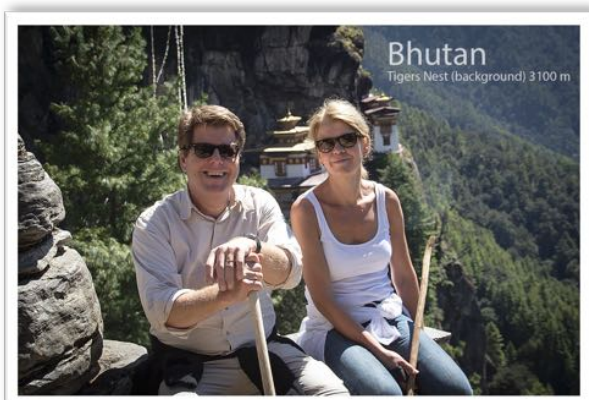


Nepal-Bhutan-India



October 2014



...An amazing three country fall-break with Tove...

...We decided to go with a group from Club-100 to Bhutan on a specially tailor made trip this fall. In conjunction to this trip, we also decided to make a stop in both Nepal on the way there as well as in India on the way back. This turned out to be a perfect arrangement.

Instead of staying in the noisy, crowded capital Kathmandu, we opted for the quieter old capital of Bhaktapur instead. We had found a marvellous boutique hotel in the old quarter of the former capital – **Boutique Hotel www.thagucchen.com. A highly-recommended place to stay when in Bhaktapur.**

The old capital is best seen/experienced by foot. Just lose yourselves by walking the old streets up and down. You are bound to bump in to everything worthwhile eventually such as the **Grand Palace in Durban Square**. Don't miss **Potters market and the shrines Myatapola Mandir as well as Pashupati Mandir.**

We were very fortunate to arrive during the annual **Hindu festival – Dasain**. Very atmospheric especially in the evening when all the streets were lined and lit-up with candles and people walking down dancing, placing instruments and chanting along the narrow streets.



The old capital of Nepal - Bhaktapur

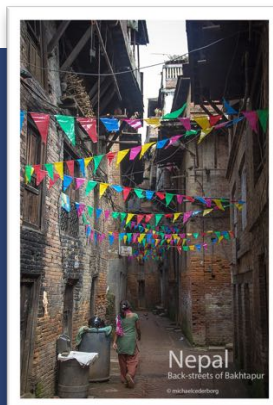
A small town packed with stupas, temples and small squares....



... We took a daytrip out to the hilltraks to get a better view of the Himalayan mountain ridge. Onward from there we backtracked to visit also the Buddhist stupa in Buddhanath – an old Tibetan temple. There are lots of lovely old and small villages worth visiting in Nepal.

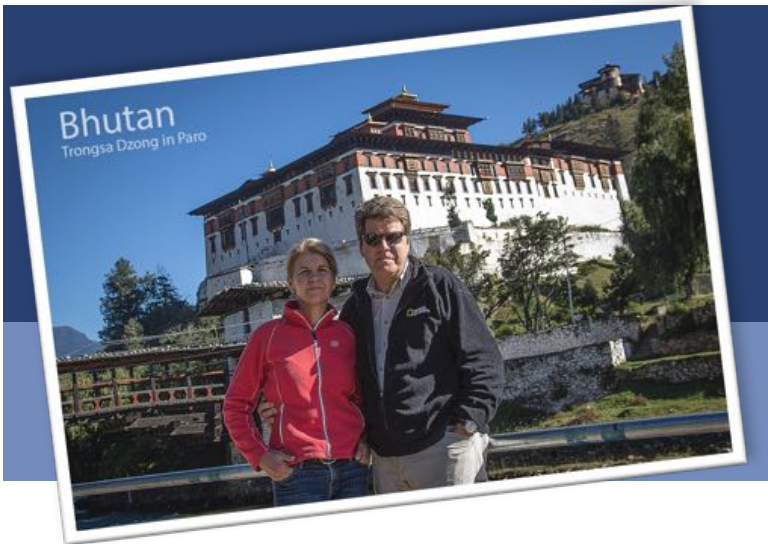


On our last evening on our own, we met up with the Club-100 group in Kathmandu for a joint dinner at one of the more traditional Nepalese restaurants. A bit touristic with dance performances and the whole arrangements. We did some sightseeing in Kathmandu before boarding our flight to Paro and Bhutan.





The land with a national happiness index...



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Paro the provincial capital.... A panoramic visit to the mountains in the north...

The only international airport in Bhutan is located outside of Paro. It is breath-taking coming in through the mountains to land at this place. The rivers are filled with clear blue water and the fields filled with flowers. With the colourfully dressed up locals and the mountain as a back scene it is a little bit like feeling you have finally reached Shangri-La. The city of Paro is very small and has only one main street. There are some interesting old traditional buildings, but the centre and the market is really seen in a couple of hours.

Better then to spend time at the **temple grounds of Trongsa Dzong**, where much of the administrative functions are kept to govern the country.

The temple grounds are spectacular and worth to spend time around.

Last but not least, **the famous Taktshang temple (tigers nest)** at 3120 meter above sea level is still the main attraction in the region and possibly the most famous mark in Bhutan. The trek up to the temple which hangs on the side high up on the mountain, can be reached only by hiking (or by sitting on the back of a horse). The trek is quite tough, but once up at the temple – it is all worth it. The temple was destroyed by fire some years ago, but has since been restored. Lots of tourists come to make the hike up to this holy place.

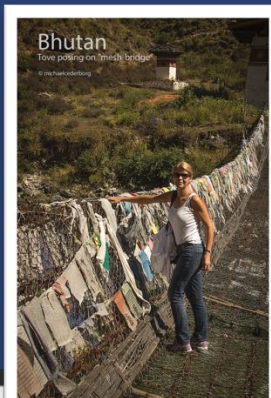
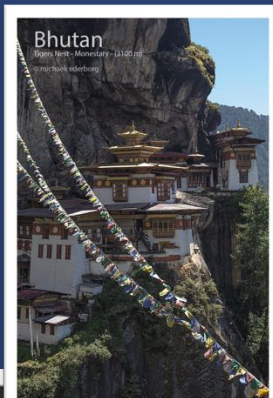
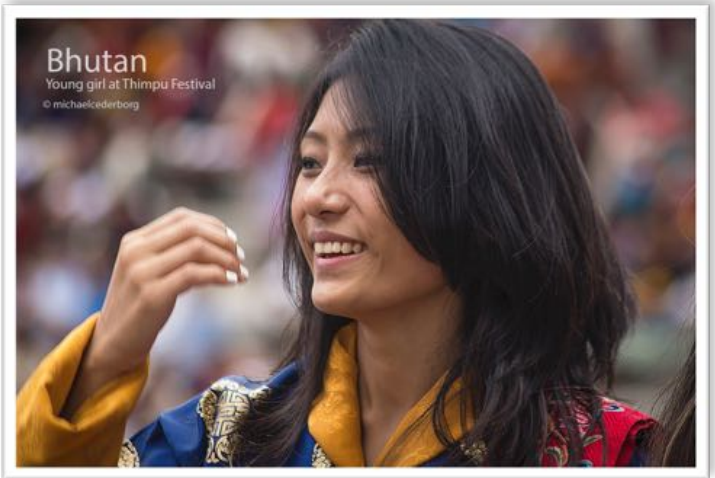


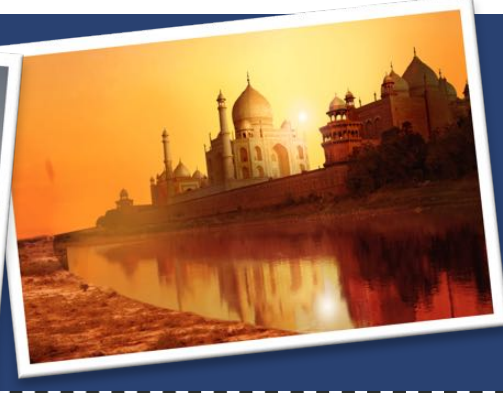


The Thimpu annual Festival

We were very fortunate to time the annual and very colourful festival in Thimpu...

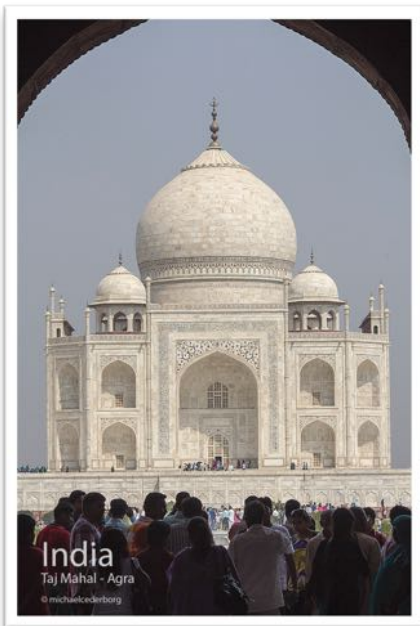
..Having travelled from Paro to **Thimpu the capital** in order to see this city and above all catch the annual festival. The city itself was far more modern and developed than Paro. We tried the night scene and ended up in a dubious gay bar before moving on to have dinner at a good restaurant. The festival was of course the highlight of this stop – where the locals had put on their best festival dresses. A great photo opportunity.





The Taj Mahal in Agra

No visit to Delhi is of course complete without a stop over here...



..Since flying stop-over via Delhi, what could be better than to spend 2 nights there to see Taj Mahal and the surroundings. **We had booked us in at the luxurious Dervana Garden** www.dervana.in ca: 2000 sek / nights, but worth every penny of it. Amazing rooms and access directly out to a 100 meter, long pool secluded for you own privacy. We had this as our base for the two nights in Delhi.

The breakfast and bar was amazing at the hotel. Dinners were taken outside at top restaurants.



Scenes from Taj Mahal in Agra....





Short stop-over in Delhi...



.. We decided to go “all in” on this short stay in Delhi. We let the hotel organize a limousine service with chauffeur, guide and full-service bar in the car to/from Taj Mahal. This turned out to be a great move. We were very lucky that it was both a Muslim as well as a Hindi religious holiday – this meant the roads were not packed as usual.

The Taj Mahal was every bit as wonderful as one had expected. We also stopped at the famous red fort along the way.



....pictures from the red fort as well as Taj Mahal

