

Nepal & Bhutan: A Journey to the Himalayas

April 9-22, 2026



University
of Rochester



Embark on a life-changing adventure through two of the most enchanting destinations in the world: **Nepal** and **Bhutan**.

In Nepal, dive into the heart of the Himalayas, where Kathmandu's vibrant temples, bustling markets, and breathtaking mountain views await. Explore ancient palaces and sacred sites that date back centuries, and experience the warmth of Nepalese hospitality as you immerse yourself in the rich spiritual traditions of this incredible country.

Next, discover Bhutan, the "Land of the Thunder Dragon," where towering fortresses, lush valleys, and pristine alpine landscapes greet you at every turn. Bhutan is the world's only carbon-negative country, offering a rare chance to witness sustainable living in harmony with nature. Explore magnificent dzongs, hike through untouched forests, and marvel at the unique Gross National Happiness philosophy that shapes the Bhutanese way of life. From stunning monasteries perched on mountain ridges to fields dotted with traditional homes, Bhutan is a paradise for any traveler seeking both adventure and serenity.

Join us for this extraordinary journey through Nepal and Bhutan—two countries where culture, spirituality, and natural beauty intertwine in an unforgettable experience. This is a trip you don't want to miss!

Space is limited. To sign-up on-line please click on this [link](#). For questions about this trip, please contact Rebecca Picone at (585) 797-5709 or the tour operator at (917) 686-2620.

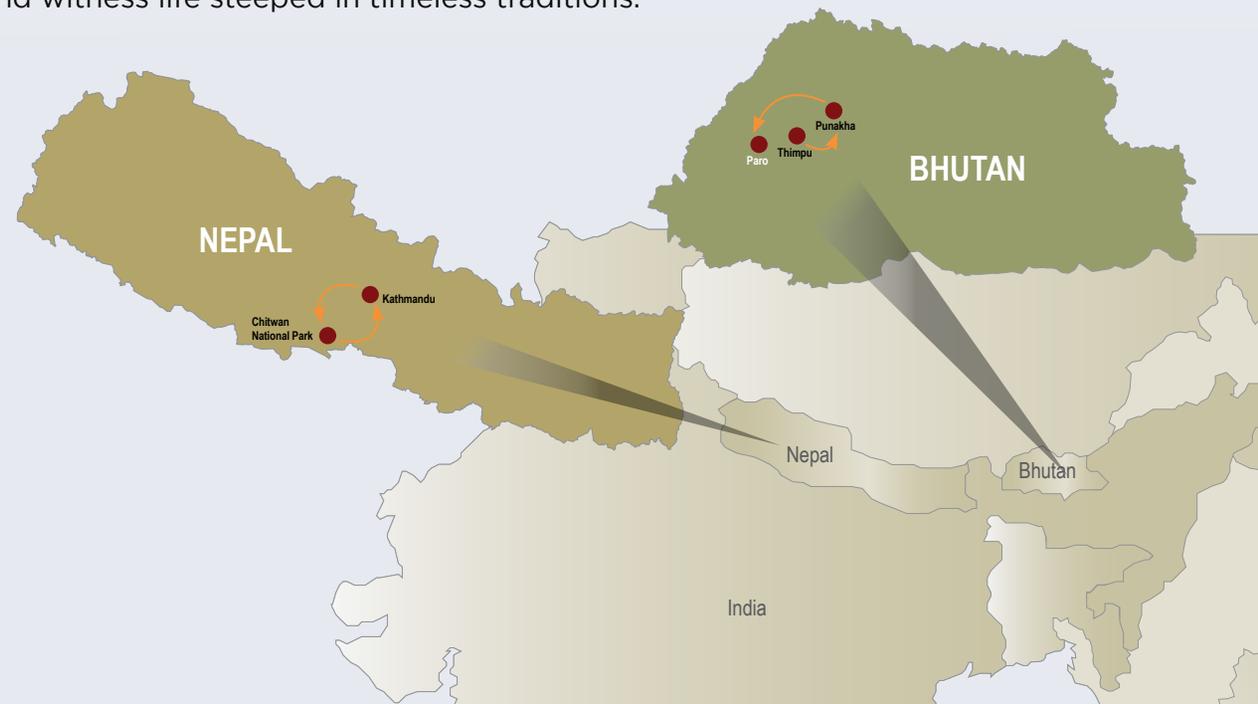


Faculty Host: Jack Downey is an associate professor in the Department of Religion & Classics, with a deep passion for Himalayan culture that began during his human rights activism as a student in the 1990s. His interest in the region is also personal, as his mother's family hails from China's Sichuan Province, an area that shares cultural ties with the regions featured on this trip. Jack has spent significant time in the Himalayas, including a year living in a Buddhist monastery in the hills outside Kathmandu, where he studied classical Tibetan language and philosophy. He later continued his academic journey at Harvard Divinity School, earning a master's degree in theological studies. His PhD work at Fordham

University focused on religion in North America, but his dedication to Buddhism has remained strong throughout his career. In addition to his research and writing, Jack has led guided tours of Tibetan refugee communities in northern India during his time at La Salle University. He is thrilled to share his wealth of knowledge and personal experiences with you, especially since the places you'll visit are profoundly significant to the rich history of Himalayan culture.

Trip Highlights

- Benefit from travel with **Professor Jack Downey** and curious-minded and adventurous Rochester alumni and friends.
- **Kathmandu Valley:** Explore UNESCO World Heritage Sites like Swayambhunath, Boudhanath Stupa, and Kathmandu Durbar Square, immersing yourself in Nepal's vibrant culture and history.
- **Himalayan Views:** Hike through scenic valleys and enjoy breathtaking views of the towering Himalayas, including Everest.
- **Bhutan's Dzongs:** Visit iconic fortresses like Paro Taktsang (Tiger's Nest) and Punakha Dzong, marveling at their stunning architecture and historical significance.
- **Cultural Immersion:** Experience Bhutan's Gross National Happiness philosophy, visit local villages, and interact with the warm-hearted Bhutanese people.
- **Sacred Sites:** Visit ancient monasteries and participate in spiritual rituals, surrounded by fluttering prayer flags.
- **Nature Adventures:** Trek through Bhutan's pristine forests and alpine meadows, offering endless outdoor exploration.
- **Authentic Encounters:** Savor traditional cuisine, connect with local communities, and witness life steeped in timeless traditions.



Program Itinerary

April 9 & 10, 2026: Travel to Kathmandu, Nepal*

April 9, 2026 is the suggested latest departure date for a timely arrival due to length of flight and time zones.

**Flights to Kathmandu (KTM) are not included in the cost of the trip. *Please contact Immersion Journeys at 917-686-2620 or info@immersionjourneys.com for airline booking assistance.*

April 11: Arrival in Kathmandu

Altitude: 1,400 m / 4,600 ft

Arrive at Tribhuvan International Airport where you will be warmly welcomed by the Nepal team. After a smooth transition through immigration, your adventure begins as you head to the luxurious hotel. Check-in at the hotel and unwind before an evening welcome dinner featuring local cuisine. Settle in and rest for the night, and prepare yourself for the wonders of Nepal.

If you wish to arrive in Kathmandu earlier please contact Immersion Journeys to book your hotel (\$185 per room per night including breakfast and taxes).

Accommodations: [Yak & Yeti Kathmandu](#) (Welcome Dinner with 1 glass house wine, beer or soft drink)

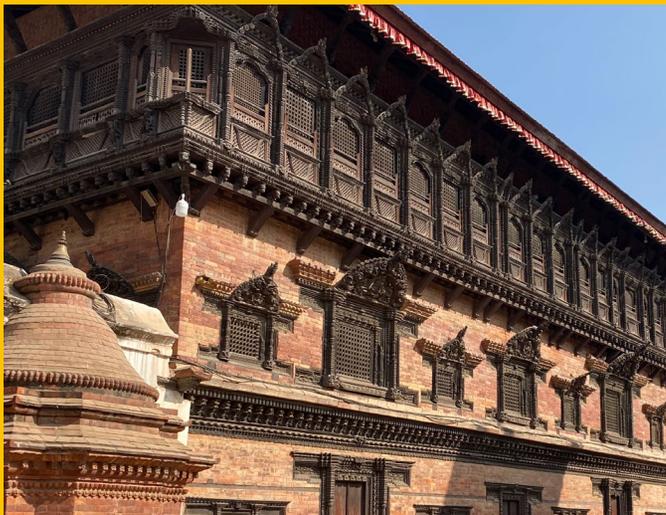
April 12: Exploring Kathmandu

Altitude: 1,400 m / 4,600 ft

Embark on an exciting tour of Kathmandu's Old City. This vibrant city effortlessly blends modern life with ancient traditions. Ride a rickshaw through narrow alleys, where the buzz of the bazaars and the charm of the street markets make for an unforgettable experience.

Your journey continues to the iconic Swoyambhunath Stupa, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that holds deep significance for Buddhists worldwide. Learn about the legends surrounding its origin, as it stands majestically over Kathmandu, offering panoramic views of the city. After lunch, visit Patan, a city of artisans and rich cultural heritage, where you will witness centuries-old architecture and craftsmanship. End your day at Patan Durbar Square, where you'll marvel at ancient temples, palaces, and intricate carvings, all set against a backdrop of history.

Accommodations: [Yak & Yeti Kathmandu](#) (B,L,D)



April 13: Flight to Chitwan

Altitude: 850 m / 2,789 ft

Transfer to the airport for a scenic 25-minute flight to Bharatpur. Upon arrival, journey through the lush greenery of Chitwan to your jungle resort. Check in, and unwind with a refreshing welcome drink. Your afternoon is filled with adventure as you canoe down the serene Rapti River, immersing yourself in the stunning natural beauty of the region. A sundowner at the riverbank offers a chance to relax and witness the breathtaking sunset over Chitwan National Park.

Accommodations: [Barahi Jungle Lodge](#) (B,L,D)

April 14: Chitwan Jungle Safari & Nature Walk

Altitude: 850 m / 2,789 ft.

Enjoy a thrilling jeep safari in the heart of Chitwan National Park. Get close to the diverse wildlife, including rhinos, tigers, and elephants, in their natural habitat. In the afternoon, embark on a guided nature walk to observe the incredible biodiversity of the area. Take a detour to visit a nearby village, where you'll experience the warmth of the local culture.

Accommodations: [Barahi Jungle Lodge](#) (B,L,D)

April 15: Return to Kathmandu

Altitude: 1,400 m / 4,600 ft

Transfer to the airport for your flight to Kathmandu. Upon arrival, visit the Pashupatinath Temple, one of Nepal's holiest Hindu shrines and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Dedicated to Lord Shiva, its gilded roof and carved silver doors draw pilgrims from around the world. While access is restricted for non-Hindus, visitors can view the temple from the east bank of the Bagmati River.

Later, explore the Boudhanath Stupa, a major Tibetan Buddhist landmark and UNESCO World Heritage Site. At 118 feet tall, it's one of the largest in the world, adorned with 108 small Buddha images and prayer wheels. Pilgrims circle the stupa daily, spinning the wheels and reciting mantras. Guests will have the chance to light butter lamps, offering light to the deities as a symbol of wisdom dispelling darkness.

Accommodations: [Yak & Yeti Kathmandu](#) (B,L,D)

April 16: Fly to Bhutan

Altitude: Paro: 2,250 m / 7,382 ft. | **Thimphu:** 2,350 m / 7,709 ft.

Fly to Paro, Bhutan, and then enjoy a scenic drive to the capital, Thimphu. Along the way, take in the picturesque landscapes and visit the Tamchog Lhakhang suspension bridge, a marvel built in the 13th century. Once in Thimphu, visit the grand Tashichho Dzong, a symbol of Bhutan's regal heritage and political history. Check in at your hotel, where you'll unwind in luxury, ready for the adventures ahead.

Accommodations: [Druk Hotel Thimphu](#) (B,L,D)

April 17: Exploring Thimphu

Altitude: 2,350 m / 7,709 ft

Your day begins with a visit to a traditional monastery for the Tsewang Longevity Blessing Ceremony, where a senior monk will bless you with prayers to promote long life and well-being. Later, enjoy panoramic views of the valley from Buddha Point, where the majestic Buddha Dordenma statue towers over Thimphu. For those who are up for a challenge, a hike through pristine forests to Changangkha Lhakang offers both spiritual discovery and physical activity. *This is approximately a five-kilometer (around three miles) hike which is estimated to take 2 hours with rest stops. It is a fairly moderate hike with some steep sections. Guests should be able to walk unassisted.*

In the afternoon, visit the Takin Preserve to learn about Bhutan's national animal and see these fascinating creatures up close. End your day with a visit to the Memorial Chorten, where you can reflect on Bhutan's rich Buddhist traditions.

Accommodations: [Druk Hotel Thimphu](#) (B,L,D)

April 18: Drive to Punakha

Altitude: 1300 m / 4265 ft

Set off on a scenic 3-hour drive to Punakha, passing through the spectacular Dochu La Pass. If the skies are clear, the view of the Himalayas is nothing short of awe-inspiring. Once in Punakha, visit the charming Metshina village and walk through lush rice fields to the unique Chimi Lhakhang monastery, famed for its fertility blessings. Next, explore the stunning Punakha Dzong, where the Pho and Mochu rivers meet. This striking fortress is a symbol of Bhutan's strength and spiritual legacy.

Accommodations: [Dhensa Boutique Resort](#) (B,L,D)



April 19: Drive to Paro

Altitude: 2250 m / 7382 ft

Enjoy a scenic drive to Paro, taking in breathtaking views of the lush valleys and mountains along the way. Upon arrival, visit the impressive Paro Dzong, also known as Rinpung Dzong, which dates back to the 16th century. This fortress is one of Bhutan's finest examples of traditional architecture and has played a crucial role in defending the Paro Valley from Tibetan invasions. It now serves as the administrative seat for the Paro district.

Inside the dzong complex, explore the National Museum of Bhutan. The museum features over 3,000 pieces of Bhutanese art, showcasing the country's rich cultural heritage and artistic traditions. After your visit, check into your hotel and relax for the evening. *Accommodations:* [Naksel Boutique Hotel & Spa](#) (B,L,D)



April 20: Hike to Taktsang Monastery

Altitude: 3,120 m / 10,240 ft

The final highlight of your journey is the hike to the legendary Taktsang Monastery, or Tiger's Nest, one of Bhutan's most iconic sites. Perched high on a cliff, the monastery offers breathtaking views of the valley below. Learn about the mystical legend of Guru Rinpoche, who is said to have flown to this spot on the back of a tigress. This unforgettable hike, with its spiritual and natural beauty, will leave you in awe as you bid farewell to the captivating land of Bhutan.

This is perhaps the most challenging due to some steep sections. Many participants find it easier to take it slow and rest frequently as there is no need to hurry. We recommend guests stop at the cafeteria (half way point) and reassess how they feel before continuing. Otherwise, grab a cup of tea or coffee and simply enjoy the beautiful view of the monastery from that point. Our guides will pick you up on the way down! *Accommodations:* [Naksel Boutique Hotel & Spa](#) (B,L,D)



April 21: Return to Kathmandu & visit Bhaktapur

After breakfast, take a flight back to Kathmandu. Upon arrival, travel to Bhaktapur, a charming city steeped in medieval history. Known as the "City of Devotees," Bhaktapur has preserved its ancient brick-paved roads, red brick houses, and artisanal crafts, including pottery and woodcarving. Visit the UNESCO-listed Bhaktapur Durbar Square, where you'll see iconic landmarks like Nyatapola Temple and the Golden Gate, showcasing the grandeur of the Malla Dynasty.

After your exploration, transfer to your hotel for relaxation and enjoy a farewell dinner. *Accommodations:* [Yak & Yeti Kathmandu](#) (B,L,D)

April 22: Departure

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your onward journey.

Ground Costs

\$8,495 per person (double occupancy.)
\$1,585 single room supplement.

Included Features

- Domestic and regional flights within and between Nepal and Bhutan.
- All necessary arrival / departure transfers.
- Assistance at all airports.
- English-speaking Nepalese and Bhutanese guiding team.
- Accommodations as indicated.
- 11 breakfasts, 10 lunches, 9 dinners inclusive of 1x mineral water per lunch and dinner (all other drinks payable directly).
- Welcome and farewell dinner inclusive of 1 glass house wine, beer or soft drink.
- Monument and entrance fees as per the above program.
- Bhutan visa fees.

Excludes

- International flights to Kathmandu (KTM). Please contact Immersion Journeys at 917-686-2620 or info@immersionjourneys.com for airline booking assistance.
- Early check-in and late check-out.
- Nepal visa available on arrival - \$50/ person (subject to change by Government of Nepal).
- Any additional meals not indicated in the itinerary.
Items of personal nature such as bar bills, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, laundry, telephone calls.
- Gratuities / tips to guides, porters, drivers, trip manager, hotel/ lodge staff, etc.
- Comprehensive trip insurance including evacuation.
- Any items, meals and services that are not mentioned on cost inclusions.

Level of difficulty: *Easy to moderate. Traveling in areas of high altitude and mountain/ hill ranges.*

Travel will be in a combination of coaches and small vehicles over winding mountain passes. You will be traveling in altitudes ranging from 4,200 feet above mean sea level to 10,000 feet above mean sea level. There will be days that involve moderate hiking on pathways of varying topography and we expect guests to be in generally good physical condition and be able to walk without a full-time aid (canes, walkers, wheelchairs). Accommodations in Nepal and Bhutan are often built on hillsides and changing landscape requiring stairs and ramps and guests should not expect conveyances that they may be used to in their country of origin. Every effort will be made to ensure your comfort however it will be the responsibility of the guest to advise the tour operator and University of Rochester regarding any concerns you may have. Please consult with your doctor regarding this trip, its length and location and share this brochure with them.

Tour Reservation Form

To reserve a space, please complete and return this form with your deposit of \$1,200 per person payable to *Immersion Journeys*. You may also fill out an online reservation form. See [link](#) to the on-line reservation. Mail or e-mail the paper registration to: **455 Main Street, Suite 5M, New York, NY 10044/ E-mail: info@immersionjourneys.com**. We will not process your deposit until you are assigned a place on the tour. Please contact 917-686-2620 if you have any questions about the registration process.

I authorize Immersion Journeys to charge my/our deposit of \$_____ (\$1,200 per person) to my:

VISA MasterCard American Express Primary Card Holders Name:_____

Card #:_____ Expiration Date:_____

Security Code (4 digits for AMEX/ 3 digits for others)_____ Date:_____

The balance of the trip is due on January 11, 2026. Payment by check or bank wire only. Credit card payments will incur a 3.5% processing fee.

Passenger Information

Name 1 (as on passport) _____ **Name 2 (as on passport)** _____

Passport # _____ Nationality _____ Passport # _____ Nationality _____

Issue Date (mm/dd/yy): _____ Expiration (mm/dd/yy) _____ Issue Date (mm/dd/yy): _____ Expiration (mm/dd/yy) _____

Date of Birth _____ Gender _____ UR Affiliation _____ Date of Birth _____ Gender _____ UR Affiliation _____

Street Address _____ Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Country _____ Mobile _____ Country _____ Mobile _____

Email (print clearly) _____ Email (print clearly) _____

I prefer single accommodations (*Extremely limited and only on first come basis*)

I plan to room with _____ Double Twin (*separate beds*)

Emergency Phone # and Contact Name (during trip): _____

Please indicate any special needs (diet, health, mobility, etc.): _____

By submitting my/our non-refundable deposit of \$1,200 per person, I/ am/we are registering for the **Nepal & Bhutan: A Journey to the Himalayas** program and have read and agreed to the *Immersion Journeys Participant's Agreement*. I/we understand that portions of this trip will be moderately strenuous, will include some long drives and may include unpaved paths, steps and most activities will take place outdoors. I/we also understand that I/we will be in areas of high altitude and I/ we also agree to be in good physical shape and will be prepared to walk without a full time walking aid or wheelchair. I/we also take responsibility for purchasing our own supplemental travel insurance including medical evacuation coverage.

Signature

Date

Signature

Date

Participant's Agreement

By signing our tour reservation form, or otherwise indicating your assent in writing, you agree to the terms and conditions set forth in this document. These terms and conditions apply to the Tour, the itinerary for the Tour and payment for the Tour.

1. INTRODUCTION: These are the terms and conditions applicable to the tour packages provided by Immersion Journeys LLC, University of Rochester (collectively "Immersion Journeys", "University of Rochester" "we", "us" and "our"). The terms "client" "you" and "your" refer to each person who purchases and/or uses a tour package provided by Immersion Journeys.

2. RESERVATIONS AND PAYMENTS: A prepayment deposit **\$1,200 per per person** along with a completed and signed Tour Reservation Form, and copy of passport are required in order to confirm your reservation. Upon receipt of these forms and your deposit, we will confirm your trip. This Agreement. The signed Reservation form and the signed Credit Card Authorization section of the Tour Reservation Form are all part of your agreement with us.

The balance of your Tour cost is due 90 days prior to departure (January 11, 2026)

3. TRAVEL INSURANCE: We strongly recommend that you purchase trip cancellation insurance. In the event that you must cancel your participation in a Tour, trip cancellation insurance may be the only source of reimbursement. Trip cancellation insurance is available for comprehensive coverage of such expenses in conjunction with cancellation due to illness or accident, and damaged or lost luggage. **Please contact Rebecca Picone, for insurance information.**
rebecca.picone@rochester.edu

4. CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY: Our cancellation charges are based on the stringent payment policies of our suppliers of local services and therefore represent a reasonable estimate of our loss. Cancellation charges are expressed as a percentage of your total trip cost (excluding commercial airfare) and also depend on the day you cancel and the day of your scheduled departure from your home. Our cancellation charges are in addition to whatever the airline may charge you:

Fee	Number of Days of Advance Written Notice
\$950	Ninety (90) or more from trip date.
50 percent (50%) of total tour cost	Between eighty-nine (89) and sixty (60)
One hundred percent (100%) of total tour cost	Less than sixty (60)

There is no refund for unused portions of a tour once it has commenced, and you are solely responsible for costs incurred by you due to missed, cancelled or delayed transportation. Your decision not to participate on the Tour due to State Department or Centers for Disease Control advisories or warnings, fear of travel, or for any other reason will be deemed a cancellation. If a flight or other delay for any reason prevents you from joining the Tour on the Tour start date, you will be considered a no-show. No refunds will be available, but you may join the Tour late if you wish. Commercial airline tickets must be paid in full at the time of ticketing. Airline cancellation charges are set forth on the invoice.

Not Included: Taxes; passport, visas and associated fees; personal expenses such as laundry, telephone calls and Internet access; accident/sickness, trip cancellation, and baggage insurance; gratuities to ship and hotel personnel; optional sightseeing excursions; baggage charges on aircraft; local departure air/airport tax(es); airfare and associated local taxes, airport facility and security taxes and federal inspection fees not listed as included in the travel Tour; transfers and baggage handling to/from airport/hotel/ship on day(s) of arrival and/or departure; any overnight on land due to flight schedule(s); meals, alcoholic or other beverages and all other services not specifically mentioned as included in the travel Tour

5. AIRFARE: Airfare is subject to change and availability and, depending on the fare basis, likely is non-refundable. Your airline ticket constitutes a contract between you and the airline, even if purchased through Immersion Journeys or its airline ticketing entities.

6. BAGGAGE: Luggage allowance policies are set by the airlines and may change without notice. Baggage is at the owner's risk throughout the trip. Airlines, buses, vans and other modes of transportation may all have weight and size restrictions on luggage. It is your responsibility to comply with all baggage restrictions

7. PRICE INCREASES: Destination countries increase their VAT taxes from time to time. Some suppliers impose energy surcharges or other price increases. Prices are also subject to increase due to currency fluctuations. Any such increases will be applied to your total due at the time of final payment. [If air is included, DOT prohibits surcharges after final payment.]

8. PASSPORTS, VISAS, AND OTHER ENTRY REQUIREMENTS: International travel requires a passport valid 6 months beyond your intended return travel date. In most cases, you will also need to have multiple consecutive blank visa pages within your passport (the number varies depending on the destination(s)). Many destinations also require that visas be obtained prior to travel. If one parent or guardian plans to bring a minor child without the other parent or parents, some countries and airlines have strict documentation and permission requirements. Birth certificates may be required for children under 18. Some nations require proof of vaccinations for all travelers. Please speak with us if you are unsure about the visa requirements for your travel destination. You are solely responsible for complying with passport, visa, and other foreign entry requirements and vaccinations.

9. RESPONSIBILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK: Immersion Journeys, its employees, shareholders, subsidiaries, affiliates, officers, directors, successors, and assigns (collectively "Immersion Journeys"), do not own or operate any entity which is to or does provide goods or services for your Tour including, for example, lodging facilities, airline, vessel, or other transportation companies, safari or guide services, local ground or safari operators, providers or organizers of optional excursions, food service or entertainment providers, etc. All such persons and entities are independent contractors. As a result, Immersion Journeys is not liable for any negligent or willful act, failure to act, financial failure or other defaults of any such person, entity, supplier or any other third party.

In addition and without limitation, Immersion Journeys is not responsible for any injury, financial or other loss, death, inconvenience, delay, or damage to person or property in connection with the provision of any goods or services whether resulting from, but not limited to, acts of God or force majeure, acts or orders of government, acts of war or civil unrest, insurrection or revolt, bites from or attacks by wild or domestic animals, insects or pests, strikes or other labor activities, criminal or terrorist activities of any kind or the threat thereof, sickness, illness, epidemics or the threat thereof, the lack of availability of or access to medical attention or the quality thereof, overbooking or downgrading of accommodations, mechanical or other failure of airplanes, vessels or other means of transportation, or for any failure of any transportation mechanism to arrive or depart timely or safely. Further, I release Immersion Journeys from its own negligence and assume all risk thereof.

We have no special or unique knowledge regarding the financial condition of the suppliers of services, unsafe conditions, health hazards, weather hazards, or climate extremes at locations to which you may travel. For useful information regarding your destination, we strongly recommend reviewing the destination-specific information at www.travel.state.gov, and the Centers for Disease Control at www.cdc.gov/travel.

If due to weather, flight schedules or other uncontrollable factors, you are required to spend an additional night(s), you will be responsible for your own hotel, transfers and meal costs. The right is reserved to decline to accept as a Tour participant, or remove from a Tour, without refund, any person Immersion Journeys judges to be incapable of meeting the rigors and requirements of participating in the activities, or who is abusive to other Tour participants, leaders or third parties, or who Immersion Journeys determines to detract from the enjoyment of the Tour by others. Specific room assignments are within the sole discretion of the lodge or hotel.

Assumption of Risk of Exposure to COVID-19: you agree to fully accept all known and unknown risks, including the potential risk of exposure to respiratory illnesses or other illnesses, diseases, or conditions, including but not limited to the coronavirus known as COVID-19. The coronavirus COVID-19 is primarily transmitted via exhaled respiratory droplets, most often through coughing, sneezing and breathing in close proximity to another person. These droplets can travel up to six feet and are more commonly transmitted between persons rather than from equipment to persons. You understand and agree that (a) COVID-19 is extremely contagious and there is an inherent risk of exposure to COVID-19 in any place where people are present; (b) no precautions, including the protocols that will be implemented as part of the trip, can eliminate the risk of exposure to COVID-19; (c) people of all ages and health conditions, including healthy young people, have been adversely affected by COVID-19; (d) certain people have been identified by public health authorities as having greater risk based on their age or underlying medical conditions; (e) exposure to COVID-19 can result in being subject to quarantine requirements, illness, disability, and other short-term and long-term health effects, including death, regardless of a person's age or health condition. You understand and agree to hold the Immersion Journeys, its officers, vendors and suppliers harmless and not liable for any real or perceived symptoms of COVID-19 or any other disease, illness, or condition, nor for exacerbating any existing symptoms of any illness, disease or condition, and you fully agree to accept these and all other known and unknown risks of receiving services from Immersion Journeys.

10. CANCELLATIONS AND POSTPONEMENTS BY IMMERSION JOURNEYS: Immersion Journeys reserves the right to change the itinerary, the lodges or hotels utilized or any Tour features at any time and for any reason, with or without notice, and Immersion Journeys shall not be liable for any loss of any kind as a result of any such changes. Immersion Journeys may cancel or postpone a Tour (or an option) for any reason whatsoever. Seasonal changes (for example, from low to high season) may result in higher prices. In any event, for cancellations (or postponements) based upon acts of God or force majeure, acts or orders of government, epidemics or the threat thereof, pandemics, terrorism or the threat thereof, strikes or labor disturbances, demonstrations, riots or civil unrest, criminal activity, supplier default or insolvency, or other similar circumstances, its sole obligation is to issue credits in the full amount of moneys paid to Immersion Journeys, but only to the extent its suppliers are crediting Immersion Journeys with those monies paid by Immersion Journeys to them. Under no circumstances is Immersion Journeys obligated to refund the cost of any purchased travel insurance. Immersion Journeys is not required to cancel any Tour for any reason including without limitation, United States Department of State, Centers for Disease Control, World Health Organization or other Warnings or Advisories of any kind. Immersion Journeys is not responsible for fees assessed by air carriers resulting from operational and/or itinerary changes, even if Immersion Journeys makes the flight arrangements or cancels the Tour. Immersion Journeys reserves the right to substitute lodges, hotels, vessels or attractions for those listed in the tour description if the same is required by circumstances beyond its control or for the convenience or well-being of clients.

11. OTHER TAXES AND FEES: Some governments charge departure taxes and/or fees. These fees are the responsibility of each passenger traveling to the designated country and are not included unless stated.

12. FORCE MAJEURE AND EVENTS BEYOND IMMERSION JOURNEYS' CONTROL: Immersion Journeys assumes no responsibility for any personal injury, property damage, financial or other loss, accident, delay, inconvenience, or irregularity which may be occasioned by reason of any matter beyond our control including but not limited to a delay or cancellation of a flight that causes you to miss all or any portion of the Tour, force majeure events such as acts of God, acts or orders of government, epidemics, war, terrorist acts, riots, disaster, weather events, or strikes, or the threat of any such events.

13. INDEMNIFICATION: You shall indemnify, defend and hold harmless Immersion Journeys, University of Rochester and its officers, employees, directors, suppliers and agents, in their individual capacities or otherwise, from and against any Losses arising out of: (i) your negligence; (ii) your failure to comply with applicable law; or (iii) your failure to comply with these terms and conditions.

14. Physical Accessibility: All Tours require physical independence and mobility. Any physical or mental condition that may require special medical attention or physical assistance (for example, the need for a wheelchair) must be reported in writing when you make your reservation. Participants must be able to embark or disembark vans or motor coaches alone or with minimal assistance from your traveling companion and climb stairs and step over raised thresholds without assistance. Participants requiring assistance must travel with a companion who will be responsible for handling equipment. Please understand that the Americans with Disabilities Act does not apply outside the United States.

15. CONDUCT DURING TOUR: You are also responsible for respecting the authority and following the directions of the tour guide and the laws of the countries in your itinerary. This includes the requirement to wear a face mask and other health and sanitization requirements. We may exclude you from participating in all or any part of the tour if, in our sole discretion, your condition or behavior renders you unfit for the tour or unfit for continuation once the tour has begun. Unfitness may include, without limitation, any behavior that, regardless of its cause, is inappropriate or offensive or interferes with the delivery of tour services, or may constitute a hazard or embarrassment. In such case, our liability shall be strictly limited to refund of the recoverable cost of any unused portion of the tour. Should you decide not to participate in certain parts of the tour or use certain goods included in the tour, no refunds will be made for those unused parts of the tour or goods.

16. MEDICAL PROXY: If you are unable to authorize your own medical attention and treatment, you authorize Immersion Journeys or its suppliers to authorize medical attention and treatment on your behalf. You agree to hold harmless and release Immersion Journeys from any liability for medical attention arranged or not arranged on your behalf. Immersion Journeys assumes no liability regarding provision of medical care or evacuation services.

Changes. Changes in this Agreement may be made only in writing, signed by an officer of Immersion Journeys.

17. HOT AIR BALLOON TRIPS: I understand that Immersion Journeys does not own, operate, control or supervise any person or entity which provides hot air balloon trips or hot air balloon equipment and that it makes no representations whatsoever as to the adequacy or safety of any such person or entity or of any such equipment. In addition, I understand that Immersion Journeys is giving me information about this trip, or booking it only as a courtesy to me. I understand there are various risks of injury, inconvenience and death associated with hot air ballooning. These include, but are not limited to, crashes, uncontrollable wind currents which, among other things, could cause hard landings (dragging of the balloon which in turn could cause injury or death), the possibility of a fire as a result of a drag or crash, landing in an area different from that anticipated, defective equipment, etc. I assume all such risks and specifically release Immersion Journeys from any and all claims of negligence, gross negligence, breach of contract or any other claim with regard to my hot air ballooning trip. I further understand that medical aid may be unavailable during the course of my balloon safari, making evacuation to any medical facility difficult and lengthy, and that any such facility (or medical personnel) may not be of the quality of facilities or medical personnel in the United States.

18. Binding Arbitration: Any dispute concerning, relating or referring to this Agreement, the brochure or any other literature concerning the Tour, or the Tour itself, shall be resolved exclusively by binding arbitration pursuant to the Federal Arbitration Act, 9 U.S.C. Sections 1-16, according to the then existing Comprehensive Arbitration Rules & Procedures of the Judicial Arbitration and Mediation Services, Inc. (JAMS). Such proceedings will be governed by substantive (but not procedural) State of New York law and will take place in New York City, New York. The arbitrator and not any federal, state, or local court or agency shall have exclusive authority to resolve any dispute relating to the interpretation, applicability, enforceability, conscionability, or formation of this contract, including but not limited to any claim that all or any part of this contract is void or voidable. Please understand that by agreeing to these terms and conditions, the participant and Immersion Journeys are waiving the right to a trial by jury. Any arbitration commenced against Immersion Journeys must be on behalf of only the signatory to this Agreement and his or her immediate family members who travelled with the signatory, such as a spouse or child. Under no circumstances can participants be part of a class or other joint action.

19. ADDITIONAL RELEASES: Some hotels, lodges, local safari operators, airlines and other suppliers might require you to sign their own releases as a condition of your utilizing their services. Upon request, we would be happy to request a copy of those releases from those suppliers.

By signing the Tour Registration form, you agree to the terms of this Participant's Agreement Concerning Terms and Conditions and Binding Arbitration. Your Agreement extends to any tour to which you may transfer. If your party includes a person under 18, then you represent that you are that person's parent or legal guardian.