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- ↑ Traditional Bumthang farmhouse.
- Pine needle stacks. In Bhutan, pine needles are used as animal bedding by farmers.
- ↗ Every year Thangbi Goemba plays host to one of the region's most popular festivals, which includes traditional dances and purification rituals.
- Buddhist mask dance at Jampa Lhakhang in Jakar, the capital of the Bumthang district.

gives way to steeper terrain just before reaching Phephe La (3,560 m/11,680 ft)—which, unlike most of the trekking passes in Bhutan, is forest-covered and viewless.

Beyond the high point, the trail initially continues under its green canopy before emerging into broad pastures dotted with sleepy homesteads. Continuing to descend, you will encounter *mani* walls and *chortens* and pass by agricultural fields of buckwheat and barley. Approximately 16 km (9.9 mi) after leaving the Sangling campsite, you will reach the floor of the Tang Valley and the hamlet of Gamling.

Alongside more than a dozen other villages in the Bumthang district, Gamling is renowned for its *yathra* textiles. Unique to this part of Bhutan, these exquisite handwoven garments are made of yak or sheep wool and are famous for their distinctive colors, intricate geometric designs, and the warmth they provide their users during the freezing Himalayan winters. Apart from its importance to the local economy, the making of *yathra* products is also an integral part of the social fabric of Bumthang. The weaving is typically done in groups of four to six women, who congregate in a single hut—often face to face—where they share design ideas and chat about the day-to-day happenings of village life.

Leaving Gamling, the trail ascends for another kilometer to the final destination of the trek, Ogyen Choling Palace. The origins >

