

GLIMPSE OF INDIA

Delhi * Jaipur * Agra * Khajuraho * Varanasi * Delhi

DAY 01

ARRIVE - DELHI

BY: INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT

You will arrive at New Delhi's International Airport. Following customs, immigration formalities and baggage collection, a representative will meet you as you EXIT the ARRIVALS TERMINAL building after which you would be transferred to your hotel.

India's capital and a major gateway to the country, contemporary Delhi is a bustling metropolis, which successfully combines in its folds - the ancient with the modern. Amidst the fast spiraling skyscrapers the remnants of a bygone time in the form of its many monuments stand as silent reminders to the region's ancient legacy. The first impressions for any visitor traveling in from the airport are of a spacious, garden city, tree-lined with a number of beautiful parks.

Upon arrival at the hotel, proceed for check-in.

Overnight at the hotel

DAY 02

DELHI

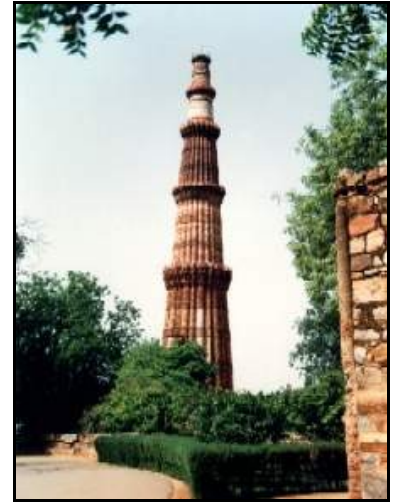
After buffet breakfast at the hotel, you will proceed for **city tour of Delhi**.



The tour will begin with a visit to **Raj Ghat**, a simple memorial to Mahatma Gandhi; visit **the Red Fort** continuing to the **Jama Masjid** by **bicycle rickshaws**. It is the largest mosque in India, accommodating up to 25,000 worshippers at one time. Designed by Shah Jahan, this grand red sandstone and white marble mosque was said to have been built by 5,000 artisans from 1644 to 1656. The broad red sandstone steps lead up to gates to the east, north and south.

After the sightseeing tour of Old Delhi, you will be driven to **New Delhi**, which reflects the legacy the British left behind. The division between New and Old Delhi is the division between the capitals of the British and the Mughals respectively. The division in the walled city and New Delhi also marks the division in the life-styles. The walled city is all tradition where one will be able to glean a past life-style in all its facets, colours and spells. New Delhi in contrast, is a city trying to live up to the best of 21st century standards.

The tour to Imperial Delhi will include a visit to the **Qutub Minar**, the tallest stone tower in India. Qutub-ud-din Aibak started it in 1199. Pulling down 27 Hindu and Jain temples and using their columns erected the attached Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque also built by him. Then visit **Humayun's tomb**, built by the widow of the second Mughal Emperor, Humayun, it is an outstanding monument in the Indo-Persian style, a precursor of the Taj Mahal. The tour also includes a drive past the imposing **India Gate**, the **Parliament building** and the **Rastrapathi Bhawan**, the President's residence.



Return to your hotel after the sightseeing tour.

In the evening you will proceed to Red Fort to witness **Sound & Light Show** (Son - Et – Lumiere). A dramatic interplay of sound and light effects, recreating the history of Red Fort, a symbol of Mughal Power. Watch three hundred years of history come alive!

Overnight at the hotel

DAY 03 DELHI – JAIPUR

After buffet breakfast at the hotel, you will be driven from Delhi to Jaipur (260 KMS/5.30 Hours) and upon arrival, proceed for check-in at your hotel.

Rajasthan's kingdoms are an enduring legacy to India's history. A land endowed with invincible forts, magnificent palaces and waves of sand dunes and serene lakes. No other region in the country assembles the many paradoxes of India, as does the desert land of Rajasthan. By far it is the most colourful region in India.

Jaipur's past is never too far from hand. The city of victory, Jaipur presides over the fascinating desert state and its people: surrounded by rugged hills, each crowned by a formidable fort; and beautiful palaces, mansions and gardens dotted throughout its precincts. The palaces and forts of yesteryear that were witness to royal processions and splendour are now living monuments, accepted quite naturally into the lifestyles of the people of the "pink city". Except for the busy traffic of bicycles, cars and

buses, little seems to have changed. There is a timeless quality to Jaipur's bazaars and its people. With its historical past, Jaipur revives legends of the ancient Rajputs. The dresses of the women and the turbans of the men add colour to this fascinating city.

Later you will visit the **city of Jaipur**. Among the highlights to be seen while touring Jaipur include the **City Palace**, which is an overwhelming complex of exquisite palaces, gardens and courtyards, decorative art and carved doorways. The palace museum houses collections of rare manuscripts, armoury, costumes, carpets and miniature paintings. Walk to the adjacent **Jantar Mantar or Astronomical Observatory** made by the Maharaja of Jaipur, built in 1726 and is one of the five such astronomical wonders built by Sawai Jai Singh and makes accurate predictions even to this day. You will also have the opportunity to wander about the local markets. Return to your hotel after the sightseeing tour of Jaipur City.

Return to your hotel after the sightseeing tour.

Overnight at the hotel

DAY 04 JAIPUR

After buffet breakfast at the hotel, you will be driven just outside Jaipur to the **ancient capital of Amber** to see the fabulous Amber Fort. Maharaja Mansingh, Mughal Emperor Akbar's most successful General, started the construction of Amber Fort in the 17th century. Before the City Palace was constructed in Jaipur, Amber was the seat of power. The fort is surrounded by fortified battlements and overlooks the Moat Lake. Ruins and remains are spread over the Aravalli hills and sprawling crenulated walls lattice the surrounding area.



An elephant (alternatively by jeep) will spare you the trouble of reaching up to the fortress. Once on top, stroll through the sprawling complex of courtyards and halls. Many of the rooms have delightful wall paintings, with precious stones and mirrors inlaid in the walls. Most fascinating, perhaps, is the Sheesh Mahal (hall of mirrors) where a single lamplight is reflected in the many mirrors, lighting up the room.

En-route to Amber you will stop and see the **'Palace of Winds'**, otherwise known as Hawa Mahal. It is really an elaborate facade behind which the ladies of the court used to watch the daily goings on in the street below. It is extremely intricate in its pink sandstone carving. The cool wind blows



through its facade of windows and latticed screens through which the queens of the court once viewed the streets of the city.

Return to your hotel after the excursion tour. Afternoon at leisure.

Overnight at the hotel

DAY 05

JAIPUR – FATEHPUR SIKRI – AGRA



After buffet breakfast at the hotel, you will be driven from Jaipur to Agra (240 KMS/ 6.3 Hours) **en-route visiting Fatehpur Sikri**, the deserted red sandstone city, built by the Great Mughal Emperor Akbar as his capital and palace in the late 16th century. It was abandoned soon after it was built when the local wells went dry and it remains today in much the same condition that it was over 300 years ago. It is complete ~~with palaces and mosques and used to be a town~~

larger than London when it was originally constructed. Now it is an extraordinary place to wander around with its buildings in near perfect condition.

After your visit, continue your drive to Agra and upon arrival, proceed for check-in at your hotel.

Agra in terms of ambiance is still associated with its Mughal period. The Mughals besides being great rulers were also great builders and they preserved their best architectural wonders for Agra & its neighbourhood. It has many wonderful monuments and the Taj Mahal, the greatest of them all, is a masterpiece of Mughal architecture at its best. The massive but elegant Agra Fort, the magnificent Taj, are each unique and outstanding. Their architectural genius can also be seen in the forts, palaces and aesthetically laid out gardens - each one a silent witness to a grand style of a golden era.

Great empires have flourished in Agra and then grown to engulf the whole country. Great battles were fought on this soil, as can be gathered from its chequered history. It's line-up of monuments today stand mute testimony to the splendour of a bygone era and the visionary far-sightedness of the many monarchs who once ruled different parts of this state.

As visitors walk down the narrow, bustling streets, they can't help but wonder if the man contentedly smoking a hookah is a direct descendant of some bygone Mughal. Even the majority of the buildings in the modern areas of town such as the cantonment, date back over a hundred years.



In the Afternoon, you will be taken for **tour of the Taj Mahal (Closed on Friday's.)** Midway **Tonga's "horse carriages"** would be waiting for you and will drop you at the gates of the Taj Mahal, taking 22 years and 20,000 men to build, the white marble was quarried 200 miles away and was transported to the site by a fleet of 1000 elephants. Built by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan as an expression of his love for his wife Mumtaz Mahal, in mid 17th century, the Taj Mahal is truly one of the wonders of the world.

Return to the hotel after the sightseeing tour.

Overnight at the hotel

DAY 06

AGRA - JHANSI – KHAJURAHOBY: TRAIN / SURFACE

After an early buffet breakfast at the hotel, a representative will transfer you to the Railway Station in time for your train to Jhansi.

Departure: Agra at: 0810 Hours By: Shatabdi Express
Arrive: Jhansi at: 1025 Hours

A representative will meet you at the Jhansi Station, after which you will be driven from Jhansi railway station to Khajuraho (200 KMS / 5 Hours) **en-route visiting Orchha**, a city frozen in time. It was founded in the 16th century by the Bundela chieftain, Rudra Pratap Singh, who built this new capital on large wooded islands on the River Betwa. Today, remains of the fort and palaces speak eloquently of Orchha's time of glory, of its splendid legacy of art and culture. Though little more than a village today, stepping back in time, into Orchha's fortress and palaces is an enjoyable experience.

Place of interest in Orchha include the multi-tiered **Jehangir Mahal**, within the fort, built in 1606; the Raj Mahal noted for its fine murals and the Rai Praveen Mahal, a palace set in the gardens of Anand Mahal. Orchha has tall-spired temples that are certainly worth visit. Notable among them are the **Ram Raja Temple, Laxminarain Temple** with its exuberant frescoes, and the **Chaturbhuj Temple**

After your visit, continue your drive to **Khajuraho** and upon arrival, proceed for check-in at your hotel where remainder of the day will be at leisure.

In the realm of architecture, Khajuraho holds a unique position. The temples here were built between 950 and 1050 A.D. by the Chandela dynasty, who claims descent from the Moon God and a mortal, Hemavati, with whom the god fell in love.

Most of the temples of the north were destroyed by invaders, but Khajuraho escaped and stands today as an island of beauty. The Chandelas built 85 temples and some 22 survive today. Architecturally the temples have some unique features. They stand on high platforms and do not have customary enclosures. Each temple has a large number of spires in ascending order representing man's aspirations towards spiritual goals. They are ornately carved, with each frieze and sculpture depicting the genius of the men who carved it and the king who inspired them. Although famous for erotic depictions, these form only a small part of the wealth of the site. Taken in totality, the sculptures of Khajuraho depict the everyday life of the people and the court in the 10th and 11th centuries.

Khajuraho is not something that can be described in words; it has to be experienced.

Overnight at the hotel

DAY 07 KHAJURAHO

After buffet breakfast at the hotel, visit the **Chandela Temple Complex**. The tour of Khajuraho this morning concentrates on the famous erotic temples, which represent some of the finest examples of temple architecture in Northern India. The remote location of Khajuraho meant that the temples were unharmed by Muslim invaders and as a result, the intricately fine carvings are in very good condition and are said to represent life in heaven.

They were built during the mighty Chandela dynasty, the majority were constructed in a sudden burst of creative and religious energy, between the mid-10th and 11th centuries. After ruling for about 500 years the Chandela dynasty fell to the might of Islam and consequently the religious centre of Khajuraho was abandoned. The temples remain as a reminder of a society that believed in the full enjoyment of life, with all the senses being a path to nirvana. Of the eighty-five original temples only 22 remain, but many are in very good condition. You visit the **Kandariya Mahadeva, the Chatrabhuj,**



Parswanath and Ghantai Temples, each remarkable for its beautiful design and architecture.

Return to your hotel after the sightseeing tour.

Overnight at the hotel.

DAY 08

KHAJURAHO – VARANASI

BY: FLIGHT

After buffet breakfast at the hotel, morning is at leisure. Later in the afternoon, a representative will transfer you to Airport in time for your flight to Varanasi.

Proposed flights – Can Change depending on availability

Departure: Khajuraho at: 1330 Hours By: 9W 724

Arrive: Varanasi at: 1410 Hours

A representative will meet you upon arrival at Varanasi airport & transfer you to your hotel. Arrive and proceed for check in.

The antiquity of Varanasi is veiled in immortal times and has been the center of religion, learning and civilization since ages. It has an endearing universal mystique, which has to be experienced to be understood. The city gets its inherent charm from the location as it's situated on west side of the Holy Ganges. The principal attraction being the bathing ghats that are always bustling with life at any given time of the day.

There is no Indian attraction like Varanasi. There are no architectural splendours, no exquisitely carved palaces or impregnable forts, and yet the city has an inherent charm. Situated on the west bank from the riverbank ghats to a winding maze of picturesque alleys overlooking tall houses alongside, dotted with temples. It is a fascinating area to wander around.

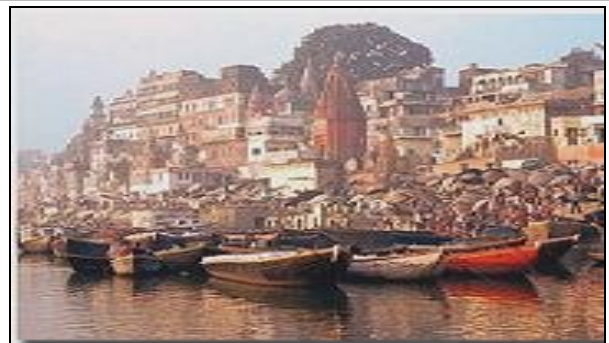
Rest of the day at leisure.

Overnight at the hotel

DAY 09

VARANASI

Early morning **boat-ride** in the holy River Ganges and see the various Ghats (the banks of the river) with people ritually cleansing their sins' in hope of attaining eternal salvation or ""Nirvana"". This will be the backdrop to your early morning boat ride when the river is bathed in a magical light and pilgrims come to perform pooja to the rising sun.



Return to the hotel for breakfast. After breakfast enjoy city tour of Varanasi, including a visit to **Vishwanath Temple**, the **Benaras Hindu University** and the **Bharat Mata Temple**.

Viswanath Temple Dedicated to Lord Shiva; this temple is the most sacred shrine in Varanasi. The original temple was destroyed by the Mughal Emperor, Aurangzeb, which was later, restored by Rani Ahilyabai of Indore in the 18th century. The Gold plating of the dome was done during the 19th century by Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Punjab. Foreigner's entry inside the temple is restricted.

Banaras Hindu University was founded by Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya it is considered to be the largest residential university in Asia. Within the university campus, Vishwanath Temple and Bharat Kala Kendra (Museum) are well worth a visit.

Return to the hotel after the sightseeing tour.

Later you will be taken for an **excursion to Sarnath**, a major Buddhist center in the world. After achieving enlightenment at Bodhgaya, Buddha, the 'Awakened One', delivered his first sermon here. It was the sixth century then, when he also set in motion the wheel of law, the Dharmachakra. This dwelling place of the rishis, it was also known as 'Rishipatana' (the place of the Rishis or sages). Buddha gave his first sermon in the Deer Park where he initiated his first five disciples into Buddhist monkhood. Buddhism found its roots in Sarnath, the birthplace of this way of life.

Overnight at the hotel

DAY 10

VARANASI – DELHI

BY: FLIGHT

DEPARTURE: DELHI

BY: INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT

Following buffet breakfast at hotel, morning is at leisure.

Afternoon, a representative will transfer you to airport to board flight for Delhi:

Proposed flights – Can Change depending on availability

Departure: Varanasi at: 1440 Hours By: 9W 724

Arrive: Delhi at: 1600 Hours

Upon arrival you will be met by a representative who will transfer you to international airport in time for your flight back home.



******* END OF TOUR *******