



## Destination Update as on 28 June 2022

### BHUTAN

#### Breaking News!!

Bhutan Government has introduced a new Tourism Levy Bill 2022 that was passed in the National Assembly on 20th June. There is a substantial increase in the Sustainable Development Fee, from USD 65 to USD 200 per person per night with effect from June 20th 2022. Children under the age of 5 would not be required pay a royalty, while children between ages of 5 to 12 years would be charged fifty percent of the fee. The royalty would be charged over and above the cost of the tour (hotels, meals, transport, guides, entrance fees etc.) The hike, which has been put in place after almost two decades, will address the issue of raising carbon footprints and improve the quality of country's infrastructure and medical services. With the introduction of the new fee structure, Bhutan hopes to become a high value, low volume, and exclusive tourism destination for discerning travellers.

Official notification is still awaited on how this will eventually work, however, our understanding so far is that visas will be applied to and approved by the Department of Immigration, proof of hotel and guide confirmation maybe required. Tourists may book other services directly (hotels, guide, transport, meals etc) and are not required to book a packaged tour through a tour operator like in the past. The new Act allows for bookings to operate at old tariff if payment was made before June 20th. New bookings will have to pay the new Royalty of USD 200 per person per night. The Association of Bhutanese Tour Operators is going to approach The Tourism Council of Bhutan to clarify and ask to allow bookings that have made payments (full or partial). We are waiting to receive more details and clarity from Tourism Council of Bhutan on the way forward.

Bhutan is set to open for international travellers from 01st July 2022 onwards, with 1-day quarantine in a hotel facility. The full restoration of tourism without quarantine may happen by September 2022. We will update you on this as soon as we have further information on this.

Please [click here](#) for the detailed updates.