

Diwali, Festival of Lights

8 days | Starts/Ends: Delhi



Every year, firecrackers announce the celebration of India's favourite festival. Homes are decorated, gifts are given, sweets are shared and thousands of lamps are lit. Join us this year for Diwali – the Festival of Light on a tour of India's famed Golden Triangle.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- The Taj Mahal – Explore India's most famous site with a guided tour of the legendary Taj Mahal, an enduring symbol of love
- Diwali – Celebrate the colourful Festival of Lights with the locals as we visit Birla Temple and enjoy a delicious Indian dinner
- Delhi – Ride on a rickshaw around the Chandni Chowk Bazaar and tour highlights of the city including Jama Masjid and the Rajpath
- Jaipur – Visit the beautiful City Palace and the UNESCO-listed Jantar Mantar Space Observatory as we tour the Pink City
- Amber Fort – Enjoy a visit to this impressive 16th century fortress and explore each of its four levels

- Abhaneri – Admire the impressive Chand Baori step well, where 3,500 steps climb down to the waters edge
- Keoladeo Ghana National Park – Spot rare bird species in this wetland reserve as we enjoy a bicycle rickshaw ride in the park
- Agra – Discover striking Agra Fort and explore behind its fortified sandstone walls

What's Included

- 7 nights 3-4 star and heritage hotels
- Breakfast daily, 1 lunch and 3 dinners
- Diwali – Visit to City Palace and Ancient Astronomy Observatory Jaipur, Birla Temple, fireworks and a gala dinner
- Guided sightseeing – Delhi, Jaipur and Agra
- All relevant transfers and transportation in private air-conditioned vehicles
- Travel by jeep to beautiful Amber Fort in Jaipur
- Rickshaw ride through Keoladeo Ghana National Park
- Escorted by an English-speaking Indian tour guide (for groups of 6 or more)
- Airport arrival and departure transfer on days 1 and 8

- Services of English-speaking Indian specialist guides at some sites

What's Not Included

- Tipping Kitty: USD\$20-30pp, paid in local currency
- Entrance Fees: USD\$70-80pp, paid in local currency
- International flights and visa
- Tip for your tour guide. We recommend you allow USD\$4-7 per day, per traveller. Tipping your guide is an entirely personal gesture

ITINERARY

Day 1 : Delhi

Namaste! Welcome to India for the festival of Diwali! On arrival at the airport you'll be transferred to our hotel where the rest of the day is free to explore or relax at the hotel before meeting the group and guide at the hotel at 18:00 for a Welcome meeting.

Overnight – Delhi

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Day 2 : Delhi sightseeing



Today we enjoy a full day of sightseeing in India's capital city. In Old Delhi we enjoy an exhilarating rickshaw ride around Chandni Chowk bazaar and visit the UNESCO-listed Humayun's Tomb. We also explore the giant Jama Masjid mosque and Raj Ghat, the site of Gandhi's cremation. An eternal flame now burns at the memorial in his honour. In New Delhi we stroll down the ceremonial Rajpath and see the India Gate monument, a memorial to those Indian soldiers who lost their lives in the First World War. This evening we enjoy a Namaste dinner at the hotel. **Overnight - Delhi (B, D)**

Day 3 : Diwali, the Festival of Light!



Delhi - Jaipur. Today we celebrate Diwali! Leave Delhi this morning as we drive to the UNESCO-listed Pink City of Jaipur for an afternoon at leisure. This evening we visit the famous Birla Temple, located at the foot of the Moti Doongri fortress. The temple is dedicated to Lord Vishnu and the goddess Lakshmi but also houses many smaller shrines to Hindu gods and goddesses. During the Diwali celebrations the gardens surrounding the temple are beautifully lit up and decorated with garlands of flowers.

The temple also gets very busy as locals come to give their offerings to the deities. This is all part of the Diwali experience and you should soak it up and celebrate with the locals.

After our visit we enjoy a traditional Indian dinner at a local restaurant and watch as firecrackers light up the darkening sky. Spend the evening celebrating this wonderful Festival of Light with the locals.

Overnight - Jaipur (B, D)

Day 4 : Jaipur sightseeing



Enjoy an optional hot air balloon ride this morning with our Balloon Over Jaipur add-on. Sail with the wind over hill-top forts, temples and palaces before we return to land and enjoy a jeep ride to Amber Fort. This impressive 16th century fortress is laid out over four levels and sits beside the glistening Maota Lake. We return to Jaipur, stopping en route at a local cotton weaving house. Enjoy a visit to the beautiful City Palace and the UNESCO-listed Jantar Mantar space observatory, which is home to 19 separate astrological instruments.

Overnight - Jaipur

Day 5 : Chand Baori & Keoladeo Ghana National Park



Jaipur - Abhaneri - Bharatpur. Say goodbye to the Pink City this morning as we travel to Abhaneri, home to the famous Chand Baori step well. This incredible well is 13 stories deep and features 3,500 steps, which climb down to the waters edge. It also starred in the famous film 'Batman: The Dark Knight Rises'.

After our visit we continue to a local school (if open) to meet the teachers and pupils. The school is part of our Change for Children programme and you may like to bring some educational items on your tour to donate to the school (see trip notes). These will be greatly appreciated. We continue to our hotel in Bharatpur and then visit the Keoladeo Ghana National Park. Enjoy a bicycle rickshaw ride around this important wetland reserve, home to numerous bird species. **Overnight - Bharatpur (B, D)**

Day 6 : The Taj Mahal

Bharatpur - Agra. Today we travel to Agra, stopping en route at the Mughal city of Fatehpur Sikri. The city was abandoned more than 400 years ago due to a lack of water but remains very well preserved. Visit the impressive Agra Fort and enjoy a guided tour of India's most famous site - the legendary Taj Mahal. This iconic white mausoleum was built in the 17th century by 20,000 workers under the instruction of Emperor Shah Jahan. It stands as a loving memorial to his wife, who tragically died in childbirth. The Taj

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Mahal is perhaps the most extravagant monument to love ever built. **Overnight - Agra (B)**

Day 7 : Return to Delhi



Agra - Delhi. This morning we return to Delhi for a day at leisure. Perhaps visit striking Red Fort or browse the local bazaars for souvenirs. **Overnight - Delhi (B)**

Day 8 : Delhi



Our tour comes to an end today with an included departure transfer to the airport(B)

ACCOMMODATION

Highlighted below are some of the accommodation/ hotels which we frequently use on this tour. We reserve the right to substitute these stays to ones of a similar standard.

Please refer to your Tour Voucher for your confirmed arrival hotel or start point and further arrival information.

Jaypee Siddharth Hotel

The luxurious Jaypee Siddharth is a stunning property located just five kilometres from the New Delhi Railway Station. Guestrooms are exquisitely decorated with a blend of cream and brown tones and benefit from air

conditioning and complimentary WiFi. If you have free time, guests can indulge in one of the rejuvenating treatments available at the spa, take a dip in the outdoor pool or work up an appetite in the gym. A range of cuisines are served in the various restaurants found within the hotel complex.



Vivanta by Taj Dwarka

Vivanta by Taj Dwarka is a modern, luxury hotel located in Dwarka, on the outskirts of New Delhi, just a 15-minute drive from the airport. Spread over 7 acres, this striking hotel has a unique angular design and offers 250 luxurious rooms and suites. All tastes are catered for at the hotel's multi-cuisine restaurant, while the Indus Express restaurant serves mouth-watering Punjabi cuisine. Head to the popular Tipple bar for a delicious array of heady cocktails or relax by the poolside with a refreshing smoothie from the Celsius Pool Bar. The nearby Sector 21 Metro station provides direct access to the heart of the city and after a day of sightseeing you can cool off with a refreshing dip in the outdoor pool or relax in the sauna and massage parlour.



Hotel Jivitesh

The Jivitesh Hotel is centrally located in the heart of Karol Bagh, a popular neighbourhood of Delhi renowned for its excellent shops and vibrant street markets. The Jivitesh offers comfortable and spacious guest rooms, with modern amenities such as

free WiFi, and you can be assured of a warm welcome and excellent customer service from the hotel staff. Enjoy authentic Indian vegetarian cuisine at the hotel's restaurant and take a refreshing dip in the outdoor swimming pool after a day of sightseeing in the capital. Please note: The swimming pool at the Jivitesh hotel is currently under renovation and is expected to be finished by September 2020.



Mandawa Haveli

Made of pink and red sandstone, the beautiful heritage-style Mandawa Haveli is a fine example of typical Rajasthani architecture. All rooms are well appointed with intricately carved wooden beds and king-size royal portraits, with modern amenities such as free WiFi and ensuite bathrooms. Spend an evening dining on continental, Indian or Rajasthani cuisine on the outdoor terrace or request a private, candlelit dinner on the rooftop under a star-studded sky. Well located in the heart of Jaipur city on Sansar Chandra Road, this hotel is just a few minute's drive from the Palace of the Winds.



Udai Vilas Palace

Set amongst 2 acres of landscaped gardens, the Udai Vilas Palace is a traditional hotel located right in the heart of Bharatpur city. Guest rooms are spacious and well equipped with comfortable beds and large windows. The hotel is famous for its barbecue nights and Rajasthani folklore

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evenings, where you will be enthralled by traditional music and dance performances. Keoladeo National Park, one of the most well-known bird sanctuaries in India, is also just a five-minute drive away.



Seven Hills Tower

The modern and stylish Seven Hills Tower hotel boasts a range of facilities and services designed to ensure the quality of each traveller's stay. The spacious guestrooms are elegantly decorated with neutral colours and fabrics covered with traditional patterns and all have excellent ensuite facilities. Guests can enjoy a dip in the rooftop pool or laze on the sun loungers before heading to the equally lofty restaurant for some mouth-watering Mughlai cuisine. The al fresco dining area offers beautiful views of the Taj Mahal, perfect for enjoying a sunset drink.



travellers or anyone wanting the privacy of a single room.

PRICES / DATES 2022

Date	Twin Share	Single
22 Oct	EUR 714	EUR 1,122

PRICES / DATES INFO

Departure dates marked with a 'G' are operating. All departure dates from 1 Apr 2023 are guaranteed to operate when there are 2 persons booked on the tour. Prior to this date a departure is guaranteed with 4 persons. 'Twin Share' prices are per person when there are 2 people sharing a room. 'Single Room' prices are applicable to solo

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