



# Incredible Indian Tours

## Essence of India

### 23 Days Delhi to Mumbai

#### 8 - 30 October 2019



**Maximum Group Size** 10

**Accommodation** 22 nights hotels

**Transport** 3 Domestic flights, Private Minibus, Boat, Taxi, Cycle Rickshaw, Auto Rickshaw

**Meals** 22 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 4 dinners

**Entrance Fees** Included for all sites visited as part of the itinerary

**Starts in** Delhi on Tuesday 8th October 2019

**Finishes in** Mumbai on Wednesday 30th October 2019

**Cost** USD4290 per person twin share (USD5140 with *optional single supplement*)

This is an exciting and classic trip, from the banks of the holy Ganges to the magnificence of the Mughal cities. We experience the land of the Kings - Rajasthan, and Mumbai, the sprawling, commercial capital of India. We will show you the well known and introduce you to some wonderful secrets. The massive forts of Rajasthan, the opulence and splendour of Maharajah's palaces, markets and bazaars, holy cities, a town seemingly lost in time, a camel safari and a search for the elusive Bollywood star all make for a trip full of highlights and contrasts.

## ITINERARY

### Day 1 Delhi

Arrival Day. After a group meeting at midday to discuss the trip, we spend the afternoon visiting New Delhi Rajpath and the stunning UNESCO World Heritage Humayans Tomb before visiting the stunning Bangla Sahib Gurudwara.

### Day 2 Delhi

This morning we travel to Old Delhi visiting the Jama Masjid, (the largest Mosque in India), the old Delhi spice market and Chandni Chowk, the busiest marketplace in Asia.

There are many other options here in Delhi – including the Craft Museum, Red Fort, Purana Qila and the Lotus Temple.

### Days 3-4 Varanasi

A morning flight takes us to Varanasi.

We take a walk along the ghats on the riverbank and explore the old city, enjoy an evening ceremonial "aarti" on the riverbanks and take a dawn boat ride on the Ganges. We visit Sarnath, the site of Buddha's first sermon and still have plenty of free time to explore the ghats and alleyways of ancient Varanasi.

### Days 5-6 Agra

We have an early afternoon flight to Agra where we explore the sights including the 'Baby Taj'.

We have a dawn visit to the wonder of the world - the Taj Mahal and also visit the Red Fort, Akbars Mausoleum and have time for some shopping.

### Days 7-9 Jaipur

Today we drive to Jaipur, the 'Pink City' and capital of Rajasthan. Amber Fort is a splendid example of Rajput/Mughal architecture and was the old capital of Rajasthan prior to 1727. We wander the markets and colourful bazaars of Jaipur and have the chance to see the splendid City Palace Museum and the wondrous Jantar Mantar. There is free time to explore more of Jaipur's many sights, and markets. We also experience a Bollywood extravaganza at the Raj Mandir cinema.

### Day 10 Khimsar

We drive west into the Thar desert today, stopping near Nagaur for the night at the grand heritage hotel of Khimsar Fort. Spread over 11 acres,

the castle was constructed in the 16th century and is now one of India's finest heritage hotels.

### Days 11-12 Jaisalmer

Like something out of 1001 Arabian nights, Jaisalmer is both exotic and mysterious with a unique fort, which unlike all others in India is still lived in, and accommodates a large portion of the town's population. We wander the ancient streets of the fort and the town, visiting the intricately carved sandstone havelis (merchant's mansions) and temples. Jaisalmer is famed for its handicrafts and there are many wonderful shops in the bazaar.

On the afternoon of day 12 we head out to the desert for a short camel safari to the dunes of the Thar Desert to watch the setting sun, and enjoy dinner in the desert.

### Days 13-14 Jodhpur

Travelling on to Jodhpur we explore the palaces of the magnificent Meherangarh Fort and the colourful markets in the city below. Famous throughout the country for its special Makhani (butter) lassi's, Jodhpur is also where the pants come from. We also take a jeep tour around some traditional Rajasthani villages and visit local handicraft makers.

### Days 15-16 Pushkar

The mellow and friendly Pushkar is a firm favourite with travellers and modern-day hippies. Picturesquely situated around a holy lake lined with whitewashed temples and ghats, Pushkar comes alive for a week every November with the annual Camel Fair when tens of thousands of people and camels descend on the small town.

### Days 17-18 Bijaipur

We head to the south-eastern corner of Rajasthan to Castle Bijaipur where we get to spend a couple of nights living like Maharajahs (and Maharanis). The Castle is still run by the local rulers, who take us out on a village safari to experience tribal village life Rajasthani style.

### Days 19-21 Udaipur

A short journey brings us to Udaipur. Often called the romantic city, Udaipur lives up to its name with its white washed havelis and palaces lining the banks of the charming lake Pichola. We visit the City Palace complex (the largest palace complex in India) and take in a classic Rajasthani Dance show. We wander the local markets and learn how to make a sensational Indian curry. Why not try your hand at a spot of miniature painting or discover the lake on an afternoon cruise. Udaipur is a friendly and charming city just made for exploring.

On the evening of day 21 we fly to Mumbai.

### Day 22 Mumbai

We have a full day in Mumbai, the exciting and frantic commercial capital of India, where we visit some of the sights including the Gateway of India, Dhobi (laundry) washers and Chowpatty beach.

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