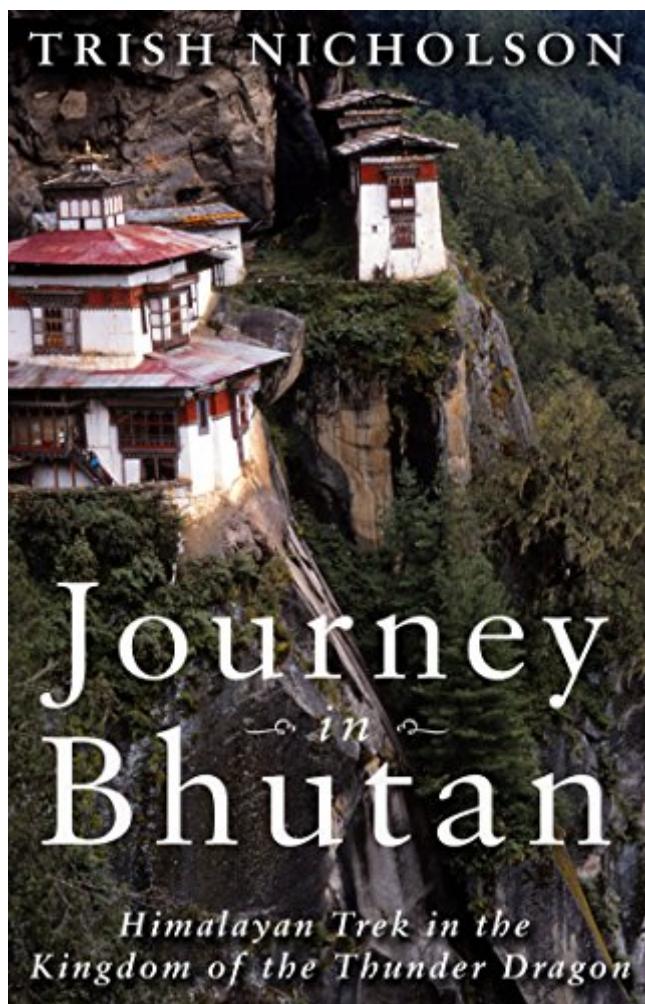


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Journey In Bhutan:: Himalayan Trek In The Kingdom Of The Thunder Dragon



Synopsis

Explore deep in the Himalayas, in the tiny Buddhist Kingdom of Bhutan, by walking beside the author along a 100 mile trek through surreal landscapes and knee-wrenching passes at 5,000 metres. Meet herders in high summer pastures making cheese from yak's milk, and hear tinkling prayer wheels spun by waterfalls in remote gorges. Climb to Taktsang, the spectacular Tiger's Nest of temples atop a 1,000 metre cliff. Visit ancient Kyichu Lhakhang to absorb the sanctity of centuries in the haze of incense, glowing butter-lamps and chanting monks. Then hold tight along precipitous hairpin bends to Thimphu and Punakha to witness monastery rituals, and meander through shops offering the world's most exquisite weaving and carving. This vivid and lyrical travelogue leads you into Bhutanese culture and history, and with infectious humour, draws the characters of her American and Australian travelling companions. For discerning readers, Appendices include a glossary of Dzongka words, a historical timeline and a *Survival Guide to Bhutanese Buddhism*.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

It is an adjustment for an American English reader to get used to some of the alternate spellings and

phraseology, but in a way, it also highlighted the complete dislocation into a foreign land. Just getting into Bhutan, which is landlocked in the uncomfortable junction between India and China, perched on the teeth of the Himalayas, could be deterrent enough to the faint of heart. The travel restrictions complicate the journey, and limit your options further. But the potential for trekking through high mountain passes, some of which are also included in pictures, really fired up my imagination. Nicholson's style is not dissimilar from Riding the Iron Rooster by Paul Theroux or the Fosters' *Forbidden Journey: The Life of Alexandra David Neel*. Her use of language was right up my alley's style and lyrical by turns. I don't know that getting to Bhutan will actually ever happen for me, but based on the detailed descriptions Nicholson provided in this easy-to-read travelogue, I know some of what I'm missing. I would highly recommend this short introduction to a completely foreign locale to anyone interested in adventure travels, the Himalayas, or Asian cultures. There are enough distinctions in this country, including pictures of local garb, that it's worth acquainting yourself with what she has painstakingly outlined.

In her travels, Trish Nicholson has crossed the Tibetan Plateau, walked on the side of Mount Everest, and around the Annapurna range in Nepal, but it is to Bhutan she takes us, in her most recent book, *Journey in Bhutan: Himalayan Trek in the Kingdom of the Thunder Dragon*. Amazed by the outstanding Himalayan landscape, Nicholson also took time to meet the people, and through a series of very expressive photographs, she lets them speak in their own words in the pages of her book. Their customs, their everyday problems, their clothes and their food are all reflected here, along with the author's lively anecdotes that make the readers feel like adventurous travelers going by her side through the rough paths of the Himalayas. This is a place of unique beauty, amazing constructions, and people who are kind enough to warm the heart of all travelers during their journey to this mystical part of the world.

Trish Nicholson's *Journey in Bhutan* is a delicacy to be savoured. Right from her landing at Delhi airport where "the heat felt like a hot wet flannel slapped onto my face", through chance encounters with wandering yaks, hair raising near misses in minibuses, clambering on all fours up the side of mountains then enjoying the wonder and joy of the view from the tops; Trish Nicholson shares it all with her reader as though they were the mascot attached to her backpack. And then just when you are feeling really disappointed that the whole experience is over, there are a few little treats at the end; just like finding some hidden extras at the

bottom of your Christmas stocking. But there is so very much more in this book than can be encapsulated in a paragraph. If you are reading this, I can only recommend that you read Journey in Bhutan and find that out for yourself!

I thought I'd written a review of this book before, but it seems to have disappeared. I absolutely loved this memoir of Trish Nicholson's hike through the highlands and mountains of Bhutan. She introduces us to a world most of us will never see and to people whose grace and charm have everything to do with their wonderful culture, uncontaminated as it was then by the modern 'civilised' world. I became so involved in the narrative and her experiences, I didn't realise until quite some way through the book that it is set in the early eighties. This is a testament to the freshness of her prose and immediacy of her descriptions and stories. A lovely, lovely memoir that makes me long to do this trip myself.

This is a fascinating book. I love Trish's writing style. Also, I identified with her as a hiker. I'm headed to Bhutan in a month...and this book made me even more anxious to get there. Her trip was taken back in 1984. I'm sure Bhutan has changed considerably since then, but I'm sure the basic philosophy has not changed.

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