

Visa/Entry permit

Visas for travel to Bhutan are being issued only by the Department of Immigration, the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs, Bhutan.

All visitors will need a visa to visit Bhutan except the visitors from India, who will require a permit. Nationals of Bangladesh and the Maldives shall be eligible for a visa on arrival at the port of entry. Nationals of Switzerland and Thailand holding diplomatic and official passports shall be also eligible for a visa on arrival at the port of entry. However, visitors eligible for visas on arrival are recommended to process for a prior visa (online) to reduce wait time at the port of entry and to avoid inconveniences.

The visa fee is USD 40 per person and it is non-refundable. While the process to issue the visa is usually quick, it may take up to five working days to process.

The following documents are required to process the visa:

1. A passport copy is required. The passport must be valid for six months from the intended date of departure from the Kingdom;
2. Travel insurance valid for the duration of the trip; and
3. A recent passport size photograph.

The Sustainable Development Fee enables investment in transformative programmes that preserve our cultural traditions, protect our heritage and environment, upgrade infrastructure, create opportunities for our young people, and build resilience. SDF amount is as follows:

1. Guests from India are levied SDF of Nu. 1,200 or equivalent amount in INR per person per night, which will remain in effect for two years, following which time it may be reviewed and revised in keeping with the principle of the preferential rate after two years.
2. Visitors from all other countries are levied SDF of USD 200 per person, per night.
3. There will be a concessionary levy of 50% on the SDF for children between the ages of 6-12 years and exemptions of SDF for children aged 5 years and below.
4. The SDF funds go to the national exchequer and are allocated to various projects that enhance facilities, services and infrastructure for nationals and guests who visit Bhutan, as well as funding free healthcare and education.

5. The SDF must be paid during the visa or permit application via wire transfer or using a credit card.
6. The SDF must be paid in USD; however, Indians can also pay in INR.
7. A guest who is eligible for a visa on arrival, should also pay the applicable SDF in USD at the port of entry.

Time-bound SDF Discounts

31st May 2023, to come in effect from 1st June 2023, a new discount scheme for the Sustainable Development Fee or the SDF was announced this evening, by the Department of Tourism, with the approval of the Bhutanese Cabinet. SDF or Sustainable Development Fund is government tariff/ royalty levied on all leisure travel to Bhutan. It is charged per person per night, collected by The Bhutanese government used in sustainable developmental activities of Bhutan.

The SDF amount per night person is USD200. There are several discount categories. Duration discount scheme: 4+4; 7+7; 12+18, which is basically 4 additional nights free for 4 nights SDF; 7 additional nights free for 7 nights SDF & 18 additional nights free for 12 nights SDF. After the discounted period, the standard daily tariff apply or the same combo scheme can be related but not different combination. This scheme is set to end by 31st December 2024.

Children Discount: Children below 12 years of age and above 6 can avail 50% discount on the SDF. Children below 6 years of age gets full discount.

Special Nations: The nationals of India currently pay concessionary SDF of INR1200 per night per person for limited period. Till then duration discount is not applied to the Indians.

Land Entry: Those entering by road, the SDF for the stay up to 24 hours at the border towns (designated area limits) is waived.