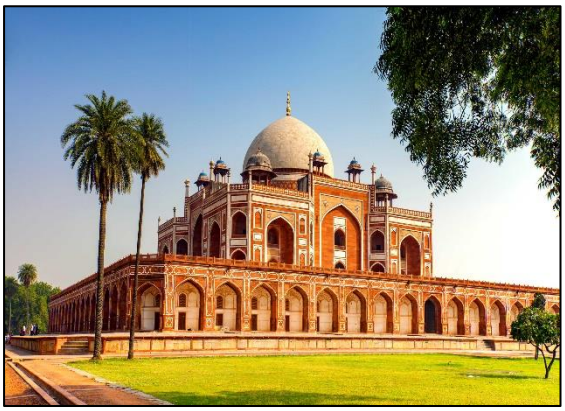
DAY1 – DELHI - Arrive Delhi & transfer to hotel

Welcome to Delhi, the intriguing cultural and historical centre of India's past and future, built over 450 years by a succession of empires - first the Hindu and Muslim dynasties, followed by the powerful Mughal dynasty who ruled until the British took over. Delhi offers its visitors glimpses of the stupendous power and wealth of its past.

DAY2 – DELHI- Full day Delhi sightseeings

Your morning exploration of Old Delhi begins with a visit to the Red Fort, a symbol of Shah Jehan's Mughal power and elegance, also known as the greatest wonder of all the cities of Delhi.Your tour continues with a visit to India's largest mosque Jama Masjid with its onion shaped dome and characteristically Mughal architecture. This mosque was commissioned by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jehan and was completed in 1656.

This afternoon you will notice the sharp comparison the architecture of ***New Delhi or 'Lutyen's Delhi'*** commissioned in 1911 and inaugurated as recently as 1931 is a combination of British and Indian styles and this whole area of Delhi is magnificently planned. At one end of the avenue known as the Rajpath (literally the 'King's Way') is the War Memorial Arch, better known as ***India Gate***, a memorial to the 90,000 Indians who gave their lives in World War I. At the other end stands the ***Rashtrapati Bhavan***, one of the largest and most grandiose of the Raj constructions, built originally for the British Viceroy and now the official residence of the President of India

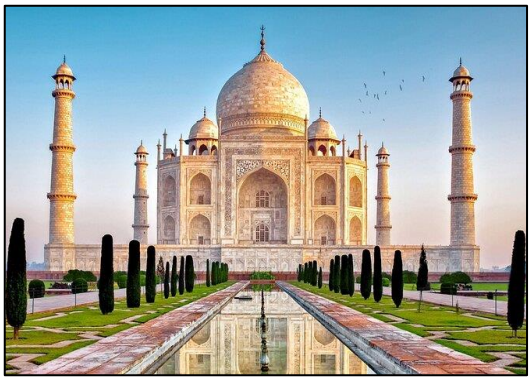


Visit ***Humayun's Tomb***, Emperor Humayun, the father of Emperor Akbar, lies buried in this magnificent monument built in red

sandstone. Haji Begum, Humayun's first wife and mother of Emperor Akbar designed and supervised the entire construction.

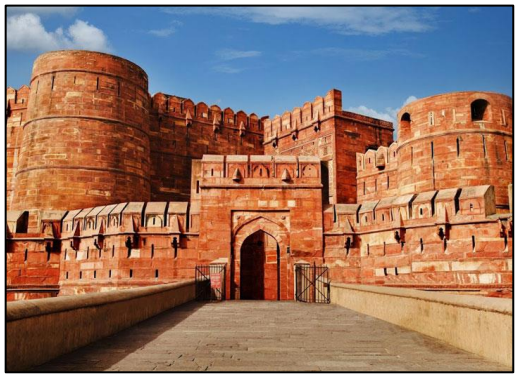
Marvel at the ***Qutab Minar***, India's tallest stone tower. At a height of 234 feet, the 'Tower of Victory' is considered by some to be the world's most perfect specimen of tower architecture. A mathematical marvel, this building has remained standing for nine centuries.

DAY3- DELHI /AGRA Transfer to Agra + Taj Mahal + Agra Fort



Today you will travel by air-conditioned train to the Mughal city of Agra. After arriving, meet your local guide who will show you around two Agra icons. Firstly, well make our way to one of the seven wonders of the modern world, the ***Taj Mahal***. The marble-domed building is perhaps one of the world's greatest symbols of eternal love, having been created by Shah Jahan as a funerary monument to his beloved wife, Mumtaz. It took over 22 years to build (1630-52) and an army of builders, artisans, and craftsmen to create the architectural masterpiece of marble and sandstone, which is said to change its colour depending on the time of day. We will aim to visit at sunset, when the surface of the Taj takes on a soft golden hue.

Post lunch, we'll visit ***Agra Fort***. Built by Akbar the Great, entirely from red sandstone, it blends Persian, Islamic and Hindu architecture. The story goes that after losing his grip on power and being imprisoned by his son, Emperor Shah Jahan was confined here to a high tower, where he spent his dying days gazing longingly downriver at his beloved Taj Mahal.



DAY4-AGRA/JAIPUR Transfer to Jaipur + Enroute visit Fatehpur Sikri

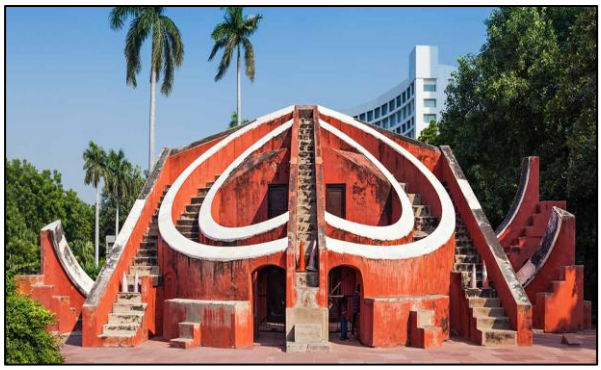
Today, after breakfast get ready to be transferred to Jaipur .On the way, we'll stop and visit the deserted city of ***Fatephur Sikri.*** Founded in 1569 and abandoned just 16 years later, it's a perfectly intact example of Akbar's imperial court. Among the many noteworthy buildings is the Panch Mahal, most likely built as a pleasure pavilion for the ladies of the harem. In the centre of the courtyard is the Pachisi Board where the emperor played a game of chess with slaves as pieces. Perhaps the finest structure of all is the lotus-shaped central pillar of the Diwan-i-Khas (Hall of Private Audience), an extraordinary capital supporting a vaulted roof.

Dinner and overnight at Agra

DAY 5 – JAIPUR Full day Jaipur sightseeings

The morning you will drive along the streets of Jaipur to the ***Amber Fort,*** set atop a rugged hilltop and overlooking Lake Moata. The fort has been constructed in white and red sandstone. The Fort is unique in that it's outside, an imposing and rugged defensive structure, is markedly different from its inside, an ornate, lavish interior influenced by both Hindu and Muslim styles of ornamentation.

This afternoon you will explore the city stopping first to view and photograph the ***Palace of Winds***. Completed in 1799, the Palace was originally built to allow the sequestered ladies of the court to view the bustling life of the city. It is popularly known as Hawa Mahal, because of the perforated screen facade which catches the welcome breeze or Hawa.



Continue on including a visit to the ***City Palace*** complex that continues to evoke the splendour of a bygone era. In an unending series of delights, from its grand aged entrance to the play of ornamental fountains, the City Palace is a dazzling showplace of Hindu and Mughal architecture.

Next to the city palace is ***Jantar Mantar***, literally translated as Calculation Instrument. This Observatory was built between 1728 and 1734 by Maharaja Jai Singh, Jantar Mantar was built on a grand scale and was way beyond its time. This was modeled after the one that was built in Delhi, the then Mughal capital. He had constructed a total of five of which the one in Jaipur is the largest.

After your tour board a cycle rickshaw to ***explore the local markets***. Jaipur is a shopper's paradise, renowned for gems and jewelry: precious

and semi-precious stones set in gold, 'meenakari' (enamel work), antique and chunky silver jewelry; and Colombian emeralds which are actually brought to Jaipur for cutting and polishing and are available at reasonable prices. Other finds include carpets, 'Pechwai' and miniature paintings on silk and paper, a unique type of blue pottery and even glass bangles. Fabric-wise, there are brocades, tie-and-dye, block printed, and the famous 'mirror work' embroidery, also used in table linen, cushion covers and readymade garments.

Dinner and overnight stay at Jaipur.

DAY6 –JAIPUR/MANDAWA ***Transfer to Mandwa and sightseeings***

Breakfast. Morning travel by road to Mandawa in the Shekhawati region, a semi arid dreamscape of dazzling fields and open-air art galleries. The primary attraction is its remarkable art collection -- unusual for the unique painting styles and for the fact that the exhibition space consists of the exterior and interior walls of literally hundreds of havelis, temples, cenotaphs, wells, and forts in the region. Transfer to Hotel. Afternoon visit the ***Shekawati town's of Mandawa, Nawalgarh and Mukundgarh.*** A local guide will lead you on a haveli tour where you'll notice that some are faithfully restored while others are crumbling. The havelis of this particular part of India are recognised around the country for their lavishly painted walls and art. Overnight at the Hotel.

DAY7 – MANDAWA/BIKANER- Transfer to Bikaner & sightseeings

Travel into the Thar Desert to the fortified town of Bikaner, which was an important staging post along some of history's great caravan routes, and thus houses a multitude of bazaars along with an impressive fort and palace.

We'll visit the massive 16th century ***Junagarh Fort*** with a local guide to learn about its impressive history. Later this afternoon, visit the museum at the ***National Camel Research Centre***, established to understand and protect these hardworking desert animals. Don't miss the camel milk parlour where you can try out ice creams and beverages. This evening, we'll venture out

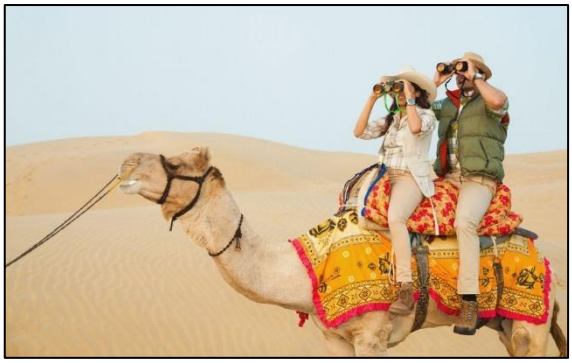
for an auto rickshaw ride through the town and its market to enjoy some tea, samosas and Indian treats.

(If time permits , also visit ***Parchina museum*** and short drive to Deshnook to see the temple dedicated to ***Karni Mata***, also popularly known as the 'Rat Temple')

Overnight at the Hotel

DAY9 –BIKANER/JAISALMER- Transfer to Jaisalmer

Breakfast. Morning travel by road to Jaisalmer visiting en route the village of Kheechan, home to the famous bird "Demoiselle Cranes". Continue on your drive to Jaisalmer, founded by Rao Jaisal in 1156 making it the oldest "living" fortified city in Rajasthan. Overnight at the Hotel.



This afternoon is yours to spend as you'd like. You may wish to simply wander the labyrinthine paths and soak up the atmosphere, or visit the Jaisalmer Folklore Museum on the banks of Garsisar Lake in the Mehar Bagh Garden. As night falls you will join a local family in their home for a delicious thali-style dinner. Tuck into pakoras, vegetable curries, chapatis and a very sweet treat to round out the meal.

DAY10 –JAISALMER-Jaisalmer sightseeings

Breakfast. Morning tour of the ***Jaisalmer Fort***, said to be the largest in the world and its temples.

Also visit the Salim Singh Haveli, Nathmalji-Ki-Haveli and Patwon-Ki-Haveli, mansions of wealthy merchants. Visit the ***Gadsisar Lake,*** built in the 14th century, which was once the main source of drinking water for the entire town of Jaisalmer. Afternoon visit ***Bada Bagh*** to see the royal cenotaphs and take a camel ride on the sand dunes near Khuri, visiting a few villages and enjoy a sunset on the dunes. Overnight at the Hotel.

DAY8 – THAR DESERT – Transfer to Thar desert camp

Today forge deeper into the Thar Desert on a desert camp safari. Drive through the dunes to a stunning campsite with spectacular views. Enjoy a traditional Rajasthani dinner as the sun sets and spend the evening around a campfire under a sea of stars before falling asleep to the desert ambiance in your comfortable permanent tent.

DAY 11 – DESERT CAMP/JODHPUR-Jodhpur sightseeings

Breakfast. Morning travel by road to Jodhpur. Located almost on the edge of the Thar Desert, Jodhpur is also known as the 'Blue City' since most houses in the old part of the city are painted blue. Transfer to the Hotel. Afternoon tour of ***Meherangarh Fort***, crowning a perpendicular cliff, it was founded by Rao Jodha in 1459 AD, around which the city grew. Also visit, Jaswant Thada, the imposing white marble memorial, built in the memory of Maharaja Jaswant Singh ll in 1899. Explore the downtown clock tower to see the vegetable, fruit and spice markets. Overnight at the Hotel.

DAY 12 – JODHPUR/UDAIPUR- Transfer to Udaipur enroute Ranakpur

From Jodhpur, you will travel through the beautiful hamlet of Ranakpur. ***Ranakpu***r is the home of a host of beautifully carved white marble Jain temples. These staggering complex temples attract Jain pilgrims from all over India, making Ranakpur one of the most important pilgrim destinations for Jains in India. We enjoy a Jain lunch at a temple today. Jain vegetarian cuisine is noteworthy for not

including anything grown underground, to prevent harming small insects and microorganisms and to prevent killing the entire plant, unlike foods harvested from plants that grow above ground.
From here you will continue on your journey to gorgeous Udaipur.
Continue to Udaipur, with its picturesque setting and long royal heritage, Udaipur offers much to delight the eye. Also known as both the City of Sunrise and the City of Lakes, it is awash in romance. Providing a sharp contrast to its desert neighbours, it presents a serene picture of shimmering blue lakes, green hills and impressive white marble palaces. It provides a kaleidoscope of colour against stark surroundings.

DAY13 – UDAIPUR- Udaipur Sightseeings

Your morning exploration of the city begins with a visit to the ***City Palace***, the largest palace complex in Rajasthan. It is a spectacular complex containing decorated mirror works and galleries adorned with frescoes.

Also, visit ***Fateh Prakash Palace*** to view the Durbar Hall's royal portrait gallery, with its massive chandeliers and Venetian mirrors, and see the Crystal Gallery, which has a huge collection of rare cut-crystal furniture and ornaments

Continue to the ***Jagdish Temple***, one of the famous temples of Udaipur. Located in the City Palace complex of Udaipur, this temple is made in the Indo-Aryan style of architecture. In 1651, Jagdish temple was built by Maharana Jagat Singh, who ruled Udaipur during 1628-53. The temple is dedicated to Lord Vishnu (Laxmi Narayan), the preserver of the Universe. It is celebrated for being the largest temple in the city of Udaipur.

Continue touring and visit ***Sahelion ki Bari Gardens*** built by Maharana Sangram Singh in the mid-18th Century. Literally translated as 'The Garden of the Maidens', it evokes vivid pictures of the luxurious lifestyle of the ladies of the court. The garden is said to have been made for the 48 girls that the Maharana received in his dowry.

Your tour ends with a boat ride on the placid waters of ***Lake Pichola.*** The beautiful Lake Pichola was enlarged by Maharana Udai Singh after he founded the city. The city palace extends a considerable distance along the east bank of the lake. From the boat you will be able to view the city of Udaipur as it rises majestically above the lake in the middle of the Rajasthan desert. You will be able to get a view of the Dhobi (laundry) ghats.

Jagmandir Palace. Overnight at the Hotel.

DAY 14 – UDAIPUR/DELHI- Udaipur to Delhi flight

After a free morning, take a flight back to Delhi, arriving late in the afternoon. After checking into your hotel, you may like to join your fellow travellers for an optional farwell dinner or enjoy an evening of free time

DAY15 – Return

Your trip comes to an end after breakfast this morning. There are no other activities planned for the day and you can depart the hotel at any point this morning. For those who wish to stay on in Delhi to further explore the city, we are happy to help in booking accommodation (subject to availability).