



India's Golden Triangle is a fabulous and inspiring introduction to the history and culture of India's three most quintessential destinations - Delhi, Agra and Jaipur. Visit the iconic sites and discover the inspiring Mughal and Rajput heritage of this fascinating region with the bustle and buzz of markets and bazaars, juxtaposing with the cosmopolitan culture of Delhi. Travel through a land full of contrasts on this compact India tour, jam-packed with unforgettable highlights.

Journey highlights

- Explore some of India's most impressive UNESCO World Heritage Sites
- Tour of Old Delhi and take an exciting rickshaw ride through the colourful bazar in Old Delhi
- Visit Rajghat – the memorial of Mahatma Gandhi
- Explore the magnificent Taj Mahal - the extravagant monument of love
- Admire the stunning 'Pink City' of Jaipur
- Guided walk to local markets and historical sites

PROGRAM

DAY 01: ARRIVE DELHI

By: International Flight

- *Welcome to India!* Arrive Delhi T3 terminal by International Flight.
- After immigration, you will be met by our Customer service executive and Welcomed with a “Mauli ritual”. *Mauli is a symbolic cotton thread tied on the wrist and is our traditional way to start the journey at an auspicious note.*
- Assisted transfer to the hotel and on arrival, check in for your stay (check in time 1400 hour).
- Due to flight schedules, you will probably arrive at the hotel after midnight local time. You may want to travel a day early to ease the effects of jet lag and relax a bit before your India tour begins.
- Perhaps visit the World Heritage-listed Humayun's Tomb or Red Fort of Delhi if you have any spare time.

Delhi is India's capital and a major gateway to the country. Perhaps there is no other capital city in the world so steeped in history and legend as the Indian capital Delhi. It was the magnet, which drew the Mongols, Turks, Persians, Afghans, Mughals and the British, all of whom contributed to its glorious but turbulent past. The fascination with Delhi was such that even though it was abandoned many times, its rulers returned to it again and again rebuilding it at least seven times. Today, the twin cities of Old and New Delhi still intrigue Indians and tourists alike as the cultural and political capital of the largest democracy in the world.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY (MIN 2 PAX):

VISIT THE WORLD HERITAGE-LISTED HUMAYUN'S TOMB OR RED FORT: USD 45 PER PERSON

MEAL: None

HOTEL: Novotel Aerocity

DAY 02: DELHI

- Explore Delhi, India's capital city that sports a rich history spanning over 2,000 years. Arrive old Delhi and ride in a *cycle rickshaw (pedi-cabs)* to the once water-filled square of Chandni Chowk. Discover the Jama Masjid, Delhi's oldest mosque, before learning about the history of the Sikh religion at the Sheeshganj Gurudwara.
- Continue to *Raj Ghat*, the memorial to Gandhi, built at the site of his cremation on the banks of the Yamuna River.
- Afternoon, drive past India Gate and the Government Secretariat buildings on the way to the *Qutab Minar* - the five-storied victory tower to signify the beginning of the Muslim rule in India by the first Muslim ruler, Qutab-ud-din Aibak.

MEAL: Breakfast

HOTEL: Novotel Aerocity

DAY 03: **DELHI – AGRA** **By surface (165 km/ +/- 3h30)**

- Travel by private vehicle to Agra - the city of Taj Mahal. Toilet stops will be made en-route.
- Arrive Agra and check in for your stay.

Agra - Once a small village on the banks of the Yamuna, it was transformed by two great Mughal monarchs, Akbar and his grandson Shah Jehan into the second capital of the Mughal Empire – Dar-ul-Khilafat, or ‘seat of the Emperor’ in the 16th & 17th century. A world of contrasting edifices of red sandstone and white marble, narrow galleys, bustling streets and small buggies, Agra retains the irresistible charm that made this the favorite city of the Mughals.

- Rest of the day is at your leisure for independent explorations. Once in Agra, there’s the option of visiting the Agra fort and North India’s oldest Christian cemetery or experience a live cultural show that depicts the saga of love and a memorable journey into history.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES (MIN 2 PAX):

EXPERIENCE MOHABBAT E TAJ – LIVE CULTURAL SHOW: USD 30 PER PERSON

EXPLORE AGRA FORT & ROMAN CATHOLIC CEMETERY: USD 22 PER PERSON

MEAL: Breakfast

HOTEL: Crystal Sarovar Premiere

DAY 04: **AGRA- ABHANERI - JAIPUR** **By surface (255 km/ +/- 6 hour)**

- Rise early for a dawn visit to the *Taj Mahal*. It is fitting to see this extraordinary monument by the first light of day as its exemplary beauty is awe-inspiring and will create an unforgettable memory. Mughal emperor, Shahjahan built this architectural wonder to enshrine the mortal remains of his beloved Queen Mumtaz Mahal.

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

- Return to the hotel for breakfast and drive for Jaipur - the 18th century capital of Rajasthan.
- Stop enroute at Abhaneri Village, a popular stop along the Agra-Jaipur road for the impressive *Chand Baori* stepwell and the Harshat Mata Temple. The Chand Baori is perhaps the region’s most visited stepwell and is one of the largest and deepest in all of India.
- Continue to Jaipur, reaching in the evening. On arrival, check in for your stay.

Jaipur - also known as the ‘Pink City’, for the abundance of pink plastered stone used to build its massive forts, magnificent palaces and exquisite temples. The city built in 1727 A.D by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II followed a grid system, which made it the only planned city of its time. A young Bengali architect Vidhyadhar Bhattacharya designed the city in accordance with Shilp Shastra - an ancient Hindu treatise on architecture. There is far more to the city than just its famous monuments and to get a complete experience of Jaipur, uncover the mysteries of the bazaars and visit silversmiths, turban sellers and traditional markets.

- After a long day of exploration, perhaps head to the Raj Mandir Cinema to experience the glamour of a Bollywood film.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY (MIN 2 PAX):

WATCH A BOLLYWOOD BLOCKBUSTER: USD 28 PER PERSON

MEAL: Breakfast

HOTEL: Clarks Amer

DAY 05: JAIPUR

- Morning visit the imposing *Amber Fort*. Set on a hilltop overlooking Maota Lake, the fort is an authentic example of Rajput architecture and the Sheesh Mahal (Hall of Mirrors) is one of its more spectacular buildings.
- Next brief photo stop at the Hawa Mahal (Palace of Winds). Its beehive-like structure is an interplay of red and pink sand stone, painstakingly outlined with white borders and motifs. Behind this elaborate latticed facade, the cloistered ladies of the court could watch the daily goings-on in the street below.
- Afternoon is at leisure for independent exploration. We suggest visiting Jaipur's Royal City Palace and exploring its extravagant rooms and apartments. Later, discover one of the five astronomical observatories built by Maharaja Jai Singh, the founder of Jaipur. You may visit a local temple in the evening to watch the prayer ceremony.
- Evening, enjoy a traditional meal with folk dance at a local restaurant in the town.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES (MIN 2 PAX):

HALF DAY CITY TOUR: USD 15 PER PERSON

WITNESS PRAYER CEREMONY AT A TEMPLE: USD 15 PER PERSON

MEAL: Breakfast & dinner

HOTEL: Clarks Amer

DAY 06: JAIPUR – DELHI DELHI – KATHMANDU

By flight (07:30/ 08:35 hour)
By flight (12:10/ 14:25 hour)

- *Welcome to Nepal!* Arrive Kathmandu terminal by International Flight.

Nepal offers visa on arrival facility. You need to have a valid passport and one passport -size photo with a light background is required (*Immigration Department has not specified the size of the passport-size photo*). Visa can be obtained only through payment of cash and the cost for a 15 days visa is USD 25 per person.

- After completing immigration and custom formalities, you will exit the airport and meet with your representative at the arrival area. On arrival, assisted transfer to your hotel and check in for your stay.

Kathmandu - extending over an area of 360 km square at an altitude of 1336 meters above sea level, is the largest city of Nepal, the political as well as cultural capital of the country. Kathmandu is a city where ancient traditions rub shoulders with the modern. However, it is the grandeur of the past that enchants the visitor whose gaze may linger on an exquisitely carved wooden window frame, an 18th century bronze sculpture or the spiritually uplifting stupas. Like any big city, Kathmandu has seen rapid expansion in the last decade, but despite the hustle and bustle typical of metropolitan cities, its people remain as refreshingly friendly as ever.

- Afternoon, visit one of the most important heritage sites of Kathmandu - the *Boudhanath Stupa* (a UNESCO World Heritage site). This 2500 years old Buddhist stupa was built in 5th century with four pairs of eyes of Lord Buddha in four cardinal directions keeping an eternal watch over the people and their doings. With a base of 82 meters in diameter, Boudhnath is claimed to be the largest Buddhist stupa in the world. Today, Boudhnath bustles with Tibetan population, busy with carpet manufacture, trade, and prayers at the several monasteries belonging to different sects of Tibetan Buddhism.
- After the visit, get a unique opportunity to interact with monks. Lama will offer Khada Himalayan Silk Sacrf) as blessings to the guests. Also visit Thanka (Buddhist painting) Gallery where you will see the artists painting the Thanka

Later return back to the hotel.

MEAL: Breakfast

HOTEL: Mulberry

DAY 07:

KATHMANDU

Optional excursion – The Mountain flight:

Early morning, proceed on a one hour Mountain Flight along the Himalayan Mountain range to get a panoramic encounter with the highest peaks on earth. This is an exhilarating experience as the aircraft flies alongside the Himalaya to give you eye-level views of the snow peaks like Langtang Lirung (7234M), Shisha Pangma (8013M), Dorje- Lakpa (6966M), Gauri Shankar (7134M), Melungtse (7181M), Pumoki (7161M), Nuptse (7855M), Makalu 8463M, Lhotse (8516M) and finally, Sagarmatha (Everest 8848M). Cruising close to the awesome massifs of rock and ice, the flight presents a mind-boggling sight.

- Morning, start your exploration with a visit to *Patan Durbar square* - the city of artistry. The city is known for its rich tradition of arts and handicrafts such as metal statues and ornate architecture. The square is a mélange of old Royal palace, artistic courtyards, and pagoda temples. The former Royal palace complex has been turned into a museum. There are three main courtyards in the palace, among which the Sundari Chowk is known for a masterpiece of stone architecture.
- Continue your exploration to *Swambhunath*. Perched on top of a conical hill is a white dome with glittering golden spire is visible from all sides of the valley for many miles. This most ancient and enigmatic of all the holy shrines in Kathmandu Valley, Swayambhunath Stupa, is also known as the Monkey Temple. This place offers an excellent view of the Valley. Though the temples around the stupa had some minor destruction and one of the temples beside the stupa collapsed during the 2016 earthquake, the process of reconstruction is ongoing.
- At Swayambhunath, watch the *Tibetan pilgrimages* and *monk* chanting prayers and praying in their traditional cultural clothes in the monastery.
- End the day with a visit to *Durbar square*, where the charm of old town blends well with traditional architecture in a rich cultural backdrop. One of the most unique features of this courtyard filled with temples & palaces is the temple of living goddess. Kumari is a young Shakyas girl from Newar community, chosen through an ancient and mystical selection to become the human incarnation of Hindu Goddess, Taleju. If you are lucky, you might get to get a glimpse of Kumari peeking out of an elaborately carved wooden window. *The main Durbar Square is the most affected area by the 2015 earthquake.*
- Take a walk through the *Ason Market*. It's a local bazaar and well known place for buying daily requirements. A lush of crowded locals enchant you with the daily life style.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY (MIN 2 PAX):

COOKING DEMONSTRATION AND HOME HOSTED MEAL WITH A LOCAL FAMILY: USD 25 PER PERSON

MEAL: Breakfast

HOTEL: Mulberry

DAY 08:

KATHMANDU

- Morning explore *Pashupatinath temple* – a World Heritage site. It is the principal Hindu shrine in Nepal and one of the foremost temples to Shiva on the Indian subcontinent. Shiva is worshipped here as Pashupati, lord of beasts, who as protector of all living creatures is also the patron deity of Nepal. Temples, ashrams (hermitages), dharamsalas, shrines and ghats spread over a wide area along the sacred Bagmati embankment. Though Non Hindus are not allowed inside the temple; one can clearly see the temple and the activities from the eastern bank of the Bagmati River. (*The Bagmati River flows close by and the Arya Ghat cremation grounds are here. We strongly advise not to take photos of cremations and of bereaved families. Sadhus, sages who follow the lifestyle of Shiva, may be seen covered in ashes and loin-cloths. They ask for money in case you want to take their photos.*)
- While at Pashupatinath, you will get the opportunity to have some spiritual interaction with the Sadhus (Holy Men).
- Afternoon visit *Bhaktapur Durbar square*. The best preserved of the three main medieval cities of the valley, Bhaktapur comprise some of the most breath-taking religious architecture in the entire country. Narrow stone paved streets snake through red brick houses, leading you to hidden temples, water sprouts, and courtyards. The city proudly displays its cultural life through daily lifestyle; artisans have been continuing traditional works like weaving, pottery, and wooden work for generation. Main attractions of this city are 55 Window Palace, Golden Gate & Lion's Gate.

MEAL: Breakfast

HOTEL: Mulberry

DAY 09:

KATHMANDU – DEPARTURE

By International Flight

- In-time, transfer to international airport to board your onward flight home.
(*Room will be available till 1200 hours*)

End of the tour

Inclusions:

- Accommodation on twin share basis for a total of 08 nights as per the hotel mentioned or similar
- 8 meals: 05 breakfasts and 01 dinner
- Intercity overland transportation in private air conditioned vehicle
- Services of English speaking local expert/ guide as per the program (*No guide will be provided during Abhaneri visit*)
- Entry Fee at the monuments (one visit only) as per the itinerary
- Bottled water in the vehicle throughout
- Current applicable taxes.

Cost does not include:

- Any airfare, cost for Indian visa gratuities or Insurance
- All items of personal nature, tips, souvenirs, laundry, internet charges etc.
- Any gratuities or optional touring as specified
- Any meals or options not mentioned in the itinerary
- Guide services in Abhaneri
- Camera fees charges at some sites (no more than INR 100/ USD 2 for a still camera).
- Any increase due to circumstances beyond our control (i.e. fuel surcharge, currency fluctuations, new taxes).
- Any personal charges