

SHANGRI-LA IN THE HIMALAYAS

Paro, Bhutan

The mythical land of Shangri-la depicted in the 1933 novel *Lost Horizon*, by James Hilton, was located somewhere in the Himalayas, but no one knows where. I found the closest place to Shangri-La at the Uma Paro boutique hotel in Bhutan.

The Uma Paro, part of the COMO Hotels and Resorts chain, is one of the few luxury hotels in this remote country. A peaceful kingdom half-hidden in the Himalayas, Bhutan is visited by only about 50,000 tourists per year. Most are attracted by the country's unique Buddhist-Himalayan culture – and preserving this age-old culture is one of the things that Uma Paro does best.

From the hotel's regal main building to its Buddhist-style villas, you'll find the architecture of Uma Paro immaculately intertwined with the poetic landscape. Made up of pagodas dating back a few hundred years, the Bhutanese complex blends in perfectly with the twisting valleys and terraced mountains that surround it. This is a world where deep-rooted culture and stylish designs collide.

As a leading hotel in the country, Uma Paro sets the standards high by fusing Bhutanese heritage with clean-cut designs – using touches like the *bukhari* wood stove heating and traditional hot stone bath treatments. From its old-world architecture to the contemporary interior design of the rooms, Uma Paro finds the perfect balance between cultural heritage and modern comforts.

Immerse in authentic Bhutanese culture, drink in million-dollar mountain vistas, revive yourself with spa treatments and soak up the much-vaunted commitment to happiness – all without leaving your own personal Shangri-la.

Room rates from US\$290; villa rates from US\$690 for double occupancy. Uma Paro

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