



Rediscover the
meaning of travel

Tour Notes

India – Rajasthan Encompassed

Tour Duration – 16 Days



Tour Rating

Fitness ●●●○○ | Off the Beaten Track ●●●○○ | Culture ●●●●○ | History ●●●●○ | Wildlife ●●●○○

Tour Pace

Busy

Tour Highlights

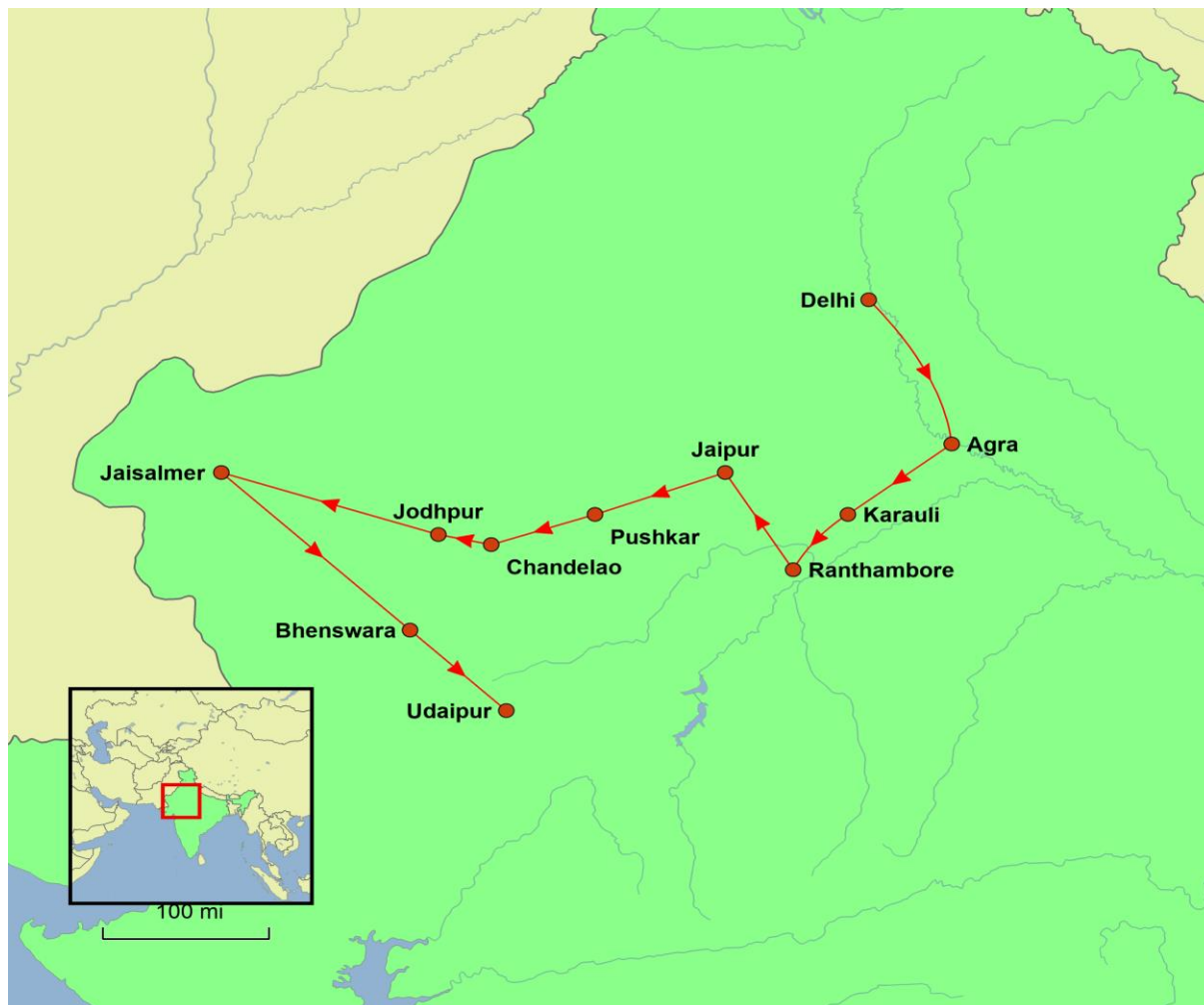
- ✓ Experience the diverse and enchanting cities of Jaipur, Udaipur, Jodhpur and Jaisalmer
- ✓ Observe the pilgrims at the holy lake of Pushkar
- ✓ The incomparable magnificence of the Taj Mahal
- ✓ Explore the impressive Meherangarh Fort in Jodhpur with its magnificent views from the ramparts
- ✓ Interact with the local community in their homes at rural Chandelao and observe age old village customs
- ✓ Enjoy a camel safari in the Thar Desert
- ✓ Search for tigers in atmospheric Ranthambore National Park in the shadow of the imposing fort
- ✓ A comprehensive journey through India's most colourful state





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Tour Map



Tour Essentials

- Accommodation:** Mix of comfortable hotels, and comfortable tented accommodation in Sawai Madhopur
Included Meals: Daily breakfast (B), plus lunches (L) and dinners (D) as shown in the itinerary
Group Size: Maximum 12
Start Point: Delhi – you can arrive any time on day 1
End Point: Delhi – depart on an evening flight on day 16
Transport: Minibus, air-conditioned train with chair car
Country Visited: India



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India – Rajasthan Encompassed

This journey to the land of the Maharajas starts with a visit to the unmissable Taj Mahal in Agra, one of the most celebrated and spectacular buildings in the world. Track the iconic Tiger in atmospheric Ranthambore National Park in the shadow of its dramatic fortress. Travel through Rajasthan's most enchanting cities, such as Jaipur and Udaipur. In the walled desert city of Jaisalmer, you have ample time to explore its traffic-free streets, flanked by exquisite architecture. There is also time to relax and recharge in the laid-back, sacred oasis town of Pushkar and visit the fantastic Meherangarh Fort in Jodhpur, one of the most impressive in India. We also journey into some of the lesser visited areas of rural Rajasthan such as Chandelao, where we can spend time observing traditional customs. We finish in surely Rajasthan's most picturesque city, Udaipur, set against the backdrop of idyllic Lake Pichola. The tour offers the quintessential highlights of the region, whilst also taking in some of the more singular, extraordinary and relatively undiscovered locations. Rajasthan is often said to be India's most colourful state – travel with us to experience its full vibrancy and diversity for yourself!

Tour Itinerary Notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested and on occasions alternative accommodation, of a similar standard to that named below, will be used.

Tour Guide

Our guides are a key strength, chosen for their knowledge of and passion for the areas in which they work. All of our guides are carefully hand-picked, and are not merely passing through these countries, but are usually locally born. Unlike some companies, it should be noted we do not send a guide or tour leader from Undiscovered Destinations in the UK: we have every confidence in our locally appointed representative who is responsible for operating the tour on our behalf. Where possible you will have the same guide throughout your trip, but on occasions it may be advantageous to change the guide at one or more points during the tour. Groups of less than 3 people will have a combined driver/guide.

Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive in Delhi

Arrive in Delhi, the capital of India, and transfer to the hotel. No guided arrangements or meals are included today. Overnight at Udaman Hotel or similar.

Note: For those that arrive early or are having pre tour accommodation we can provide numerous sightseeing options in Delhi on request. A heritage walk around Old Delhi is particularly recommended.

Old Delhi

Old Delhi was the capital of Moghul India between the 12th and the 19th centuries. You will find here many mosques, monuments and forts of the Moghul period of India's history. The medieval atmosphere of the bazaars of Old Delhi contrasts sharply with the open, spacious streets of New Delhi, the imperial city created as the capital of India by the British.

Day 2: Delhi – Agra by train – Sunset at the Taj Mahal

Today take the early morning express train to Agra, home to one of the world's most celebrated and beautiful buildings the Taj Mahal, built in the 17th century by the emperor Shah Jahan as a mausoleum for his wife Mumtaz Mahal.



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Farther along the river Yamuna lies the impressive Red Fort built during the 16th and 17th century golden age of the Moghul Empire and from where there are more classic views of the Taj Mahal. Later as sunset approaches, we visit the Taj Mahal itself. Overnight at The Retreat or similar. (B)

Agra

Although Agra was a lesser fortified town for much of its history, it was besieged in 1080 and from then on was a centre of minor territorial scuffles. It was in 1506, however, that its heyday began: Sultan Sikander of Delhi moved his capital here and when it fell to the Mughal lords in 1526 it became the administrative centre of India's second largest ever Empire. The opulence and building programmes that followed had their flowering in the construction of the Taj Mahal: one of Shah Jahan's wives had died after childbirth – their fourteenth child, indicating just why she was so dear to him – and the mausoleum is a dazzling tribute to his favourite partner. Described by the Bengali poet Tagore as “a teardrop on the face of eternity”, the edifice was completed 22 years after her death and is constructed from Rajasthan marble and precious metals and jewels from the four corners of Asia.

Day 3: Agra- Karauli via Fatehpur and Bharatpur (Overall approximate driving time: four hours)

Today after an early breakfast, drive to Karauli enroute we will visit Fatehpur Sikri and Bharatpur. View some of the extraordinary array of colorful and rare birds at this former maharaja's hunting lake sanctuary at Bharatpur. Later we continue our drive to Karauli, midway between Agra and Ranthambore. The town's magnificent Old City Palace, built in 1635, is a treasure trove of architecture, stone carvings, intricate jali fretwork and classic paintings. Karauli also has a lively bazaar full of handicrafts and jewellery. Just outside town is the former residence of the maharaja, now a beautiful heritage hotel where we check-in for the night. Overnight at Bhanwar Vilas Palace or similar. (B)

Day 4: Karauli – Ranthambore National Park (Overall approximate driving time: 2 hours)

Continue to Sawai Madhopur, your base for visiting the beautiful Ranthambore National Park, one of the best opportunities in India in which to see a tiger in the wild. You take an afternoon safari by share jeep to explore the expanses of the famous park. The varied landscapes, flora and fauna within the park are compelling and the wildlife safari is an intriguing experience even if tigers prove elusive. Overnight at Ranthambore Heritage Haveli or similar. (BLD)

Ranthambore and its tigers

The name Ranthambore is synonymous with tiger sighting, and for good reason: established as a national park in only 1980, it boasts an impressive total of around 60 which makes good reason for optimism when you step into a safari vehicle. The origins of the area as a park have a darker past: it was a popular tiger hunting area for the gentry of Rajasthan and this continued well into the 20th century. However, as the largely forested areas in northern India, perfect for the big cats' territories, were progressively felled and shooting of tigers for trophies continued, it became apparent that the Bengal tiger's very existence was in doubt. In response, the government first set up a reserve here in 1955 and, as poaching took its toll, widened the acreage of the reserve and poured funding into the area as a key sanctuary. As a result, since a low point of 26 tigers in 2005, the population has been rising. The reserve status has also benefited sundry other species of mammal: your chances of seeing some anything from leopards, hyenas or deer, to jackals, bucks or civets are good; equally, bird watchers flock to the park to glimpse many of the 313 recorded species, including hornbills, babblers, vultures, pheasants, parakeet and the beautiful dusky eagle owl.

Day 5: Ranthambore National Park - Jaipur (Overall approximate driving time: 3.5 hours)

For those that wish a further safari is included this morning again by shared vehicle to try and observe more of the magnificent wildlife and take in the fine scenery in the early light. After breakfast continue to Jaipur where on arrival you will have some leisure time in the afternoon before we head out late afternoon wandering through the atmospheric bazaars. Overnight at Dera Rawatsar or similar. (B)



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Jaipur

The city famously forms one point of the 'Golden Triangle' yet was founded in relatively recent times in 1727; it takes its name from its founding father, Jai Singh. The burgeoning metropolis is a fascinating insight into India's vibrancy and vitality, yet at its core it retains the exquisite and opulent grandeur of its foundations in the Pink City. This historic centre is resplendent with palaces, bazaars and places of worship; just outside its southern and western walls the trend continues and the city is renowned for its beautiful carpets, enamelled ornaments, precious and semi-precious stones, brass ornaments and many other arts and crafts. Prior to Jaipur's establishment, smaller kingdoms and strongholds dotted the region: predominant amongst these is the UNESCO world heritage site of Amber (or Amer) Fort which dates from the 11th century and sits spectacularly atop the natural defences of red sandstone cliffs and Maota Lake. Despite this, the citadel has fallen to invaders, notably on the occasion of the Diwali massacre of the Meena garrison.

Day 6: Jaipur sightseeing

This morning after early breakfast we set out for an excursion to Amber Fort passing by Jaipur's most distinctive landmark '*Hawa Mahal* commonly known as (Palace of Winds). Next, we visit City Palace, a perfect blend of Rajasthani and Mughal architecture. Followed by our visit to Jantar *Mantar*, which is an astronomical observatory built by Jai Singh II. It is one of the largest and the best-preserved observatories in the country. Overnight at Dera Rawatsar or similar. (B)

Day 7: Jaipur – Pushkar (Approximate overall driving time: 3 hours)

This morning, drive to Pushkar, a desert oasis on a holy lake. The afternoon is at leisure to explore the lakeside with its compelling holy men, pilgrims and temples. Hundreds of small temples are built on the periphery of the lake with wide stone steps or 'ghats' leading down to the lake. A magical quality of light hovers over the lake, bouncing off the surrounding white-washed temples and bathing ghats. At sunset Pushkar turns into one of the most exotic places on earth. Overnight at Pushkar Palace or similar. (B)

Pushkar

Legend has it that the sacred lakes of Pushkaraj Maharaj ('Pushkar, King of Kings') sprang up when Lord Brahma, the Hindu creator god, dropped three lotus petals into the desert. The largest lake is surrounded by over 500 temples, dedicated to much of the Hindu pantheon, with the Brahma, Apteshwar and the loftily situated Savitri temples being particularly stunning examples. The latter afford you a unique view of the site, and will take a lusty hour for you to summit! The religious edifices generally date from the 12th century onwards, with regular renovations following periods of Muslim conquest in the region. The town draws thousands of Hindu and Sikh pilgrims, especially during the October full-moon phase, who seek the healing properties of its waters.

Day 8: Pushkar – Chandelao (Overall approximate driving time: 3 hours)

After breakfast drive to the small and tranquil heritage hotel of Chandelao Garh. Here, with virtually no other tourists around, one can interact with the community and learn about the rich art, culture and heritage of Rajasthan. On an afternoon village tour by jeep, observe local craftsmen at work, and visit a Bishnoi tribal family in their traditional home. Observe local women in colourful traditional attire fetching water from the wells, and gain a fascinating and authentic insight into traditional Indian village life. Overnight at Chandelao Garh or similar. (BD)

The Bishnoi Tribe

In 1485, whilst the English were knocking chunks out of one another at Bosworth field, guru Jambeshwar Bhagavan was making huge ecological leaps of faith and progress in this tiny corner of Rajasthan. Sensing that the local drought was owing to deforestation, he formulated a series of 29 maxims for living in harmony with nature, including making killing animals and felling live trees a taboo. This effectively makes the Bishnoi unique as a tribe united by dogma rather than ethnicity. Indeed in 1730 their faith was put to the test and 363 Bishnoi were slaughtered as they protected the local trees from felling to make way for the maharaja's palace.



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The result was that the protection of animals and forestry became enshrined in law in the region. The hotel in which you stay to experience this serenity is equally soothing: sit in leafy, red sandstone courtyards, imbibing the trickle of bird-song around you. The beautiful buildings date back to the 1740s and were the overlord's residence at the centre of a robust feudal system, only abolished in 1952.

Day 9: Chandelao – Jodhpur (Overall approximate driving time is 1.5 hours)

Continue to the 'Blue City' of Jodhpur. Standing at the edge of the vast, arid Thar Desert, Jodhpur is dominated by the massive Meherangarh Fort, which we visit in the afternoon. The fort houses an excellent museum and affords captivating views of the blue Brahmin houses of the old city. The clock tower is a popular landmark in the old city. After visiting the fort, wander down hill through atmospheric narrow alleys land through bazaars for textiles, silver and handicrafts. It's a fascinating jumble of winding streets of great interest to wander around. Overnight at Pal Haveli Hotel or similar. (B)

Jodhpur

Jodhpur and the territories it controlled have always retained a proud independence, striking deals with the two great Empires in its history – the Mughals and the British. The city began life in 1459 as the newly constructed capital of the kingdom of Marwar. Rao Jodha selected what he hoped was an impregnable site for the fortress of Meherangarh, and so it proved: the kingdom amassed great riches and even in modern times is a centre for trade, owing to its long-time stability. The golden sandstone of the fort sublimely compliments the pastel blue washes of the cascades of old city dwellings within the walls and makes Jodhpur a photographer's mecca. The city boasts a thriving cottage industry of items such as glass bangles, metalwork and carpets and its spice markets are a kaleidoscope of vibrancy. Food is also a proudly held prowess of the Marwaris: amongst the dishes to not miss out on are spicy Mirchi bada and the wonderful array of local dishes if you order Rajasthani Thali.

Day 10: Jodhpur – Jaisalmer (Approximate overall driving time: 5 hours)

An early start to cross the desert en route to the 'Golden City' of Jaisalmer, looming magically out of the horizon. Within the fortress walls the cobbled streets are strewn with stunning palaces, beautiful mansions, and Jain temples that were built between the 12th and 15th centuries. On arrival the rest of the day is at leisure for you to relax or explore. Overnight at Nachana Haveli Hotel or similar. (B)

Jaisalmer

Since the twelfth century, Jaisalmer has occupied a position which has dominated the east-west trade routes across the Thar desert. The outline of the dramatic fortress and the cornucopia of rich merchants' ornate haveli ('houses') make this seem like a scene from The Arabian Nights. Much of the city's charm is owed to its inaccessibility and marginalisation after the establishment of the Indo-Pakistani border which effectively reduced it to a backwater, yet also protected its beauty from the population explosions that other Indian cities have experienced. Only the wars with Pakistan in the 1960s re-established it as of strategic importance and brought its diverse and beautiful sites back into the consciousness of travellers. The fortress and the walled city are a delight to explore, the former being unique as a 'living' fortress, bustling with traders, businesses, temples and museums. As you inhale the heady blend of vitality and antique, it's hard to imagine that the fortress itself three times witnessed acts of 'johar' – mass female suicide – as the city seemed destined to fall in the 1200s-1400s.

Day 11: Thar Desert – Camel Safari

The best way to experience the Thar Desert, which surrounds Jaisalmer, is on an overnight camel safari. Leaving Jaisalmer in the mid-afternoon, its half-an-hour by road near Sam to meet our camels. When you arrive, you will be escorted to start point of your camel safari. Traversing an unspoilt area of the desert, passing through a mix of scrub and sand dunes as the light turns from gold to dusky pink. The desert camp itself is pitched in a peaceful location close to sand dunes When you have finished with your camel safari, you will be escorted to the parking area from where you will drive back to the camps in your vehicle.



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The camp's attentive staff will serve dinner before an evening spent under a blanket of stars, and there may also be some live music at the camp. Overnight at Winds Desert Camp or similar: (BD)

Note: *Sam Sand Dunes is one of Jailsamer's most popular attractions for both domestic and international visitors and it has become increasingly popular and busy over time. However, it still retains its essence, particularly for viewing sunsets and sunrises.*

The Thar Desert

The Great Desert of India covers an area of 77,000 square miles and is a natural barrier between much of the country and Pakistan. The natural way into a desert is by camel and the height and languid pace afford you excellent views and the chance to glimpse much of its delights. Deserts are unique places in which to travel: be prepared for more warmth during the afternoon and then a steady decline in temperature until you will be relieved to have brought warm jackets and socks! Keep your eyes peeled to see the national bird of India, the peacock, traversing the scrub branches, lizards and grouse scuttling away from your camel and vultures and endangered Indian spotted eagles winging overhead. With the dusk come unbelievable sunsets and huge skies, totally unpolluted by urban light. As darkness rises, the nocturnal buzz of life there forms a gentle backdrop to the heavenly spectacle that unfolds: this is an astronomer's dream as the Milky Way unfolds like a meandering smudge across the star-spangled skies.

Day 12: Jaisalmer walking tour

This morning, wake up to the magical light of the desert. For those that wish, a second camel ride awaits on a different route for around an hour before re-joining the jeep for the drive back to Jaisalmer, arriving by mid-morning. This afternoon, enjoy a guided walking tour of the Old City. Jaisalmer, with its narrow-cobbled lanes, is a wonderful place to wander around on foot. The fort itself is not simply a monument, but is home to a community of several thousand people. Within it one can observe some attractive Jain temples, fascinating architecture, and enjoy superb views over the city and the desert beyond from the many vantage points on its walls. Hidden amongst the narrow lanes leading off the main market street are several elaborate and opulent havelis. Overnight Nachana Haveli or similar. (B)

Day 13: Jaisalmer – Bhenswara (Approximate overall driving time: 7 hours)

An early start today for a long drive out of the desert and into a little visited area of rural Rajasthan. The region around Bhenswara is interesting as it is home to some of the more pastoral tribes of India. The rock-strewn region of Bhenswara is also the natural habitat for leopards and your host at Bhenswara is a keen tracker. You have the option to join a thrilling, eerie evening safari to try and get a glimpse of this elusive animal but please kindly be realistic with your expectations as sightings are quite rare but the anticipation of a glimpse of this wonderful creature is exciting in the darkness and the scenery is a joy as the sunsets. Overnight at Ravla Bhenswara Hotel or similar. (BD)

Day 14: Bhenswara – Udaipur (Approximate overall driving time: 4 hours)

The last stop on the itinerary is the beautiful 'White City' of Udaipur. Set around the vast Pichola Lake and dominated by dramatic palaces, Udaipur is surely Rajasthan's most picturesque city. High, whitewashed houses and narrow, winding alleys lend it an almost medieval charm. The huge City Palace, still the residence of the Maharana, is intricately carved out of yellow sandstone and stands on the banks of Lake Pichola, from where you have fabulous views over the balmy waters and the famous Lake Palace Hotel. On arrival the rest of the day is at leisure for you to wander in the atmospheric streets or relax and marvel at the views out over the lake. Overnight at Kotra Haveli or similar. (B)

Udaipur

The current maharana is, almost unbelievably, the 76th in an unbroken line of Mewar rulers of Udaipur. The dynasty has long been regarded as the chief Rajput royal family and the city's history extends back to the mid-1500s.



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If any city in Rajasthan can claim to hold the crown of romantic backdrops, then this is it: the nearby Aravelli hills encircle it and the interconnecting lakes have earned it the title 'Venice of India'. At its heart, the City Palace is a complex of ornate gates and courtyards, palaces within palaces, temples, museums and even a former elephant fighting arena beside the triple 'Tripolia' gateway.

Day 15: Udaipur sightseeing – Delhi (domestic flight)

Enjoy a guided morning tour of the elaborate palaces and temples, followed by a boat trip on Lake Pichola to experience an entirely different angle on the elegance of the city. Later this afternoon we take a flight back to Delhi and you can either depart on a late evening flight or stay overnight at an airport hotel and fly anytime on Day 16. Overnight at Hotel Atreo or similar. (B)

Day 16: Departure from India

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your onward flight back home. (B)

Tour Inclusions/Exclusions

Inclusions:

Arrival and departure transfers
Overland transport in tour vehicle
Shared jeep safari at Ranthambore National Park
Delhi – Agra by Shatabadi Express (AC chair car)
All accommodation
All sightseeing and entrance fees as per the itinerary
Services of English-speaking guide / tour leader (groups of less than 3 people will have a combined driver/guide)
Meals as listed (B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner)
Domestic flight from Udaipur to Delhi

Excluded:

International flights
Any airport taxes
Travel Insurance
Visa (if applicable)
Services, meals and drinks other than those mentioned in the itinerary
Items of a personal nature
Extra charges for camera and video permits
Tips (see the notes section for information on the tipping kitty)
Covid-19 testing, if required

Important Information

Foreign Travel Advice Warnings

We constantly monitor the advice posted by the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). In particular we will always advise clients of any travel warnings. At present there are no warnings against travel to the areas of India that we visit. Please feel free to contact us should you have any specific



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concerns or would like to know in detail what measures are being taken to ensure visits remain trouble free and without incident.

It should be noted that this information applies to British citizens. Other nationals are asked to check the current position of their respective government.

Accommodation and Meals

Hotel Check-in Times

As a general rule most hotels will allow guests to check-in from 12pm. Please note that the price of your tour does not include guaranteed early check-in. Therefore, please advise us if you would like to ensure that your room is available for an earlier arrival. This is particularly relevant on the first day of the tour and for early morning arrivals. One option is to pre-book and pay for an extra night at the beginning of your tour which will guarantee your accommodation is available irrespective of what time you arrive. Please contact us for information and costs.

It should also be noted that on many of our tours we have set-aside Day 1 of the itinerary as an 'arrival day'. For this reason and because tour participants are likely to be arriving at different times, and often from different countries, guided sightseeing or other activities are not included. If you are arriving early or before the start date of the tour and would like to organise some extra arrangements on a private basis please contact us.

Accommodation Rating

On this tour we stay in mid-range comfortable accommodation consisting of small hotels and guesthouses. All accommodation has private bathrooms. We will also stay in some nice heritage hotels with lots of character.

We welcome solo travellers and single rooms will be allocated subject to the applicable tour supplement. Please note that on occasions you may not always be allocated a double or twin room, as some hotels have designated single rooms. These may be smaller in size. However, the supplement payable takes this into consideration.

Food & Drink

The daily meal basis is shown in the tour itinerary; breakfast (B), lunch (L) and dinner (D). Please note that lunch may be a picnic. Drinks are not included and will be payable locally in cash.

Dietary Requirements

If you have any special dietary requirements, you must notify us at the time of booking. While we will make every effort to cater for you, we cannot guarantee that this will be possible.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Tipping – Guide and Drivers

Tipping is very much part of the culture in India and is usually expected. Tipping can often be an awkward affair, especially when in an unfamiliar country where you are not sure when or how much to tip. As such, your guide will collect an amount of between £50 - £60 per person on arrival depending on the group size which will be used to tip hotel staff, local sightseeing guides, drivers and any other hotel staff throughout the tour. A tip for the main tour guide is left up to you and is not part of the kitty. A suggested amount is £2 – 3 per person per day.



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Foreign Exchange

ATM Availability: India is well equipped with ATMs, although less so in smaller towns than in larger cities

Credit and Debit Card Acceptance: Cards are generally only accepted in the more expensive shops and restaurants

Local Currency: Rupee

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Pound Sterling or US Dollars

Where to Exchange: Your guide will advise you

Joining your Tour

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will receive an airport transfer, both on arrival and departure include in the tour price. In order that the transfer can be arranged please ensure that you advise us of your flight information once available. Please advise the date, time and flight number for your arrival/departure. If we have not been advised of this information at least 2 weeks before travel, then you will be required to make your own way to the hotel on Day 1 of your tour.

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Undiscovered Destinations that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses (including cover for Covid-19 conditions) and emergency repatriation to your home country and be valid for the entire duration of your holiday.

Visa Information

At the time of writing British, US and Australian nationals require a visa for a tourist visit to India. For further details please visit the applicable website shown below

British Nationals - www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

US Nationals - <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html>

Australian Nationals - www.smartraveller.gov.au/

Other nationals should check the latest requirements with the authorities in their home country, or with the destination's nearest embassy or consulate.

Should you require any documentation to support a visa application, such as a letter of invitation, upon request this will be provided by Undiscovered Destinations after receipt of your balance payment.

As it is the travellers' responsibility to ensure that they meet all entry requirements it is essential that you check the rules and any other conditions at the time of booking and again when making your balance payment. In addition, we would strongly advise that you make a final check around two weeks before your arrival. This is important as requirements can change at short notice. Undiscovered Destinations, when possible, will provide guidance about entry rules, but in the first instance please contact the relevant authorities, including the applicable embassy or consulate for assistance.



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Passports

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, valid for at least six months after the date of return to your country.

Your passport must be machine readable, with 2 blank pages for your visa and valid for a minimum of 180 days at the time of your visa application. The guidelines regarding passport validity on arrival in India are unclear. To avoid possible problems at immigration, make sure your passport is valid for a minimum of 180 days at the time of entry into India.

For specific information about the requirements for your destination please check with the country's embassy or consulate. Alternatively, UK citizens can visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

Vaccinations & Protection

As with travel to most parts of Asia, we strongly recommend that you contact your doctor's surgery or a specialist travel clinic for up-to-date information, advice and the necessary vaccinations.

For a visit of less than one month, almost certainly you will be advised to have immunisations against the following: Diphtheria and Tetanus, Hepatitis A, Typhoid, Meningitis. The use of a DEET-containing insect repellent is highly recommended.

The legal status and regulation of some medicines prescribed or purchased in your home country can be different in other countries. If you're travelling with prescription or over-the-counter medicine, read this guidance from NaTHNaC on best practice when travelling with medicines. For further information on the legal status of a specific medicine, you'll need to contact the embassy, high commission or consulate of the country or territory you're travelling to.

Preparing for your tour

Climate

The climate of much of the Subcontinent - which includes Sri Lanka, India, Bhutan, Nepal & Pakistan - is dominated by heat, monsoons and the Himalayas. Northern India enjoys a predominantly dry, desert climate, with the months between October and March providing the best time to visit. October and March can still be very hot by day with temperatures into the high 30's Centigrade. If you prefer cooler conditions then November – February will be more comfortable. During this time nights can be quite cool. Misty conditions are common in early mornings during winter.

Clothing

When it comes to clothing it is usually recommended that lighter clothes are worn through the day, and warmer ones at night, especially in the desert. A hat is also advised to be worn through the day to protect from the sun, along with at least one piece of waterproof clothing for any days that the weather may be wet or windy. Rain is quite rare in the dry winter season but cannot be entirely ruled out.

You should bear in mind that India tends to have a conservative attitude towards dress. Women, and also to a certain extent men, will find that the way they dress will often determine the degree of respect they receive from both men and women. In temples you will be asked to remove your shoes so please wear socks if you do not wish to be barefoot.



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Road Conditions

Most roads on this tour are in a reasonable or good condition, but you will encounter some sections where works are in progress or rural sections where the roads are not in such good order. Safaris are carried out mostly in jeeps or canter vehicles, ideal for the terrain but please be advised that safaris are still bumpy.

Safari Expectations

On this tour you have the opportunity to see some amazing biodiversity. However, these animals are wild. We cannot guarantee sightings. Your chance of seeing larger cats is increased from January – March when the land is parched. From October – December parks are often lush from the rains and wildlife is harder to see. The flip side of this is that the forests and parks are more beautiful. October and November are also a great time for birding and migratory species. So please kindly enjoy what nature has to offer and keep expectations realistic.

Heritage Hotels

During the tour we will stay at times in wonderfully atmospheric old heritage hotels. In many cases these hotels have been converted from old forts and/or palaces. Many of these kinds of hotels will not have lifts although they are not high-rise hotels so they usually only have a few floors and assistance can be provided with bags at all hotels. Also beware of clearance issues if you are tall getting into rooms and through corridors. Some areas may not be well lit so always carry a small torch.

Equipment

The first thing on your list should be a first aid kit. Whilst there is no undue cause for alarm, travellers are best advised to travel well-prepared: adequately immunized, with sufficient supplies of prescription drugs, along with a medical kit. Suncream/sunblock is a must. Insect repellent, including a bite spray will also be useful to have. Please also bring a torch/flashlight or a head-torch for any unexpected electricity outages or for dimly lit areas. As the wildlife and birdlife is excellent in India you may wish to take a pair of binoculars.

Footwear

Footwear is a main priority on this tour. Comfortable walking shoes/boots are recommended. Lighter sandals are fine for travelling.

Luggage on tour

Your luggage should not exceed 20kgs (44lbs). One large suitcase/rucksack, and one small hand luggage rucksack is acceptable.

Electric Supply & Plugs

230-240volts. Plugs are usually of the European two round pin variety.

Tour Itinerary Versions

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes. These notes were updated 3 July 2023.