



*Best of India
Step in Style
06 Mar 2023- 22 Mar 2023
Cad \$ 4447 pp*

*Delhi – Amritsar – Udaipur – Delhi - Agra – Lucknow – Hyderabad –
Kochi – Alleppey – Kochi - Mumbai*

A vast land of different religions and cultures, India has something for everyone and is one of the most unique places to visit. It will offer you a glimpse from the past like the wonders of the Taj Mahal and into the present like the Bollywood city of Mumbai where you may spot one of the stars like Big B

HIGHLIGHTS

Visit to the Taj Mahal - Monument of Love

Elephanta Caves by ferry and Rickshaw ride

Sound and Light Show at the Golconda Fort

Film City Tour, Hyderabad

Backwater Cruise and Overnight on Houseboat

Golden Temple Palki Ceremony and visit to Wagah Border

Qutub Minar and Jama Masjid

Day 01 (Mon) 06th March 2023: ARRIVE DELHI

- Arrive Delhi.
- Meeting on arrival and transfer to hotel (room will be reserved from noon)
- Overnight stay in Delhi

Welcome to India! Arrive Delhi T3 terminal by International Flight.

After immigration, you will be met by our Customer service executive for assisted transfer to the hotel and on arrival, check in for your stay (check in time 1400 hour).

Delhi stands as the capital of modern India. Here you can see the mingling of the old and new India, the ancient and the modern. Delhi is made up of seven ancient cities, spanning the period from the 11th to 20th centuries. Delhi has seen the rise and fall of many emperors who have left behind a plethora of monuments that commemorate the grandeur and glory of bygone ages. Very few cities in the world can express such a profusion of architectural styles.

Overnight stay in Delhi
Meal Plan: No meal

Day 02 (Tue) 07th March 2023 DELHI

- **Breakfast at the hotel**
- **Full Day city tour of Delhi**
- **Overnight stay in Delhi**

Post breakfast proceed for city tour. Arrive Old Delhi and ride in a cycle rickshaw (pedi-cabs) through the narrow lanes. The Old City walls around Chandi Chowk, the ancient market that continues to thrive. The energy in the streets is palpable. The colors and aromas of the city are enticing. The scent of cardamom and allspice is exotic and rejuvenating. Local men sit and sip their tea at chai stands. The spices emanate from the beverage and linger in the air. A walk through the aromatic spice market, Khari Baoli – Asia’s largest wholesale spice market, would add an unforgettable memory of Old Delhi.

Next visit Jama Masjid - the largest mosque in India built by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in the 17th century and surrounded by multiple entrances that all lead to the apex of the main worshiping deck.

From here, drive through the city viewing the Diplomatic Enclave, Government buildings, Central Secretariat, President’s House and Parliament.

Visit Humayun’s tomb built by the widow of the second Mughal Emperor, Humayun. It is an outstanding monument in the Indo-Persian style, a precursor of the Taj Mahal.

Also visit Qutub Minar – At 72.5 meters, the Qutab Minar is the tallest brick minaret in the world. Surrounding the building are many fine examples of Indian artwork dating back to 1193.

Overnight stay in Delhi
Meal Plan: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 03 (Wed) 08th March 2023: DELHI – AMRITSAR (1155/1325hrs)

- **Transfer to airport for a flight to Amritsar via Delhi**
- **Meeting on arrival & transfer to hotel**

- **Rest of the day free at leisure**
- **Evening: Visit the Golden temple to see the “Palki ceremony”**

After breakfast, transfer to airport to catch flight to Amritsar (connecting flight) via Delhi.
(Please note, luggage allowance on this flight is 15 kg checked in baggage and 7 kg hand luggage)

On arrival in Amritsar, be met and transfer to hotel.

Rest of the day free at leisure.

Late evening, visit Golden Temple to witness “Palki Sahib” – temple closing ceremony. During this time, the Granth Sahib (the holy book) is carried on a silver palanquin from the main shrine to the sanctum where it rests for a few hours until the opening ceremony the following morning. The floors of the temple are then washed with milk and water before the doors are closed.

Overnight stay in Amritsar
 Meal Plan: Breakfast & Dinner

DAY 04 (Thu) 09th March 2023: IN AMRITSAR

- **Breakfast at the hotel**
- **Morning: Visit the Golden temple, Jalianwala Bagh**
- **Afternoon: Excursion to Wagah border**

Morning, walk through some narrow streets to the temple - on the way keep an eye out above you as there are some very old buildings with very intricate wood carvings. The original Sikh temple in Amritsar was built here at the end of the 16th century. The temple was rebuilt in 1764 by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and 100kg of gold was added in 1830 giving rise to its name 'The Golden Temple'. Your guide will show you around the main area of the temple and explain the history and layout including the vast dining halls where all visitors, regardless of their religion, are invited to eat together.

Perhaps the most incredible part are the kitchens run by volunteers, you will see vast cauldrons full of dhal, groups of ladies rolling out chapattis, meanwhile the noise in the background is the endless washing of plates, sweets are also available and a non-stop supply of Chai all free for anyone who wants. You will get an opportunity to volunteer in the community kitchen.

Next 15 minute walk will take you to Jalianwala bagh, the site of a massacre in 1919 when the British opened fire on a peaceful gathering of protestors. Mahatma Gandhi subsequently called for a nationwide strike and formed the Non-Cooperation Movement, which became a key event in India’s struggle for independence. The area is now a park with a memorial to the men, women, and children who died.

Also visit Ram Bag, a beautiful garden consisting of the amazing summer palace of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. There is a beautiful museum exhibiting unique oil paintings, miniatures, coins, weapons, and objects relating to the Sikh period.

After lunch at local restaurant, drive to Wagah border to attend one of the world's oddest spectator activity involving a pompous display of military bravado at the Flag Ceremony. The "Retreat," a high-kicking, tow-stepping, quick-marching ceremony wherein the Indian and Pakistani flags are lowered on either side of the only border that remains open between the two hostile countries provides a rare look at relations between the two countries.

Overnight stay in Amritsar
Meal Plan: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 05 (Fri) 10th March 2023: AMRITSAR-UDAIPUR (1245/1650hrs)

- **Transfer to airport for a flight to Udaipur via Delhi**
- **Meeting on arrival & transfer to hotel**
- **Evening is at leisure**

Post breakfast, transfer to Delhi airport to board the flight to Udaipur (*Please note, luggage allowance on this flight is 15 kg checked in baggage and 7 kg hand luggage*).

Upon arrival in Udaipur, transfer to your hotel.

Set on the shores of Lake Pichola and surrounded by hills, Udaipur grew in complete contrast to the harsh deserts of the rest of Rajasthan. From the late 16th century, peace brought about an era of renaissance in the arts and encouraged the building of beautiful palaces around the lake, culminating in the City Palace, one of the largest palace complexes in the world. The lake itself is a romantic setting surrounding the gleaming white Lake Palace and the Jag Mandir, a refuge of the rebel Mughal prince, Shah Jahan, soon to be the creator of the incomparable Taj Mahal.

Evening is at leisure.

Dinner will be arranged at the hotel.

Overnight stay in Udaipur
Meal Plan: Breakfast & Dinner

DAY 06 (Sat) 11th March 2023: IN UDAIPUR

- **Breakfast at the hotel**

- **Morning : City tour of Udaipur**
- **Afternoon: Boat ride on Lake Pichola**

Take a tour of the city visiting the City Palace, which stands on the crest of a ridge overlooking Lake Pichola. The largest palace in Rajasthan, it was built at various periods but still preserves the harmony of design, enhanced by massive octagonal towers surmounted by cupolas. Now a museum, it is a labyrinth of courtyards richly decorated with inlaid mirror-work, galleries covered with frescos, temples and roof gardens, which afford a wide panorama below. Later visit mid-17th century built Jagdish Temple in the old town, famous for the remarkable bronze statue of Garuda, the mythical bird, facing his revered master Lord Vishnu.

Continue the visit to the Sahelion-ki-Bari (Garden of the Handmaidens), a good example of the Hindu art of landscape gardening on a princely scale. Ornamental pools with finely sculptured cenotaphs of soft black stone are surrounded by a profusion of fountains.

Thali Lunch will be arranged at Garden Restaurant.

Towards the evening, enjoy 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.

Overnight stay in Udaipur

Meal Plan: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 07 (Sun) 12th March 2023: UDAIPUR -DELHI (0900/1025hrs)
DELHI – AGRA By: Surface (Approx. 5hours)

- **Transfer to airport for a flight to Delhi**
- **Meeting on arrival & Drive to Agra**
- **On arrival, check in at the hotel**
- **Rest of the day free at leisure**

Post breakfast, transfer to Delhi airport to board the flight to Delhi (*Please note, luggage allowance on this flight is 15 kg checked in baggage and 7 kg hand luggage*).

Upon arrival in Delhi, drive to Agra.

Lunch will be arranged en route.

Agra was once the capital city of the mighty Mughals and much of its majesty can be attributed to the vision and power of Akbar the Great and his grandson, Shan Jahan. A town incredible for its UNESCO crowned sights, only a few cities can match the iconic standing that Agra boasts in

the fancy of travelers the world over. You notice its majesty wraps around the luster of the Taj Mahal and the beauty of the historical architecture left as a legacy by the Mughal Empire.

Upon arrival at Agra, check-in at the hotel.

Overnight stay in Agra

Meal Plan: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 08 (Mon) 13th March 2023: AGRA- LUCKNOW

By: Surface (Approx. 5hours)

- **Sunrise visit to Taj Mahal**
- **Drive to Lucknow**
- **Rest of the day is at leisure**

Rise early to catch the first rays of dawn gleaming on the Taj Mahal, a certain sight that you would trade for. A masterpiece that now stands as a symbol of love to the world, this UNESCO World Heritage Site has captivated the hearts and minds of travelers for centuries. Commissioned in 1632 by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in loving memory of his wife Mumtaz Mahal who passed away during childbirth, the iconic mausoleum rises above a well manicured garden and its interiors display elaborate inlay work of precious and semi-precious stones.

Note: Timing subject to change based on the local sunrise timing

Return to the hotel for breakfast. Later check out from hotel and drive to Lucknow. On arrival in Lucknow, check in for your stay.

Rest of the day is at leisure.

Dinner will be arranged at the hotel.

Overnight stay in Lucknow

Meal Plan: Breakfast & Dinner

DAY 09 (Tue) 14th March 2023: IN LUCKNOW

- **Breakfast at the hotel**
- **Morning: Embark on a guided city tour of Lucknow**
- **Later meet the Nawab Sahib over a cup of tea**
- **Late afternoon : proceed for a heritage walk**

Post breakfast at hotel, embark upon an exciting city tour of Lucknow visiting the world's most unique architecture, Asifi Imambara. This monument was built as a relief measure for a

devastating famine, in order to provide employment to the subjects of the state by Nawab Asif-ud-Daula'. Also see the 'Rumi Darwaza' or the Turkish Gate and the Asfi Mosque.

Visit Husainabad Complex - The Clock Tower is the highest Clock Tower in Asia and in some ways superior to its counterpart, 'Big Ben'. Today the clock stands motionless but has witnessed all times, the good, the bad and the ugly. Now enter the Babylon of East, The Husainabad Imambara - known for its beauty and pieces of décor. This was built in 1840 by Mohammad Ali Shah and is still considered to be a sacred address by the natives. Also see the Satkhanda that stands as Lucknow's incomplete leaning tower of Pisa. Visit to Jama Masjid.

Drive past Sadat Ali & Begum Tombs and the 'Chatar Manzil' (Outside view only). Later Visit the graveyard to pay our homage to named and unnamed soldiers who gave up their lives in the defense of The Residency.

After the city tour of Lucknow, interact with Nawab Sahib on diverse topics of history, craft and cuisine over a cup of tea that he is always delighted to serve you when at his home in his decked up small family museum that houses inherited antiques.

Later proceed for Heritage Walk (*Remains suspended on Thursday*), discovering the lanes and the bylanes of Chowk. On this walking tour we explore the unexplored and explain the inexplicable. Understand how vast a history, this city of superlatives holds. History in Lucknow, stretches beyond the concrete walls of its monuments, spreads into the lanes of Lucknow and has many more nuances that can only be understood and appreciated in the lanes and bylanes of Chowk.

Overnight stay in Lucknow

Meal Plan: Breakfast & Dinner

DAY 10 (Wed) 15th March 2023: LUCKNOW-HYDERABAD : (0935/1140hrs)

- **Fly to Hyderabad**
- **Meeting on arrival & transfer to hotel**
- **Visit to Aga Khan Academy**
- **Evening witness the Sound and light show**

Post breakfast, transfer to the airport to board the flight for Hyderabad *Please note, luggage allowance on this flight is 15 kg checked in baggage and 7 kg hand luggage*).

Famous for its beautiful "monuments, mosques and mistresses", the Nizams of Hyderabad were amongst the richest people in the world. Asaf Jah seized power from the Mughal Governor in 1724 and founded the dynasty which ruled the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. Built on ancient granites, the area was famous for its gem stones and produced magnificent diamonds including the famous Kohinoor that today decorates the crown worn by British

royalty. Today the city is growing as a center for information technology and is rapidly becoming known as “Cyberabad” after Bill Clinton visited it in March 2000

On arrival proceed to visit the famous Aga Khan Academy Hyderabad which began operating in 2011 on a 100-acre campus near the city of Hyderabad, India. The Academy opened first with its Junior School and then in 2012 initiated the Senior School, including the residential program. Evening is reserved for witnessing **Sound & Light show** at famous Golconda Fort.

Overnight stay in Hyderabad
Meal Plan: Breakfast & Dinner

DAY 11 (Thu) 16th March 2023: HYDERABAD

- **Full day sightseeing tour**
- **Free Time for Shopping**
- **Overnight stay Hyderabad**

The old city is entered through the Char Minar, the decorative gateway built in 1591 and referred to as the Oriental “Arc de Triomphe”. This was built by Sultan Mohammad Quli Qutb Shah as a show piece at the center of his beautiful city and has become the symbol of Hyderabad. Of special note in the old city is the Mecca Masjid or the Grand Mosque. This was begun by the sixth Sultan and ultimately completed by Aurangzeb. The enormous black granite slabs were quarried locally and the red bricks on its entrance arches are believed to have been made from clay brought from Mecca.

The Lad Bazaar is particularly interesting to wander in. Here shops sell the typical Hyderabadi embedded glass bangles, pearls and cloth. Silver merchants working in their tiny shops make thin silver “leaf” by pounding sheets of the metal.

The capital of the Qutb Shahi Kings who ruled the area from 1507 to 1687, Golconda was repossessed by the Nizam Asif Jha in 1724 and restored for a short period to its former glory. It is one of the most accessible of great medieval forts in India. The Fateh Darwaza or Victory Gate at the entrance is made of teak with a Hindu deity engraved in it. It is studded with iron spikes to repel war elephants. The famous diamond vaults here once held the famous Kohinoor and Hope diamonds. While the dungeons were used by the Nizam to imprison his worst enemies among whom were several of his sons and at least two of his wives.

Northwest of the fort are the Tombs of the Qutb Shahi rulers. Each tomb of black granite or greenstone with plaster decorations is built on a square or octagonal base with a large onion dome and arches with fine sculptures, inscriptions and remains of glazed decorations.

Overnight stay in Hyderabad
Meal Plan: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 12 (Fri) 17th March 2023: HYDERABAD – COCHIN (1915/2055 hrs)

- **Visit to Film City**
- **Later in the evening transfer to airport to board a flight to Kochi**
- **On arrival, transfer to hotel**

Post breakfast; visit the myriad Settings of shooting & the numerous beautiful Theme Gardens etc. at Film City.

On arrival, you'll receive a box of chocolates, a welcome drink and snacks before boarding your guided coach to take you around the complex. Film City is a unique location that caters to the requirements of the film world, including regional, national, Hollywood and in-house productions.

Buffet/fixed menu lunch will be provided during Film city tour.

After the visit, transfer to Hyderabad airport for a flight to Kochi *Please note, luggage allowance on this flight is 15 kg checked in baggage and 7 kg hand luggage).*

On arrival in Kochi, transfer to your hotel.

Kochi is full of echoes of Kerala's past colonizers, including Hindu and Mughal dynasties, Portuguese and Dutch conquerors, and the British Empire - which came seeking control of the lucrative pepper trade. The city hosts the oldest church in India, 500-year-old Portuguese houses, old tiled houses built in the Chinese pagoda style, and a Jewish community whose roots go back to the Diaspora.

Overnight stay in Cochin

Meal Plan: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 13 (Sat) 18th March 2023: KOCHI – ALLEPPEY By: Surface (Approx. 01 and half hour)

- **Morning Cochin City Tour**
- **Drive to Alleppey**
- **Board the houseboat**

After your breakfast, proceed for half day city tour of Kochi.

Visit St. Francis Church originally named after Santo Antonio and dedicated to him as the Patron Saint of Portugal. Once a wooden building, it was replaced by the present stone building. Vasco De Gamma died on site in 1524 and was originally buried in the cemetery. His grave is still marked with a plaque and a brass rail, though his remains are back home in Portugal. We will explore the Jew-town, which abounds with fascinating antique shops and wares. Looming protectively over the synagogue is the Mattancherry palace, erstwhile home to the Verma kings and today a fine museum.

Later you will be you will be transferred to Alleppey, where you will board the houseboat for overnight stay while exploring the backwaters.

A visit to Kerala is incomplete without a visit to the backwaters. A series of canals, which thread their way through the state to the sea, it allows you a glimpse of life in Kerala impossible to get from road transport. Along the way you will pass rice fields, tiny villages, boats transporting children to school and farmers transporting their produce to the market, and women completing household tasks such as laundry and washing utensils. You will disembark from the boat to wander in the villages and talk to the people. At night the boat will anchor mid-stream, and your meals will be specially prepared by the crew from freshly bought produce.

Kettuvallam were the original transportation of Kerala, boats used to transport produce. With the advent of vehicular traffic, these slowly became redundant. Eventually the craft was revived and today these boats are used to tour the backwaters. They are made completely of natural material (wood and thatch) and have a bedroom and a sit out. The room is decorated using local material and artifacts.

“Please note that the backwater cruise normally starts at about 1200 - 1230 hrs and lunch is served on board as the boat cruises along the backwaters, later early evening the clients are shifted on a smaller boat to explore the narrow backwaters and after 30 – 45 minutes or so they are again bought back to the houseboat and by 1700 hrs the boat has to halt for overnight, after sunset they are not allowed to operate.

Next morning again at about 0730 - 0800 hrs the boat starts its return journey back to boat jetty from where it started and breakfast is served on board. The clients have to check-out the houseboat latest by 0930 hrs”.

Dinner will be at Houseboat

Overnight stay in Alleppey

Meal Plan: Breakfast, lunch & Dinner

**DAY 14 (Sun) 19th March 2023: ALLPPEY- KOCHI By: Surface (Approx. 01 and half hour)
KOCHI - MUMBAI (1355/1605 hrs)**

- **Drive to Kochi Airport**
- **Fly to Mumbai**
- **Meeting on arrival and transfer to hotel (room will be reserved from noon)**
- **Overnight stay in Mumbai**

After your breakfast, disembark from the houseboat in Alleppey jetty to drive to Kochi airport to for a flight to Mumbai *Please note, luggage allowance on this flight is 15 kg checked in baggage and 7 kg hand luggage).*

Arrive Mumbai and transfer to hotel.

The history of Bombay or Mumbai as it is now known is the story of an incredible transformation from its foundation to its present day.

The British built it expressly for trade and over the years it changed hands from the fishing village of the Kolis, through the Portuguese conquest, to Catherine of Aragon who took the seven islands of Mumbai as her dowry to Charles II of England. Mumbai is the Gateway to India, commemorated by a monument of that name built to mark the visit of King George and his consort, Mary. Today, Mumbai is India's premiere commercial and financial city and is ever on the move.

Dinner will be arranged at the hotel.

Overnight stay in Mumbai
Meal Plan: Breakfast & Dinner

Day 15 (Mon) 20th March 2023: Mumbai

- **Morning: Half day city tour of Mumbai**
- **Afternoon free for shopping**
- **Overnight stay in Mumbai**

Today morning drive past Marine Drive, Mumbai's most popular seaside promenade, and see the Kamla Nehru Park and Hanging Gardens on the slopes of the Malabar hills, offering a nice view of the marine lines and the Chowpatty beach. Visit the Jain temple, & the Dhobi Ghat. Also visit Mani Bhawan (Gandhi Memorial), the house where the Father of the Nation stayed on his early visits to the city.

Also, drive past Marine Drive, Mumbai's most popular seaside promenade.

This afternoon is for to shop around Colaba area which is known as fashion hub of Mumbai.

Overnight stay in Mumbai
Meal Plan: Breakfast & Lunch

Day 16 (Tue) 21st March 2023: Mumbai

- **Morning excursion to Elephanta Caves**
- **Visit Prince of Wales Museum**
- **Overnight in Mumbai**

Morning you will spend some time at the Gateway of India, Mumbai's principal landmark. Later proceed on a tour of the Elephanta Caves. An hour away from Mumbai by ferry, the Elephanta Caves are a network of sculpted caves located on Elephanta Island or Gharapuri (meaning the city of caves) in Mumbai Harbor. The island, located on an arm of the Arabian Sea, consists of two groups of caves - the first is a large group of 5 Hindu caves, the second, a smaller group of 2 Buddhist caves. The rock cut architecture of the caves has been dated to between the 5th and 8th centuries.

Afternoon visit the Prince of Wales museum built in grand Indo Saracenic style, drive past Marine drive.

Overnight stay in Mumbai

Meal Plan: Breakfast & Dinner

Day 17 (We) 22nd March 2023: Depart Mumbai

- **Later transfer to airport**
- **Fly to onward destination**

In time, transfer to Mumbai international airport to board the flight to onward destination.

Hotel Envisaged or similar

City	Hotel Option	Room Category	Nights
Delhi	The Claridges	Claridges Boutique Room	02
Amritsar	Hyatt Regency	Guest Room	02
Udaipur	Trident	Deluxe Garden View Room	02
Agra	ITC Mughal	Mughal Room	01
Lucknow	Fairfield By Marriott	Deluxe Room	02
Hyderabad	Taj Deccan	Residency Room	02
Kochi	Fragrant Nature	Duke Chamber	01
Alleppey	Houseboat	Deluxe Room	01
Mumbai	Trident Nariman Point	Premier Room	03

- Guests travelling from the continent of North America to India can avail the E-tourist visa facility. For the complete details, please visit <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/visa/tvoa.html>

Inclusions

Welcome and Assistance at Airports

Well appointed Hotels and Transfers

Transportation in an Air-Conditioned Deluxe Vehicle

Services of Professional English Speaking Guide

Entrance fees as specified in the Itinerary

All Breakfasts, Lunch or Dinner Daily

Exclusions

International Flights

Mandatory Insurance

Tips to Tour Guides and Drivers

Visa to India

Optional Tours within Cities

Drinks with Meals

Items of Personal nature