



COMO  
UMA BHUTAN

**Vital Statistics: COMO Uma Paro and COMO Uma Punakha**

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<b>Website:</b>	comohotels.com/umaparo comohotels.com/umapunakha
<b>Opening Date:</b>	COMO Uma Paro: November 2004 COMO Uma Punakha: September 2012
<b>General Manager:</b>	James Low
<b>Interior Designer:</b>	Kathryn Kng
<b>Architect: Lighting</b>	Cheong Yew Kwan
<b>Designer:</b>	Isometrix, London
<b>Landscaper:</b>	Trevor Hillier
<b>Executive Chef:</b>	Siam Kaewcheerat
<b>Location:</b>	The airport at Paro is a 10-minute drive from COMO Uma Paro and around five hours by car from COMO Uma Punakha. Transport between the resorts is by car, and arranged by COMO Uma Bhutan staff. It is not possible to hire cars for private use in Bhutan.



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**Getting there:**

Druk Air ([drukair.com.bt](http://drukair.com.bt)) connects Bhutan with Bangkok, Kolkata, Delhi, Kathmandu and Singapore, with additional routes provided by Bhutan Airlines ([bhutanairlines.bt](http://bhutanairlines.bt)) between Bhutan, Kolkata and Bangkok.

**Accommodations:**

**COMO Uma Paro:**

**9 Forest View Rooms (25sq m/ 269sq ft):** These comfortable double rooms overlook the pine forests and feature a king-sized bed or two twin beds, hand-painted traditional Bhutanese wall designs and a well-appointed bathroom with combined shower-bathtub. (25sq m/269sq ft)

**9 Valley View Rooms (32sq m/ 344sq ft):** Larger than COMO Uma Paro's Superior Rooms, COMO Uma Paro's Deluxe Rooms provide breathtaking views of the Paro Valley. Rooms feature either a king-sized bed or two twin beds and a generous bathroom with bathtub and separate shower stall.

**2 COMO Suites (95sq m/ 1,022sq ft):** The oversized COMO Suites have separate dining, sitting and study areas as well as a kitchenette. The sunshine-filled bedroom features 180-degree views of the Paro Valley. COMO Suites can be interconnected with a twin bedded Deluxe Room to form a two-bedroom suite perfect for families.

**8 One-bedroom Villas (92sq m/ 990sq ft):** These spacious freestanding villas feature an intimate living and dining area with traditional Bukhari wood-burning stove, a large master bedroom with King bed, a very generous bathroom and dressing area with claw foot tub and separate shower, as well as a private spa treatment area. All villas come with personal butler services.

**1 COMO Villa (330sq m/ 3,299sq ft):** The stately COMO Villa features a 'double master' design with one king-sized bedroom and bath and one twin bedroom and bath, a large living and dining area with panoramic views of the Paro Valley, an open-air courtyard with bonfire pit, and a private spa treatment area with its own outdoor hot stone bath. The COMO Villa comes with personal butler services.



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**COMO Uma Punakha:**

**8 Valley View Rooms (27-34sq m/ 291-360sq ft):** These glass-walled rooms overlooking the Punakha Valley – some with outdoor terraces – feature king-sized or twin beds, Sheesham (Indian Rosewood) wood furniture and bright wall paintings by local artisans. There is a cosy lounge area, deep bathtub and a separate shower stall.

**1 One Bedroom Villa (51sq m/ 549sq ft, outdoor terrace: 18sq m/ 194sq ft):** This spacious freestanding villa features a large living area, spacious terrace offering expansive views of the Punakha Valley and surrounding hills, and a comfortable master bedroom and large bath with soaking tub and shower. Outside, the villa has its own glade, where rhododendrons and hydrangeas grow.

**1 COMO Villa (90sq m/ 969sq ft, outdoor terrace: 40sq m/ 431sq ft):** The headline two-bedroom COMO Villa has a large living and dining area that opens onto a private 40ft terrace providing stunning views of Punakha Valley and the snow-covered Himalayan peaks in the distance. Two double bedrooms, one with a King bed and one with two twin beds, flank each side and feature Bhutanese design details, luxurious Indian cotton bedcovers and hand-knotted rugs from Nepal. The COMO Villa sits within its own glade planted with azaleas, rhododendrons, camellias and hydrangeas.



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**Room Facilities:**

Both COMO Uma Bhutan properties feature the following in-room facilities:

- Egyptian cotton linen
- Individually controlled air conditioning
- Flat screen LED Satellite TV
- DVD Player (COMO Uma Paro only)
- Electronic personal safe
- Private bar (COMO Uma Punakha villas only)
- Complimentary coffee/tea-making facilities
- Umbrellas
- Yoga mat
- Hairdryer
- COMO Shambhala bathroom amenities
- Wi-Fi

**Guest Services:**

Both COMO Uma Bhutan properties feature the following range of guest services:

- Fully licensed as a travel agency and ground handler in Bhutan providing full tour services with professional English speaking guides
- Comprehensive trekking services, including guides
- Concierge
- Villa butler service (COMO Uma Paro only)
- Foreign exchange
- Multilingual hotel staff
- Library with Business Centre (COMO Uma Paro only)
- Wi-Fi
- Babysitting (on request, with 24 hours' notice)
- Private cars and drivers
- Boutique (COMO Uma Paro only)

**Restaurant:**

The Bukhari restaurants at COMO Uma Paro and COMO Uma Punakha serve modern international cuisine featuring Western, Bhutanese and Indian dishes, all made from locally sourced, organic produce. Guests can also enjoy COMO's healthful and revitalising COMO Shambhala meals and fresh fruit and vegetable juices and extracts. In-room dining is available for all meals.



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- Bar:** At COMO Uma Paro, the relaxed Uma Bar provides all-day dining and refreshments from 11am and serves morning coffee or tea, cocktails and wines. The bar also offers non-alcoholic smoothies and fresh juices. An all-day dining menu, incorporating healthful COMO Shambhala Cuisine, is also available. The Uma Bar can be booked out for a private gathering of up to 20 people with a VIP set dinner menu.
- Executive Chef:** Siam Kaewcheerat
- Dining Options:** Breakfast, lunch and dinner at Bukhari and Uma Bar (COMO Uma Paro only)  
All-day healthful COMO Shambhala menu In-room dining from 6.30am to 10.30pm  
Private dining can be arranged at a number of locations at both properties
- Meeting Facilities:** COMO Uma Paro has a meeting room for 12 people, with dedicated staff
- Guest Wellbeing:** Both resorts feature a COMO Shambhala Retreat, offering a range of holistic Asian-inspired treatments including facials and signature massages. At COMO Uma Paro, there is yoga and meditation available. The COMO Shambhala Retreat at COMO Uma Punakha is more intimate with a focus on massage and body treatments.
- Treatments:** The spa offers Asian-inspired holistic therapies developed by COMO Shambhala, including reflexology, Ayurveda, massage, facials and hot stone baths.



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**Retreat facilities:**

COMO Shambhala Retreat at COMO Uma Paro offers the following facilities:

- Four treatment rooms
- Yoga studio
- Separate male/female changing rooms and steam rooms
- Two private traditional Bhutanese hot stone bath house treatment rooms (90sq m)
- Gym (67sq m)
- Temperature controlled indoor pool (46sq m) with outdoor sundeck
- Yoga weeks led by internationally renowned teachers

COMO Shambhala Retreat at COMO Uma Punakha offers the following facilities:

- 2 treatment rooms (a double for couples and a single room featuring a traditional Bhutanese hot stone bath)

**Outdoor Activities:**

Overnight camping treks Guided day/half-day walks Mountain biking and sightseeing by bike  
Archery and dart lessons  
Custom-designed cultural/special interest tours  
Museum, monastery and temple tours Textile shopping and excursions Cultural activities  
Visits to schools for Buddhist monks and nuns Personal one-on-one talks with Buddhist lamas Visits to traditional Bhutanese farmhouses Treks to visit Himalayan tribes

**Single Destination Itineraries:**

Himalayan Discovery (3, 5 or 7 nights)

A cultural itinerary based at COMO Uma Paro, this package of either three, five or seven nights gives a comprehensive insight into this fascinating Himalayan kingdom.

Himalayan Discovery with Bumdra Camp (5 nights)

This includes four nights at COMO Uma Paro and also a night at the remote Bumdra Camp in the high Himalayas.

Himalayan Wellness Discovery (6 nights)

Our Himalayan Discovery package with the addition of a full exploration into the fundamentals of yoga.



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**Dual Destination  
Itineraries:**

Himalayan Explorer (5, 6, 7, 9 or 10 nights)

These longer itineraries feature both COMO Uma Paro and COMO Uma Punakha, allowing guests to fully immerse themselves in Bhutan.

Himalayan Explorer with Bumdra Camp (7 or 9 nights)

This itinerary includes nights at COMO Uma Paro and COMO Uma Punakha and also a night at the remote Bumdra Camp high in the Himalayas

Bhutan Through a Lens (7 nights)

This itinerary has been developed for photographers of all levels and interests. An experienced photographer will accompany the group and give guidance where needed.

Two Kingdoms One Journey (12 nights)

This 12-night itinerary includes stays at COMO Metropolitan Bangkok, COMO Uma Paro, COMO Uma Punakha and COMO Point Yamu in Phuket.

Scenic Heli-Adventure (6 nights)

This six-night trip takes you to the heart of the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan with two privately guided helicopter flights.

**Direct Reservations:**

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W. [comohotels.com/umaparo](http://comohotels.com/umaparo) and  
[comohotels.com/umapunakha](http://comohotels.com/umapunakha)

**GDS Access Codes:**

Private label chain CV  
Sabre **70691** Amadeus **PBH696**  
Apollo/Galileo **81081** Worldspan **4696**



## **INTRODUCTION: COMO Uma Bhutan**

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COMO Uma Bhutan comprises two properties from COMO Hotels and Resorts. The first to open was COMO Uma Paro in the Paro Valley, close to many of Bhutan's great cultural landmarks. The second to open was COMO Uma Punakha, a five-hour drive away in the picturesque Punakha Valley.

COMO Uma Paro is the larger of the two, with nine private villas and 20 rooms. COMO Uma Punakha is more intimate, with just eight rooms and two villas, including an exclusive two-bedroom COMO Villa. At both resorts, accommodation provides a deeply comfortable and luxurious retreat, to be enjoyed after a day's cultural activities and adventure pursuits, from Himalayan trekking to archery and white-water rafting.

As a fully-licensed tour operator with English-speaking guides, COMO Uma Bhutan offers a seamless, hassle-free travel service that takes care of visas, flights and guides. Dual-centre packages such as 'Himalayan Explorer' offer a choice of carefully constructed itineraries that allow guests to experience both Uma properties during a single visit.



## **RESORT SYNOPSIS: COMO Uma Paro and COMO Uma Punakha**

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### **COMO Uma Paro**

COMO Uma Paro first opened in 2004. This inland mountain retreat, located on a 38-acre site atop a gently sloping blue pine tree-clad hill, overlooks the town of Paro in the valley below. Paro town is one of the main cultural centres of Bhutan, situated towards its western border. It is also where the nation's only airport is located. Thimphu is the capital and a one-hour drive away.

Paro derives its name from 'Pardhu.' 'Par' means 'handful' and 'Dhu' means 'dragon.' The town is flanked by rice paddies, wheat fields, trout-filled streams and scattered settlements.

At COMO Uma Paro, there are 20 rooms and nine villas (including one two-bedroom COMO Villa), fashioned by traditionally-trained Bhutanese artisans alongside Cheong Yew Kwan, architect of COMO Shambhala Estate in Bali. Cheong's respect for indigenous styles accounts for the resort's references to a local Bhutanese village. The landscaping is soft, with orchards, lawns and ramped pathways preserving the original contours of this rugged land. Each villa is loosely placed at different levels, in glades and clearings planted with azaleas, rhododendrons, camellias and hydrangeas, giving the resort an organic, unstructured sensibility. Materials include stone, wood and tiles – handcrafted, using age-old techniques. The main building, formerly the home of a Bhutanese nobleman, forms the visual focus of the resort. Peach-flowering climbing roses decorate walls, and there are glorious magnolias.

COMO Uma Paro is committed to developing wildflower meadows, organic gardens and more mixed species woodland, using oak, hemlock, fir and maple saplings. These measures are attracting an even greater number of birds than the existing blue pine forest.

### **COMO Uma Punakha**

COMO Uma Punakha opened in September 2012. The 11-room resort lodge, located in the heart of Bhutan, is set into the hillside overlooking a bend in the Mo Chhu Chu river, with bird's-eye views across the bright green terraced rice and vegetable fields below. COMO Uma Punakha is a five-hour drive from COMO's Paro resort (where Bhutan's major international airport is also located).

The historic Punakha Valley is one of the most beautiful and important in Bhutan; Punakha was the capital of Bhutan until 1955, before the seat of government was moved to Thimphu. Today Punakha Valley is one of the country's most productive districts, thanks to its year-round mild climate, suitable for fruit growing. The valley is home to many beautiful monasteries as well as the majestic Punakha Dzong—the fortress-like monasteries found all over Bhutan—located at the scenic confluence of the Mo (mother) and Po (father) Chhu rivers. This area is also a popular location for rafting, showcasing the many prayer flags along the river banks and the temple at Nyezergang.



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At COMO Uma Punakha, there are eight valley view rooms and two deluxe Villas (a One-bedroom Villa and a Two-bedroom COMO Villa), all fashioned in similar style to COMO Uma Paro, by architect Cheong Yew Kwan. Every room makes the most of the views across the valley, with natural light flooding the simple, pared-back interiors. As at Paro, Bhutanese artisanship is found in the handcrafted furniture in Sheesham woods, stone and ceramics.

Also like COMO Uma Paro, COMO Uma Punakha is committed to sustainability and is developing its own organic gardens and mixed species woodland.



## DESTINATION OVERVIEW: Bhutan

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The Kingdom of Bhutan lies landlocked within the folds of the mighty Himalayas. This has given rise to names for Bhutan such as 'hidden treasure' or 'the last Shangri-La'.

Bhutan's unique topography has also ensured that large parts of the landscape remain untouched. Much of the country is protected by law. Snow and high winds dominate in the mountainous north, while rivers and broadleaf forests define Bhutan's valleys. The sub-tropical strip in the south has tropical vegetation and plains where rice is grown.

It is thought that the region was inhabited as early as 1500 BC. Buddhism was introduced in the 7th century, and remains the state religion in Bhutan, with every household in Bhutan containing a 'choeshum' (a shrine room devoted to prayers and offerings). Many of the country's sightseeing highlights are found in its religious architecture - temples and 'dzongs' which also function as administrative centres.

Interlaced with its religion are Bhutan's rich cultural heritage, folklore and history. People still wear traditional national dress: men wear 'gho', a heavy knee-length robe tied with a belt, whilst women wear 'kira', which is an ankle-length dress worn over a blouse and tied up with a brooch. Spirits, manifestations, medicine men, yetis and reincarnation are all aspects of daily life here.

Unsurprisingly, tourism came late to Bhutan, with the borders opening to foreign visitors as recently as 1974. Even now Bhutan only sees around 35,000 visitors each year. The government strives to balance openness while protecting the natural environment with a daily tourist tax (currently US\$65 per day), which is paid in order to offset any environmental impact.

Popular activities in Bhutan include walking, trekking, mountain-biking and whitewater rafting with terrain ranging from pine-clad hillsides to rocky outcrops, and trails incorporating traditional villages, monasteries and striking views. The national sport of archery is practised all over the country, with high-spirited, colourful contests. The archery fields are known as 'Bha Cho'.

Shopping in Bhutan is centred around handicrafts such as carpets, jewellery, bamboo bowls, masks, silver, wooden products, textiles and handmade paper. Bhutan is also famous for its stamps. Beautiful stamp collections (presented in books) make fantastic souvenirs.

Eating out in Bhutan is erratic and often there will be no formal menu. The national dish 'ema daste' consists of large chillies, served in a cheese sauce. Another favourite is 'phak sha laphu'— stewed pork served with radishes. Although Bhutan is a Buddhist country it is not vegetarian. Traditional snacks, with a Tibetan influence, are 'momos'. These are small dumplings filled with meat or cheese. It is also common to find noodle dishes. Buckwheat, a dish favoured in the Bumthang Valley, is a staple and the locally grown red rice, favoured by the Bhutanese people, has a pleasant nutty flavor.



## KEY BIOGRAPHIES: COMO Uma Bhutan

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**James Low, General Manager:** After training in Malaysia and the United Kingdom, James Low's 30-year career in hospitality has taken him to many parts of Asia, including Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand. James joins COMO Uma Bhutan after serving as General Manager of COMO Metropolitan Bangkok and COMO Point Yamu in Phuket, Thailand.

**Jesse Tibert, Lodge Manager:** COMO Uma Punakha: Jesse joined the COMO family in 2011 when he took on the position of Staff Welfare Manager at COMO Parrot Cay. In March 2013 he moved to New York City to work at The Avalon. It was in June 2014 when Jesse returned to Bhutan to take on the role of the Front Office Manager at COMO Uma Paro, after his first stint from 2010-2011 at the Nak-Sel Boutique Hotel & Spa.

**Tshering Yangki, Assistant Activity and Tours Manager:** Tshering Yangki, from the central Bhutan town of Bumthang, started her career with COMO Uma Bhutan in 2005 as a Tour Guide. She manages a team of 10 guides, comprising some of the most experienced guides in Bhutan. Yangki makes sure her guides are kept up-to-date with the latest tourism developments and attractions in the kingdom.

**Cheong Yew Kwan, Architect and Interior Designer:** Cheong divides his time between Bali and Singapore. His past projects for COMO Hotels and Resorts include COMO Shambhala Estate in Ubud, Bali, COMO Parrot Cay in the Turks and Caicos, and COMO Cocoa Island in the Maldives. He has also worked on a number of high profile private houses. Formerly with Kerry Hill Architects in Singapore, his style is defined by a keen awareness of indigenous traditions, creating satisfying, sensitive volumes for modern living.

**Kathryn Kng, Interior Architect:** Kat Kng, of KathrynKng interior design practice, is based in Singapore where she has a long-standing reputation for innovative, clean-lined aesthetics. This is evidenced in past work for the city's fashion stores, including Issey Miyake, Christian Dior and Emporio Armani. In the hospitality sector, Kng has worked on the interior conversion of the Four Seasons Island Explorer, a boutique-style diveboat launched 2002 in the Maldives, COMO Cocoa Island in the Maldives, and COMO Metropolitan Bangkok.

**Trevor Hillier, Landscape Architect:** Currently working out of Bali, Hillier is a Southeast Asian tropical landscape specialist, with a strong conservationist leaning. His work shows a keen sensitivity to architecture and context, his designs incorporating agriculture into the landscape wherever possible. In the resort sector, he has been responsible for extensions of both Four Seasons Hotels in Bali, as well as the landscaping of COMO Parrot Cay in the Turks and Caicos and COMO Uma Ubud in Bali.



## **ABOUT THE COMO GROUP AND COMO HOTELS AND RESORTS**

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COMO Hotels and Resorts, part of the Como Group, is a multi-award-winning, family-owned business with 15 hotels and resorts worldwide — each one different to the other but sharing the same core values: a deep commitment to holistic wellness, exceptional nutrition-rich cuisine, and inspiring destinations that honour the spirit of place.

Our city hotels include COMO Metropolitan London and COMO The Halkin in London, COMO The Treasury in Perth, Australia, and COMO Metropolitan Bangkok in Thailand. Our country resorts include COMO Uma Paro and COMO Uma Punakha in Bhutan, COMO Uma Ubud and COMO Shambhala Estate in Bali, and COMO Castello Del Nero in Tuscany. COMO's beach and island portfolio encompasses COMO Parrot Cay in the Turks and Caicos, COMO Cocoa Island and COMO Maalifushi in the Maldives, COMO Point Yamu in Phuket, and COMO Uma Canggu on the Bali shore. COMO Laucala Island is the Group's newest addition: a private island resort in Fiji.

The Singapore-based COMO Group of lifestyle companies is home to businesses that seek to make a meaningful difference to customers' lives with products and services focused on quality and authenticity. Founded by Mrs Christina Ong, the COMO Group encompasses the international luxury fashion retailer Club 21, the award-winning wellness brand COMO Shambhala, our food concepts, COMO Cuisine and COMO Dempsey, the philanthropic COMO Foundation, and COMO Club. This new initiative for 2022 is a one-stop digital platform that connects customers to the different experiences in the COMO Group, as well as partner brands who share our values.

For more information on COMO Hotels and Resorts, visit our website [comohotels.com](https://comohotels.com), follow our adventures on Instagram [@comohotels](https://www.instagram.com/comohotels), or chat to us on our [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/comohotels).



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