, and tickets issued are subject to the terms and conditions specified by the air carriers, cruise lines, and other independent suppliers. We will make every effort to operate our tours as planned, but we reserve the right to make itinerary changes as necessary, if unforeseen circumstances require us to change a hotel, we will select alternative accommodations of the same or better quality.

Health and Medical Issues

We request that you be in good health to participate in this tour. There is a considerable amount of walking, and **you must be able to get on and off motorcoaches and rafts on your own.** We regret that we cannot offer individual assistance; in such cases you must be accompanied by a companion who will assist you. Please note that many of our tour itineraries, for reasons beyond our control, do not accommodate wheelchairs. Please call or e-mail us to inquire and we will do our best to answer any questions you may have. We reserve the right to remove anyone whose physical or mental condition, in our opinion, compromises the operation of the tour or detracts from the enjoyment or safety of the other passengers. In that event, VMFA and Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. assume no financial responsibility for any unused portion of the tour.

Air Transportation – Important Information

Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. includes in its tour price round-trip economy air from designated gateway cities as shown, and contracts with those airlines the company feels provide the level of service, routings, and value necessary for your entire trip. While another airline may offer a more direct connection, it may be at a price unavailable at the lower group rates. You will receive your preliminary air schedule approximately 2½ months prior to departure. **Please note that seat assignment on your international flight is usually done at airport check-in. Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. is unable to guarantee any seat assignments.** Due to the nature of tour operator tickets, other restrictions apply, including, but not limited to, frequent flyer mileage accrual, stopovers, alternate travel dates, upgrades, and airline taxes and fees. If you prefer to make your own travel arrangements, Land Only is available on most tours. **Since international and domestic air schedules are subject to change at any time, we recommend that if you choose to make your own airline reservations, you do not purchase non-refundable tickets or those with high penalties for changes. If you choose to make your own air arrangements, Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. shall not have any liability for any loss resulting from cancellation of this tour or its tours.**



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TOUR TO NEPAL AND BHUTAN!

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