

Deserts Palaces Ganges 13 days



An exciting two week tour that takes in Jaipur, the legendary Taj Mahal, the incredible carved temples of Khajuraho and the colourful city of Varanasi, right on the banks of the holy Ganges.

TOUR DETAILS:

- Starts in: Delhi / Ends in: Delhi
- Departs: Every second Saturday - September through to April
- No local payment required
- Breakfast: 12, Lunch: 0, Dinner: 2
- Hotel Rating: 3 - 4 star & heritage hotels
- Tour Guide: Yes

ONLINE RESOURCES:

- For a detailed GO GUIDE - [click here](#)
- To book this trip - [click here](#)
- To enquire about this trip - [click here](#)

TOUR MAP:



QUICK WEB LINKS

India Prices ::: Why Us for India? ::: India Reviews ::: Our India Blog ::: Golden Triangle Tours ::: Kashmir Tours ::: Kerala Tours ::: Top Spots in India ::: Best Time to Travel ::: Festivals & Events ::: Hotels in India ::: Tiger Spotting ::: India - Useful Info ::: FAQs on India ::: India Visas ::: India Gallery

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Day 1: Delhi

Saturday. Upon arrival into Delhi, you'll be met at the airport and transferred to the hotel. The remainder of the day is yours to relax or independently explore this bustling capital. Overnight - [Delhi](#)

Day 2: Old Delhi & New

This morning, our welcome meeting takes place. Afterwards we head out on a full day sightseeing tour of Delhi. Tonight, we enjoy a Namaste Dinner at an Indian restaurant. Overnight - [Delhi](#)

Days 3 - 4: Amber Fort on Elephant back

Delhi - Jaipur. This morning we drive to Jaipur, affectionately known as the Pink City as Maharaja Ram Singh had all of the Old City painted a welcoming pink in 1876 to herald a visit by the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII), it is also the bustling capital of the state of Rajasthan. The state of Rajasthan emerged after Partition from a mosaic of 22 feudal kingdoms, known in the British era as Rajputana, 'Land of Kings'. We enjoy a tour of the City Palace and Jantar Mantar - an old yet cleverly designed space observatory. Jaipur is sensational for shopping. Keep your eyes peeled for colourful papier mache puppets and traditional jootis - the Rajasthani shoe of choice. We'll also visit a cotton trading/tailor shop which specialises in tablecloths and other articles block-printed with traditional Rajasthani designs and a very capable tailoring service where bolts of European-style fabric can be crafted into shirts and other garments meeting your specification, at a fraction of prices charged for bespoke tailoring in the West. Best of all, anything you're measured up for will be delivered in record time to your hotel!

On day 4 early-risers can opt for a morning hot air balloon ride over Jaipur, and sail over hilltop forts, regal palaces, sleepy villages, and stone carved temples. After we travel beyond Jaipur to the stunning 16th century Amber Fort - a sprawling Rajput concoction which hugs the hill on which it was built and overlooks the hot plains below. We enjoy a stately elephant ride* to the fort proper and tour the fort's well-preserved interior and grounds. Back in Jaipur the rest of the day is at leisure. Overnight - [Jaipur](#)



Day 5: Abhaneri Stepwells & Rural India

Jaipur - Bharatpur via Abhaneri and Peharsar. Departing Jaipur we stop in the village of Abhaneri to see Chand Baori, which is the largest and deepest step well in the world. This incredible well has a staggering 3500 steps and is 13 stories deep. Next, we drive on to the rural village of Peharsar, where we walk the backstreets discovering local life, traditions and (if open) visit the village school where we operate our 'Change for Children' programme. Here, we visit Chandra Mahal, a charming haveli (mansion house) with small courtyard, lawned gardens and rustic appeal carefully being restored to the splendour of better farming years (if open, currently under renovation). After hotel check in at Bharatpur and time to freshen up we visit Keoladeo Ghana National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, where we'll enjoy a leisurely bicycle rickshaw ride through the park. Overnight - [Bharatpur](#)



Day 6: Agra Fort and the Taj Mahal

Bharatpur - Agra. En route to Agra, we visit Fatehpur Sikri, former imperial capital of the great Mughal emperor Akbar. Built between 1569 and 1585, it has been deserted for more than four centuries, by all accounts abandoned in 1600 due to a meagre supply of water. In Agra, we visit the impressive Agra Fort before touring the legendary Taj Mahal and witnessing a glorious golden sunset. Built by Emperor Shah Jahan in loving memory of his beloved wife Mumtaz, who tragically died in childbirth in 1631, the Taj Mahal in Agra is described as the most extravagant monument ever built for love and remains one of India's most enduring symbols. Overnight - [Agra](#)

Day 7: Orchha's temples & Palaces

Agra - Orchha. Today, we travel by express train to Jhansi and drive onward to Orchha. Situated on the banks of the River Betwa, Orchha is set amongst a wonderful complex of well-preserved 16th century temples and palaces. Overnight - [Orchha](#)

Day 8: Khajuraho - the Chandela dynasty

Orchha - Khajuraho. Travelling south-east, we arrive in Khajuraho - home of the resplendent Hindu temples which were built during

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the Chandela dynasty over a 100 year burst of creative genius from 950-1050 AD. Immortalised in stone, the carved temples display exceedingly artistic aspects of Indian life a millennium ago. Famed above all for their delicate sensuality and forthright eroticism, how and why they were built still remains a mystery. Indeed, the Chandelas appear to have forgotten about the temples soon after they were completed and it took 'rediscovery' by the British before these awesome masterpieces were fully appreciated in India. Though we won't be able to dispel the mystery, we've plenty of time to see the temples including the various acts from the famous Kama Sutra depicted on these monolithic temples for ourselves! The incredible skill of the artisans is evident throughout. Adding to the beauty, these amazing temples subtly change hue as the day progresses, passing from a warm pink at sunrise to white under the midday sun and back to pink at sunset. Overnight - [Khajuraho](#)



Day 9: Varanasi

Khajuraho - Varanasi. We offer a jeep safari in Panna NP this morning, please see our wildlife safari bolt on for details. This afternoon we bid farewell to Khajuraho and fly east to Varanasi. Perhaps the holiest city in India; Varanasi, also known as Benares or the city of Shiva, is also one of the oldest cities on earth. Sitting on the banks of the holy River Ganges, it has been a centre of learning and civilisation for more than 2000 years and is a place of Hindu pilgrimage. Overnight - [Varanasi](#)

Day 10: Boat ride on the Ganges

This morning, we enjoy a sunrise boat ride on the holy Ganges where we'll view the ancient religious tradition of ritual cleansing that takes place on the many riverbank ghats (riverside steps). Later, we embark on a tour of the city. At sunset consider re-visiting the ghats for the evening pilgrimage, remarkably different from the dawn ritual. Overnight - [Varanasi](#)

Day 11: Holi Varanasi

Varanasi - Delhi. Today, take the opportunity to further explore this vibrant city. Early evening we return to Delhi by comfortable overnight train (option to fly to Delhi available, see below).

Overnight - Train



Day 12: Explore Delhi your own way

Delhi. Breakfast upon arrival and hotel check in. Today is a chance to further explore the city at your leisure or a chance to pick up those last minute souvenirs. Overnight - [Delhi](#)

Day 13: Delhi

Thursday. Hotel check out and included onward departure transfer to airport. Happy travels!

WHAT YOU SEE AND WHAT YOU GET:

Below is a list of key highlights and what is included on this tour. Further, where appropriate, we have listed the items that are not included in the tour price.

Trip Highlights

- Old and New Delhi - the magnificent Red Fort, India's largest mosque Jama Masjid, and Gandhi's crematorium Raj Ghat.
- The spectacular Taj Mahal - India's most famous monument in all its glory at sunset
- Fatehpur Sikri - an ancient abandoned Mughal city
- Abhaneri - the iconic Chand Baori 9th century step well
- Bharatpur and Peharsar Village - rural India at its friendliest.
- Keoladeo Ghana National Park - UNESCO heritage site with up to 300 migratory birds
- The Pink City of Jaipur - the lofty Amber Fort, the very regal City Palace and the ancient observatory of Jantar Mantar.
- An exotic elephant ride into Jaipur's Amber Fort - just like the Raj would have done
- Orchha Temples - wonderful complex of brilliantly preserved 16th century temples.
- Khajuraho - the stunning Chandela erotic temples.
- Varanasi - the holiest city in India, Mother India site, local temples, mosque and the holy River Ganges

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What's Included

- 12 breakfasts, 2 dinners (including Namaste Dinner in Delhi)
- 11 nights - 3-4 star and heritage hotels
- 1 night overnight train (2nd class air-conditioned, semi-enclosed cabin)
- Elephant ride to Amber Fort - Jaipur (*Subject to Government regulations and availability)
- Buggy ride to Taj Mahal - Agra
- Bicycle rickshaw ride in Keoladeo Ghana National Park
- Sunrise boat cruise on the holy Ganges - Varanasi
- Economy class flight - Khajuraho to Varanasi
- Taj Mahal, Jaipur City Palace and Jantar Mantar entrance fees.
- All relevant transfers and transportation
- Airport arrival and departure transfers on day 1 and day 13
- Touring of Delhi, Jaipur, Chand Baori Step Well, Peharsar, Agra, Orchha, Khajuraho and Varanasi
- English speaking Indian tour leader for groups of 6 or more
- Specialist guides at local sights
- Selected entrance fees

What's Not Included

- International flights and visas
- Tip for your tour leader. We suggest \$13-\$20 USD per person for this tour. Tipping your leader is an entirely personal gesture.
- Entrance Fees: \$70-80 USD
- Tipping Kitty: \$20-25 USD

BOLT-ONS:

Make the most of your time away! Listed below are the optional activities that are available on this trip. Please note that you will need to book these prior to travel as we cannot always guarantee availability of these activities once you are on holiday.

Diwali - Festival of Lights Supplement - USD \$100

The Festival of Light is the happiest festival of the Hindu calendar. At night, countless oil lamps are lit to show Rama the way home from his period of exile. In all the festival lasts five days.

Balloon over Jaipur - USD \$299

Sail within a breath of lofty hilltop forts and fine regal palaces. Look down upon sleepy villages waking to the early morning sun. Drift past expansive waterside manors and intricately stone carved temples with the Pink City of Jaipur in the distance on a magical hot air balloon adventure.

Shimla Calling - 4 days - USD \$579

Ride the narrow gauge railway aboard the Himalayan Queen Toy Train to Shimla. Nestled between lofty peaks and breathtaking scenery, the charming getaway was once the summer capital of British India. The natural beauty of Shimla will enchant you, being famous for its colourful bazaar, temples at soaring heights, stunning sunsets and verdant woods, contrasted with the quintessential English pomp and style.

Bollywood Dancing - USD \$79

For some lighthearted fun, join in the energy of a Bollywood dance class in Delhi! Bollywood dance has transformed over the years from a traditional, classical style into a modern, pop culture which is taking the world by storm! We have teamed up with the Delhi Dance Academy to offer you a simple and entertaining introduction to this wonderful dance form! Whilst we cannot guarantee you'll leave the class ready to star in the next big Bollywood Blockbuster, you're sure to learn a few sharp moves to impress your friends on the dance floor!

Golden Amritsar - 3 days - USD \$499

Home to the world famous Golden Temple and the seat of the Sikh religion, Amritsar is one of the Punjab's principal cities. Built in 1803 and made of marble, copper and pure leaf gold, the temple is an amazing architectural feat. During your stay, enjoy a visit to Wagah - the only road border crossing between India and Pakistan where the fascinating sunset 'retreat' ceremony takes place with great pomp.

Panna Wildlife Safari - half day - USD \$149

Go where the wild things are! Available on our Deserts, Palaces, Ganges; Highway to Himalayas and Delhi to Darjeeling and also to anyone wanting to take a walk on the wildside is an excursion to Panna National Park. Panna National Park is home to some of the best wildlife species in India. The park is renown for its wild cats, leopards as well as deer, antelope, langur monkey and sambar.

PRICES AND DATES: from USD \$1,999

Prices shown are per person travelling. 'Twin/Double' prices per person apply when there are 2 people travelling, sharing a room. The 'Single supplement' applies for single travellers who require their own room and needs to be added to the 'Twin/Double' price. If you are happy to be paired up with another single traveller of the same sex on your tour, this can be arranged, (if another solo traveller of the same sex is already booked upon the tour), thus avoiding the single person supplement. All our scheduled tour departures are guaranteed subject to a minimum of 2 travellers. To date we have not cancelled a single trip. This tour is also available on a private basis - for details please see the Supplementary Prices at the bottom of this page. NOTE: If departing on Thu 13 March 2014 we will be attending The Festival of Jaipur and celebrating Holi in Bharatpur. Please see our tour Go

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Guide for more info.

2013

Date	Price/Person	Single Supp.
07 SEP - 19 SEP	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
21 SEP - 03 OCT	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
05 OCT - 17 OCT	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
19 OCT - 31 OCT	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
02 NOV - 14 NOV	USD \$2,349	USD \$699
16 NOV - 28 NOV	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
30 NOV - 12 DEC	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
14 DEC - 26 DEC	USD \$2,409	USD \$699
28 DEC - 09 JAN	USD \$2,409	USD \$699

2014

Date	Price/Person	Single Supp.
11 JAN - 23 JAN	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
25 JAN - 06 FEB	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
08 FEB - 20 FEB	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
22 FEB - 06 MAR	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
08 MAR - 20 MAR	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
13 MAR - 25 MAR	USD \$2,349	USD \$699
22 MAR - 03 APR	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
05 APR - 17 APR	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
19 APR - 01 MAY	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
06 SEP - 18 SEP	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
20 SEP - 02 OCT	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
04 OCT - 16 OCT	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
18 OCT - 30 OCT	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
01 NOV - 13 NOV	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
15 NOV - 27 NOV	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
29 NOV - 11 DEC	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
13 DEC - 25 DEC	USD \$2,249	USD \$699
27 DEC - 08 JAN	USD \$2,409	USD \$699

Supplementary Prices

	Price/Person	Single Supp.
Private Tour Supplement - Deserts, Palaces, Ganges	USD \$560	USD \$0
Pre-Tour accom (Delhi)	USD \$89	USD \$40
Post-Tour accom (Delhi)	USD \$89	USD \$40

POSTCARDS:

Here's what some of our past travellers have written in to us and said about their experiences on this trip.

We were both very impressed with the organisation of the tour. Our guide was very accommodating, friendly and very knowledgeable.

[Felicity & Kate, Feb 2013](#)

Satendra made the trip very special. He is a very knowledgeable person and I learned so much from him. He is an excellent guide.

[Jamie Foster, Jan 2013](#)

I am not normally keen on doing tours however this covered a huge area in a short amount of time and was very well organised. The guide and accommodation were fantastic and I'd definitely consider doing another tour in the future. Thank you

[Alison Pottinger, Apr 2012](#)

Thoroughly enjoyable holiday made excellent by the great bonding of everyone on our tour and because of our fantastic tour guide Davinder!

[Madelyn Cruickshank, Mar 2012](#)

Our tour guide Davinder was excellent, caring knowledgeable and one of the best guides I have ever had.

[Kenneth Norman, Mar 2012](#)

Tour leader was great and went beyond the call of duty. Excellent tour!

[Andre Rigoni, Feb 2011](#)

The tour was enjoyable and our tour leader was fantastic!

[Emina Demirovic, Jan 2011](#)

We had a great trip in Northern India, amazing sights, colours and people. Highly recommended tour.

[Ms Suzanne Rohleder, Jul 2010](#)