ULTIMATE INDIA

DETAILED ITINERARY

Nov 04/26



Discover the many faces of India on an extraordinary 28-day adventure that takes you far beyond the country's iconic landmarks. From sacred cities and magnificent Mughal monuments to colorful villages, ancient temples, royal palaces and vast desert landscapes, this journey offers an unparalleled opportunity to experience the richness and diversity of India.

Begin in Delhi and travel to spiritual Varanasi, where a sunrise boat ride on the Ganges and an evening aarti ceremony offer glimpses into India's enduring traditions. Explore the remarkable temples of Khajuraho before continuing to Agra, home of the magnificent Taj Mahal. In Rajasthan, discover the grand forts and palaces of Jaipur, Jodhpur and Udaipur, while experiencing the quieter side of India in the desert oasis of Pushkar.

Our journey then takes us to the extraordinary

FACTS & HIGHLIGHTS

• 28 land days • Maximum 16 travelers • Start in New Delhi and finish in Mumbai • All meals included • Includes 4 internal flights • Explore Rajasthan's highlights • Visit the Taj Mahal, Khajuraho and Fatehpur Sikri • Experience the sunrise on the Holy Ganges River in Varanasi • Experience the white salt plains of the Rann of Kutch and vibrant local festivals. • Marvel at the romantic palaces and shimmering lakes of Udaipur, the "City of Lakes." • Search for tigers in Bandavgarh and Tadoba National Parks • Spot the majestic Asiatic lions on a safari in Gir National Park. • Visit Bera, famously known as the "Leopard Capital of India."• Explore the Blue City of Jodhpur with its famous fort and lively markets.

DEPARTURE DATES & PRICE

Oct 26 - Nov 22, 2027 - $11295 USD

Activity Level: 3

Comfort Level: Some rough/dusty roads and long drives.

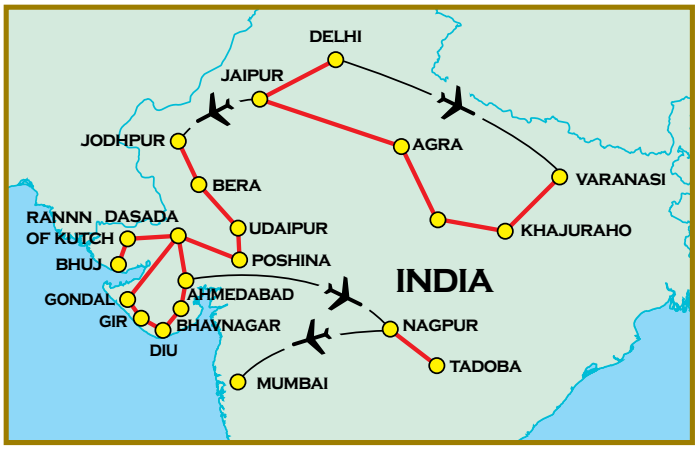
ACCOMMODATIONS

Comfortable hotels with private bathrooms.

landscapes of the Little Rann of Kutch and the shimmering White Rann, where traditional music, dance and handicrafts bring the desert to life.

Wildlife adventures add another exciting dimension to our journey, with opportunities to search for elusive leopards in the Jawai region, Asiatic lions in Gir National Park and magnificent Royal Bengal tigers in Tadoba. Along the way, we stay in distinctive heritage properties and enjoy opportunities to connect with local people and communities.

We conclude our adventure in vibrant Mumbai, home to Inida's largest population. This remarkable journey is filled with fascinating encounters, extraordinary landscapes and memories that will last a lifetime.



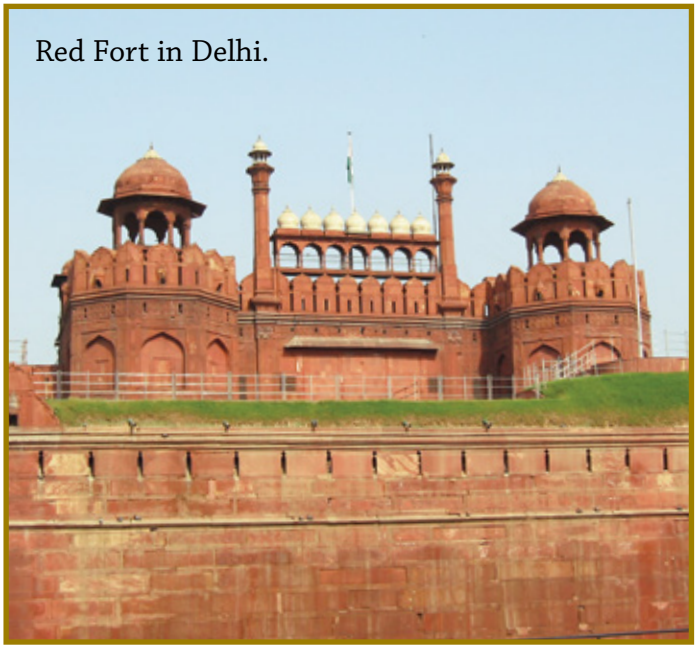


Qutab Minar in Delhi.

DAY 1 ARRIVE NEW DELHI

Arrive in New Delhi, the bustling capital of India, and transfer to our comfortable hotel in the city. This evening we will have dinner and our orientation meeting.

Overnight in New Delhi.



Red Fort in Delhi.

DAY 2 CITY TOUR OF NEW & OLD DELHI

We spend the day in Delhi, exploring some of the sights in both the "Old" and the "New" cities. In Old Delhi, we visit the Jama Masjid - India's largest mosque, and also enjoy a rickshaw ride through Chandi Chowk, Delhi's famous "Silver Street". In New Delhi, we see the Qutab Minar, Gandhi's tomb, as well as see India Gate - the "Arc de Triomphe" that leads to the Indian Parliament, which we drive through.

Overnight in New Delhi.



Holy Ganges River.

DAY 3 TO VARANASI, EVENING CEREMONY ON THE GANGES

We depart Delhi by plane to the "Eternal City" of Varanasi, also known as Benares. The city lies on the west bank of the Ganges at a point where it sweeps in a great bend north, before resuming its southeasterly course to the sea. India's most sacred city, it was already an important town in the 7th century BC when Babylon was at the peak of its power and was certainly well established by the time Buddha arrived here in 500 BC. Varanasi is said to combine the virtues of all other places of pilgrimage, and anyone dying within the area is transported straight to heaven. This is why many devout Hindus move to Varanasi to end their days and have their ashes scattered in the holy Ganges.

We journey to our hotel to prepare for our evening experience starting with a rikshaw ride to visit a ghat at aarti (prayer) time.

Overnight in Varanasi.

DAY 4 VARANASI, SUNRISE ON THE HOLY GANGES RIVER, VISIT SARNATH

An early morning boat trip on the Ganges River takes us past the ghats where pilgrims have come to purify themselves and where bathing and cremations are regular activities in these sacred waters. After the boat trip we visit Sarnath, the ancient site where Buddha gave his first sermon. Today the monks are long gone and the buildings are in ruin but its setting among green grass and beautiful trees makes it an ideal place to experience India's profound past. Tonight we take a boat ride for a special ceremony with traditional music along the Ganges River.

Overnight in Varanasi.

DAY 5 KHAJURAHO

In the morning, we take a short flight to Khajuraho, a medieval city filled with intriguing temples. In the afternoon we explore Khajuraho's temples (declared





a UNESCO World Heritage Site). Intricately carved, these ancient temples depict human and divine forms engaged in daily life.

Overnight in Khajuraho.

DAY 6 AMERMAHAL PALACE, TRAIN TO AGRA

In the morning, we visit the Amermahal Palace, which resembles a European-style castle. In the afternoon we drive to Jhansi where we board the train for Agra, home to the Taj Mahal. Upon our arrival in Agra, we check into the hotel for dinner.

Overnight in Agra.

DAY 7 AGRA - TAJ MAHAL, AGRA FORT AND ITMAD-UD-DAULAH TOMB

We have a full day to explore some of the most famous sights of Agra, including the Taj Mahal (UNESCO). This white marbled jewel was built over a 22-year period by Shah Jehan as a monument to his great love for his wife.

We also visit Agra Fort (UNESCO) built by Akbar the Great, which includes the Pearl Mosque, the Palace, and the Halls of Private and Public Audience. Later, we visit the Itmad-Ud-Daulah Tomb, which was also known as the mini Taj Mahal. We will learn why this tomb pre-dates the Taj Mahal as we marvel in the lace design that makes this tomb so unique.

Overnight in Agra.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TAJ MAHAL:

In 1612, Arjumand Banu Begam, better known by her other name, Mumtaz Mahal was married to Shah Jehan (then Prince Khurram), the fifth Mughal Emperor. This marriage, although the emperor's second, was a real love-match, and Mumtaz was her husband's inseparable companion on all his journeys and military expeditions. She was his comrade, his counselor, and inspired him to acts of charity and benevolence towards the weak and the needy. She bore him fourteen children, and died in childbirth in 1630 (only three years after his accession to the throne) in Burhanpur in the Deccan Plateau where she had accompanied him on a military campaign.

Overpowered by grief, Shah Jehan was determined to perpetuate her memory for immortality, and decided to build his beloved wife the finest sepulchre ever - a monument of eternal love. It was Shah Jehan's everlasting love for Mumtaz that led to the genesis of the Taj Mahal. The sad circumstances, which attended the early death of the empress who had endeared herself to the people, inspired all his subjects to join in the emperor's pious intentions.

After twenty-two laborious years, and the combined effort of over twenty thousand workmen and master craftsmen, the complex was finally completed in 1648 on the banks on the river Yamuna in Agra, the capital of Mughal monarchs.

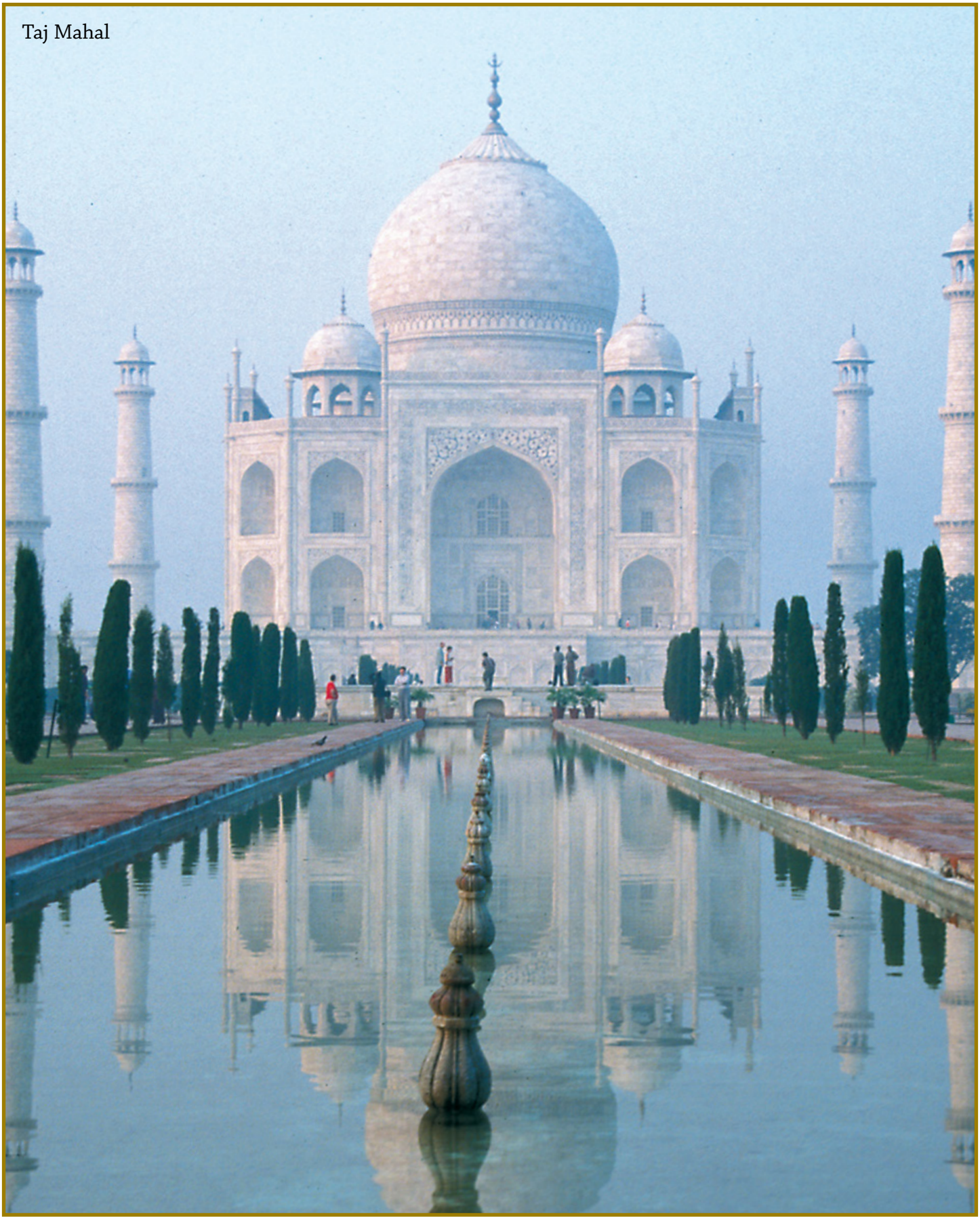
The origin of the name the "Taj Mahal" is not clear. Court histories from Shah Jehan's reign only call it the Rauza (tomb) of Mumtaz Mahal. It is generally believed that "Taj Mahal" (usually translated as either "Crown Palace" or "Crown of the Palace") is an abbreviated version of her name, Mumtaz Mahal (Exalted One of the Palace) - Saumya Lashkari

DAY 8 TO JAIPUR

n the morning we depart for Jaipur, the "Pink City" of Rajasthan, which was built in 1728 and holds many attractions for the modern-day traveler. It earned its moniker as the Pink City because the rock that was used in the city's construction has a pink hue. Enjoy a relaxing evening in the Pink City or for those who want to learn more about the famous Bollywood, we will attend a true

Akbar Tomb in Agra




Taj Mahal

Hindi Bollywood movie at one of the oldest and most extraordinary cinemas in Jaipur.

Overnight in Jaipur.

DAY 9 JAIPUR - AMBER PALACE FORT, ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY & CITY PALACE

In the morning we visit Amber Palace and Fort with its impressive architectural style, perched on a hill overlooking Maoto Lake. We stop at the Hawa Mahal (Palace of the Winds) to catch the morning sun on this beautiful structure. We will explore this majestic fort and learn the history of Jaipur and how life was like in the king's day. In the afternoon we will journey to the famous Jantar Mantar, the largest stone astronomical observatory built by Maharaja Jai Singh (UNESCO). We will also visit the City Palace.

In the afternoon we will end our sightseeing with some free time to wander the colorful markets of Jaipur or take a rickshaw ride through the old city.

Overnight in Jaipur.

DAY 10 TO JODHPUR, MEHRANGARH FORT

This morning we have a flight to Jodhpur. Once the former capital of Marwar State, Jodhpur was founded in 1459 by Rao Jodha, who himself claimed descent from Lord Rama (the hero of the epic Ramayana). The massive fort, Mehrangarh, came first and around it grew the city of Jodhpur, protected by a high stone wall with its seven gates and countless bastions.

Today, the city has grown to become the second largest city of Rajasthan yet still manages to maintain its









medieval character. As in the past, Jodhpur remains one of the leading trading centers of wood, cattle, camels, salt and agricultural crops. However, the past is never very far behind and Jodhpur boasts some fine reminders of this glorious past - palaces, forts, temples and other elegant monuments of architectural and historical value. After lunch we will embark on a tour of the fort. Learn about the caste system and the rich history of the region. Take your time at each room, go back to your favorite place or just sit in the peaceful courtyards. We conclude our tour with a stop at the viewing point for a picture of the Jaswant Thada, a royal cenotaph made of white marble.

Overnight in Jodhpur.

DAY 11 TO BERA (JAWAI REGION) LEOPARD CAPITAL OF INDIA

Today we drive to the area of Jawai Dam and visit the village of Bera, which is home to the Rabari shepherds, a nomadic tribe of cattle herders. This area is also home to a big, but very shy cat - the elusive leopard. The leopard roams in the wild here, which makes for an exciting safari. In the afternoon we will go for a village walk to meet the Rabari shepherds and learn about their history and traditions. If time allows, we will go for an evening safari.

Overnight in Bera (near Jawai Dam).

DAY 12 UDAIPUR

Today we travel to Udaipur and have the opportunity to visit the City Palace. Located on the bank of the peaceful Lake Pichola, the City Palace is the largest palace complex in Rajasthan, boasting an interesting blend of Medieval, European and Chinese Architecture. Made of granite and marble, the palace is a wonderful assortment of courtyards, pavilions, terraces, corridors, rooms and hanging gardens. At sunset take a boat ride around the lake to get a different perspective of Udaipur's beautiful setting.

Overnight in Udaipur.

DAY 13 POSHINA

Today we proceed to Poshina, a charming rural destination known for its heritage and tribal culture. Visit the ancient Khumbariya Jain Temple complex, consisting of five beautifully carved temples dating between the 11th and 13th centuries.

Upon arrival, we check in at the heritage Darbargadh Poshina, an ancestral fort converted into a charming heritage hotel.

Overnight in Poshina.

DAY 14 TO DASADA - LITTLE RANN OF KUTCH - SAFARI & ARTISAN VILLAGES

This morning, we continue our journey towards Dasada, a peaceful destination located near the Little Rann of Kutch, known for its unique wildlife and desert ecosystem.

Upon arrival, we embark on a safari in the Little Rann of Kutch, an extraordinary expanse of salt marsh and arid grasslands. Keep an eye out for the rare Indian Wild Ass, along with numerous bird species that make this area their home.

Later, we visit nearby artisan villages to experience the vibrant local culture firsthand. Watch skilled craftsmen at work, creating beautiful hand embroidery, pottery, and traditional village art forms that reflect generations of heritage.

Overnight in Dasada.



City Palace Udaipur



Flamingos in the Rann of Kutch

DAY 15 RANN OF KUTCH FESTIVAL

Today we continue to the spectacular White Rann of Kutch, an endless expanse of shimmering salt desert that creates one of India's most breathtaking landscapes.

Upon arrival, we check in at the luxurious Tent City, located just a short distance from the desert.

In the evening, we have the opportunity to experience the vibrant atmosphere of the famous Rann of Kutch festival, where colorful folk dances, traditional music, local handicrafts, and captivating cultural performances provide an authentic glimpse into the spirit of Kutch. Enjoy the magical desert ambiance beneath a starlit sky.

Overnight at Tent City, Rann of Kutch.

DAY 16 RANN OF KUTCH FESTIVAL EXPERIENCE

Today is dedicated to experiencing the many wonders of the vibrant Rann Utsev Festival.

We spend the day exploring the cultural activities, handicraft bazaars, local cuisine, folk performances, and the magnificent white desert landscape. You may also choose to relax and soak in the unique atmosphere of the desert surroundings while enjoying the facilities at Tent City.

The mesmerizing beauty of the White Rann, especially during sunrise and sunset, creates an unforgettable travel experience.

Overnight at Tent City, Rann of Kutch.

DAY 17 BHUJ

We travel to Bhuj, where we visit the historic Bhuj Palace complex, including the elegant Aina Mahal (Palace of Mirrors), renowned for its exquisite mirror work and royal artifacts, along with the adjacent Prag Mahal, admired for its striking blend of Italian Gothic architecture and grandeur.

Later, we proceed to nearby artisan villages to experience Gujarat's rich living traditions firsthand. Observe skilled local craftsmen engaged in intricate embroidery, weaving, and handcrafted textile production that reflect the region's cultural identity and artistic excellence.

Overnight in Bhuj.

DAY 18 GONDAL

Today we journey to Gondal, where we will visit the beautiful Navlakha Palace, dating back to the 18th century and known for its intricately carved façades, graceful courtyards, and royal interiors.

Later, we check in at the scenic Riverside Palace, a charming heritage property that offers an insight into the regal lifestyle of Gondal's erstwhile rulers.

Overnight in Gondal.

DAY 19 TO SASAN GIR

This morning we continue our journey to Sasan Gir, the only natural habitat of the rare Asiatic Lion. On arrival, we check in at our resort and later, enjoy dinner amidst the serene natural surroundings.

Overnight in Sasan Gir.

DAY 20 SASAN GIR NATIONAL PARK

We begin the day with an exciting early morning jeep safari in Gir National Park, where we may have the opportunity to spot the majestic Asiatic Lion, along with leopards, hyenas, deer, crocodiles, and a rich variety of birdlife in their natural habitat.

We return to the resort for breakfast and enjoy some leisure time amidst the peaceful forest surroundings.

In the afternoon, we embark on another safari to explore a different zone of the park, enhancing the chances of wildlife sightings while exploring the region's diverse landscapes and ecosystems.

The evening is free to relax and soak in the tranquil atmosphere of the wilderness.

Overnight in Sasan Gir.

DAY 21 DIU

This morning we enjoy a scenic drive to Diu, a peaceful coastal town celebrated for its Portuguese heritage, golden sandy beaches, and dramatic sea-facing fortifications.

On arrival, we enjoy a short exploration of the historic Portuguese Fort of Diu, offering beautiful coastal views and fascinating colonial architecture. Later, we check in to our hotel overlooking the fort and enjoy dinner, soaking in the serene coastal ambiance.

Overnight Diu.

DAY 22 BHAVNAGAR

Today we continue our journey to Bhavnagar, where we will visit the impressive Royal Cenotaphs, dedicated to the rulers who shaped the city's history. Continue to Ganga Deri, often referred to as the "Taj Mahal of Gujarat," an elegant white marble memorial pavilion beautifully set beside the lake and admired for its exquisite craftsmanship and regal charm. Commissioned in 1875 by Maharaja Takhatsinhji in memory of his late queen, it features intricate architectural work designed by British architect Sir John Griffith and sits floating atop the Gangajaliya Lake.

Overnight in Bhavnagar.

DAY 23 FLIGHT TO NAGPUR

Today we drive to Ahmedabad for our flight to Nagpur, located in the heart of central India. Often referred to as the "Orange City" for the region's abundant citrus production, Nagpur is an important commercial and cultural centre and serves as a gateway to some of central India's finest wildlife reserves.

Upon arrival, we transfer to our hotel and enjoy some time to relax after our journey.

Overnight in Nagpur.

DAY 24 TADOBA

Today we will drive to Tadoba National Park, one of the finest and largest national parks in Maharashtra state. This beautiful and wild paradise has abundant dry deciduous forests and lakes teeming with rich aquatic life.

Overnight in Tadoba National Park.

DAY 25 TADOBA - JEEP SAFARI'S IN SEARCH OF ROYAL BENGAL TIGERS

We will enjoy both a morning and evening jeep safari in search of India's national animal, which is also one of the biggest and most beautiful cats in the BIG CAT family - the Royal Bengal tiger. The hilly terrain provides perfect shelter for the animals, yet its excellent accessibility makes it an ideal area for a wildlife safari.

Overnight in Tadoba National Park.

DAY 26 MUMBAI - INDIAN GATE

Today we fly from Nagpur to Mumbai, the most populous city in India. Home to 21 million people, it serves as the entertainment capital and India's financial powerhouse. The city is diverse, vibrant and multi-cultural. Upon arrival, we visit the iconic Gateway of India stone arch, built by the British Raj in 1924, and later enjoy dinner in the action packed city.

Overnight in Mumbai.

Rann of Kutch Festival



Rare Asiatic Lion





DAY 27 MUMBAI SITES, CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI TERMINUS

We will explore the sights of Mumbai today, including Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, a bustling railway station that is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and a brilliant specimen of Victorian Gothic architecture. We visit the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya, formerly known as the Prince of Wales Museum. We will also visit the Dhobi Ghat, a laundry nook.

Overnight in Mumbai.

DAY 28 DEPART MUMBAI

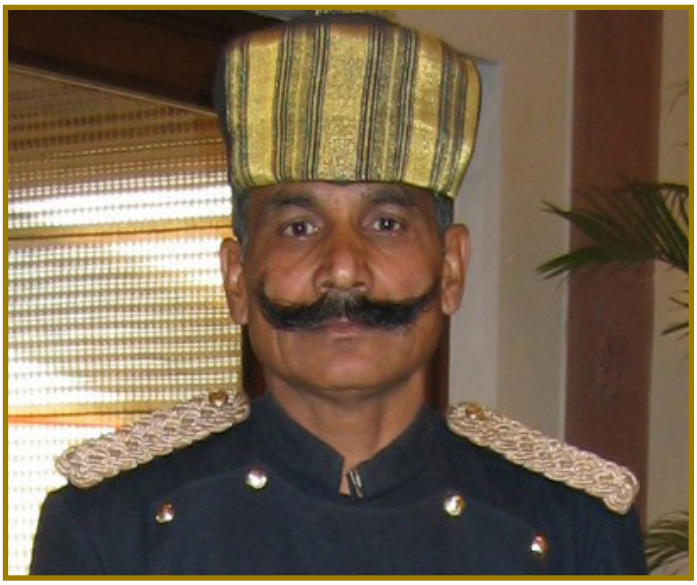
Today we say goodbye to this remarkable part of India. You are transferred to the airport for your international departure flight.

















Somnath Temple

















QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. HOW BIG ARE THE GROUPS?

Each group is limited to 16 participants. Small groups are an important ingredient in adventure travel. They allow for more interaction and more personalized service throughout the itinerary.

2. WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

All accommodations throughout; all meals, starting with dinner on day 1 and finishing with breakfast on departure day (i.e. the last day of the ElderTreks tour); bottled drinking water throughout the trip; all internal transportation; airport transfers on day 1 and departure day (i.e. the last day of the ElderTreks tour); all day trips and entrance fees as outlined in the itinerary; tips for hotels (porterage), bus driver, restaurants and spot guides; services of a trip leader.

3. WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

International flights, tips to ElderTreks tour leader, alcoholic drinks, visas and travel insurance.

4. ARE THESE "EDUCATIONAL" TOURS?

Yes, in the broadest sense of the word, "educational". We visit many temples and historical sites, and develop an overview of Indian history and culture. But this is only a portion of the educational experience. We believe that it is equally educational to meet local people on a non-commercial basis, visit their homes and even try to learn a few words in Hindi. Sometimes the most "educational" moments are spent sipping a cold drink in a street market.

5. HOW DO WE TRAVEL DURING THE TOUR?

All local transportation, including 4 domestic flights, is included in the land price of the trip. Most of the transportation is by bus, although we also travel by boat, jeep and on foot.

6. WHAT ARE OUR ACCOMMODATIONS LIKE?

We always stay in good accommodations — hotels all have private bath or shower. Accommodations have been chosen on the basis of location, atmosphere and local charm.

7. WHAT ABOUT THE WEATHER?

There are wide variations in climate in India with winter, spring, summer, monsoon and autumn experienced in all regions. Generally, December and January are cool, with maximum temperatures around 70°F - 75°F (21°C - 23°C), and minimum temperatures as low as 40°F (4°C). February and March are very pleasant, with temperatures starting to heat up in April, and peaking in late May at around 100°F (38°C). June to September bring the monsoon rains, followed by the October to December period that brings clear skies and cool weather.

8. WHEN IS PAYMENT DUE?

A non-refundable deposit of $500 USD (plus insurance if you require it) is due at time of booking and will reserve your place on the tour. Payment of the full land cost is due 120 days before departure. Cancellation charges are applicable and are outlined in the "Terms & Conditions" section of our brochure.

9. IS MEDICAL INSURANCE REQUIRED?

Insurance coverage is not included in the cost of your trip. Please note that medical insurance is not required for this adventure but is recommended. ElderTreks offers comprehensive travel insurance and we are happy to provide you with a quote if you call our office. If you are purchasing insurance elsewhere, please ensure you provide the details to ElderTreks as soon as possible.
Please note those travelers with pre-existing medical conditions must take out travel insurance at the time of deposit

10. WHAT SHOULD I TAKE ON THE TOUR?

There is a detailed "What to Take" list in our Trip Kit, which we will send to you after receiving your booking deposit for the trip.

11. WHAT MEALS ARE INCLUDED?

All meals during the itinerary are included, starting with dinner on day 1 and finishing with breakfast on departure day. We eat a variety of local foods prepared in a wide range of settings. In many cases, we simply order a number of dishes and share, allowing you to sample new foods and decide what you enjoy best.

12. CAN YOU ARRANGE MY FLIGHTS?

We would be happy to take care of your air arrangements. ElderTreks offers personalized flight itineraries — not group flights. Stop over en route, come in a few days early, or extend your stay. Call us for a customized itinerary.

13. WHAT IF I WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION?

If you have any further questions about the trip, please do not hesitate to contact our office or your travel agent for additional information. A Trip Kit containing further details on the destination will be sent to you once you have booked on the tour.

