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# INDIA

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2022-2023

A photograph of the Taj Mahal in Agra, India, captured at sunset. The monument is illuminated by the warm, golden light of the setting sun, creating a silhouette effect against the darkening sky. The central dome and the four minarets are clearly visible, with intricate architectural details highlighted by the low-angle light.

Small Group Escorted Tours . Extensions . Bespoke Experiences

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# Namaste!

Welcome to our India. A country so huge and vast – from the jungles of the south to the Himalayas of the north and the deserts of the west, India has it all and so have we.

We have put together a range of tours, extensions and bespoke experiences that combine popular must dos like the Taj Mahal and Jaipur with more exotic and remote locations like Ladakh, the Spiti Valley and Northeast India.

Our small groups cater for up to ten people, but if you would like to go at your own pace then we can put together an itinerary to suit your style and budget. Whether you want a luxury hotel, a Rajasthani haveli or a more modest home stay, we have it covered.

Our expert guides and staff are on hand to ensure your safety and comfort from the moment you land in India until the time you leave with our 24x7 hotline. With over seventeen years' experience and offices in Australia and India, we are with you every step of the way.

All tours/independent travel options are quoted in Australian Dollars. We can provide quotes in USD, Euros or other currencies upon request.



Sharon, Vikas and Shiv (Principals of Ekno Travels)

# Classic & Festival Tours

Pages 4 to 24



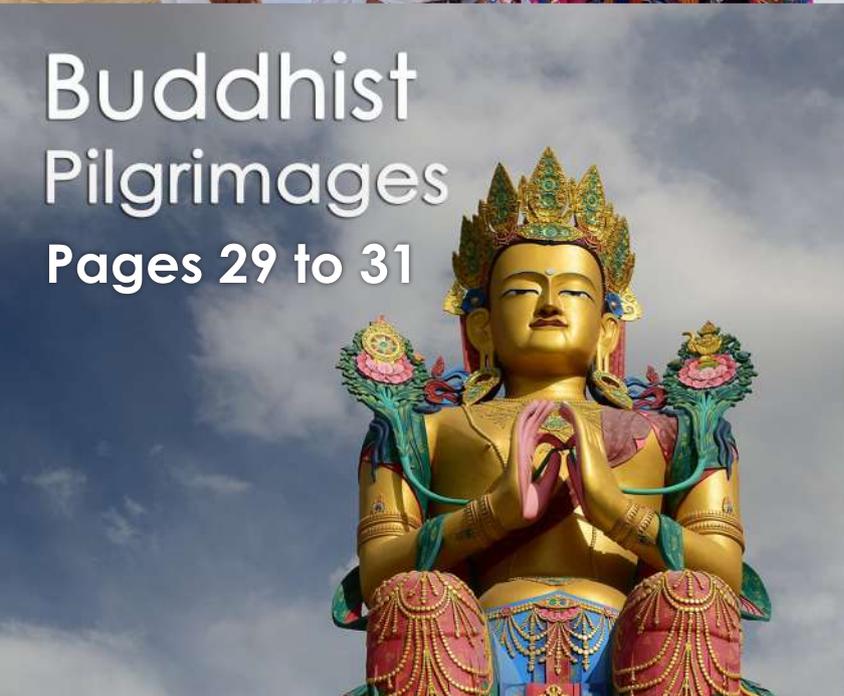
# Adventure Tours & Trekking

Pages 25 to 28



# Buddhist Pilgrimages

Pages 29 to 31



# Extensions & Bespoke Experiences

\*bespoke experiences are optional extras

Pages 32 to 38



# GOLDEN TRIANGLE

Escorted/Independent  
Delhi, Agra & Jaipur

6 days, 5 nights

**Dates:** 10-15 Oct, 14-19 Nov,  
12-17 Dec 2022, 9-14 Jan, 13-18  
Feb, 13-18 Mar, 10-15 Apr, 9-14  
Oct, 13-18 Nov, 11-16 Dec 2023

**Cost:** A\$1650 per person  
twin share

## Classic & Festival Tours



Jaipur - Hawa Mahal

## INCLUDES

- 5 nights accommodation with breakfast
- Following transportation by Toyota Innova Car or similar:  
Pickup/drop off from Delhi airport  
Delhi-Agra-Jaipur tour
- Sunrise visit to the Taj Mahal
- Services of a local English speaking guide for 5 days

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Sightseeing tour of Old and New Delhi
- Sunrise visit to the Taj Mahal in Agra
- Agra Fort, a wonder of Mughal architecture
- Amber Fort, City Palace and Hawa Mahal in Jaipur
- Colourful local bazaars of Jaipur

## BESPOKE EXPERIENCES

- Walk through the old Mughal city in Agra
- Taj Mahal heritage tour
- Live theatre show on the story of the Taj Mahal
- Cooking class with a local family in Jaipur
- Elephant village rescue centre in Mathura

## ITINERARY

### DAY 1: DELHI

Welcome to incredible India! Upon your arrival at the airport in Delhi, our representative will greet you and escort you to your hotel. After checking in, spend the rest of your day at your leisure exploring the local area or relaxing in the hotel. Our friendly guide and hotel staff will be on hand should you need restaurant recommendations or general provisions.

**Overnight:** Hotel, Delhi

### DAY 2: DELHI

After breakfast, head to the iconic and bustling area of Old Delhi. The magnificent Jama Masjid – India's largest mosque will be your destination and enjoy a rickshaw tour through the ancient alley ways of Chandni Chowk bazaar along the way. Before heading back to New Delhi, pass by the fantastic Red Fort, constructed in 1638 and visit Raj Ghat, the cremation site of Mahatma Gandhi. As you continue to weave your way to New Delhi, pass British era landmarks such as India Gate, Rajpath, the President's House, Parliament House & the Government Secretariat Buildings. Spend the afternoon shopping at one of Delhi's many bustling outdoor bazaars. Tonight, enjoy a welcome (namaste) dinner at a restaurant specialising in Indian cuisine.

**Overnight:** Hotel, Delhi

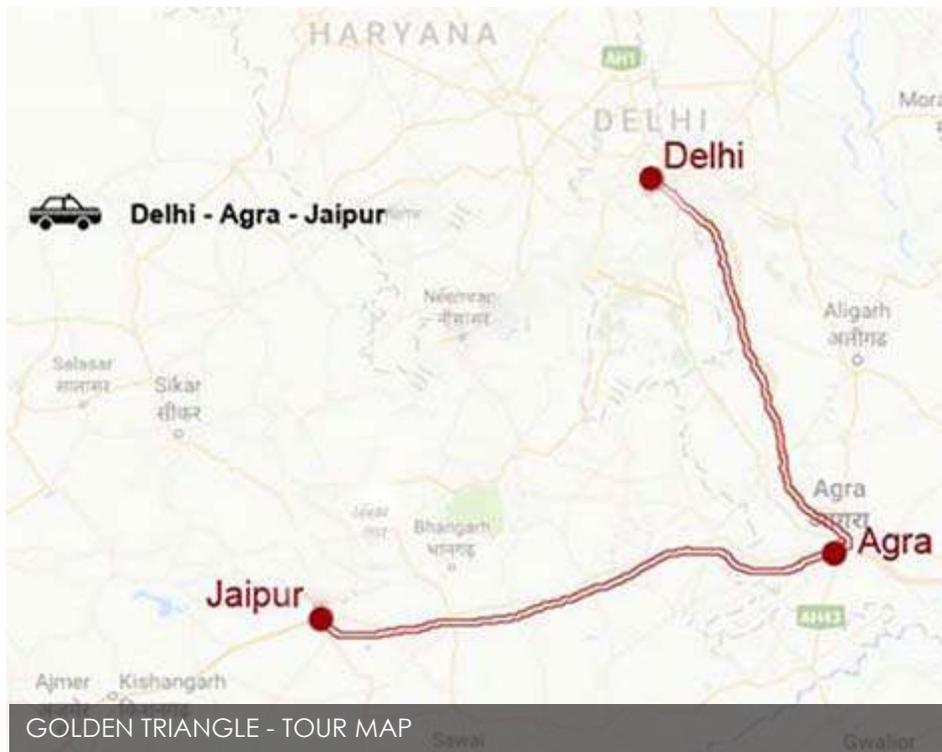
### DAY 3: AGRA

After breakfast drive from Delhi to Agra, home of the majestic Taj Mahal. Upon arrival in Agra visit the impressive Agra Fort before touring the legendary Taj Mahal. Built by Emperor Shah Jahan in fond memory of his beloved wife Mumtaz, the Taj Mahal has been described as the most extravagant monument to love ever built and remains one of India's most enduring symbols.

**Overnight:** Hotel, Agra

### DAY 4: JAIPUR

Rise early to beat the crowds and watch the sun rise over the magnificent World Heritage site the of the Taj Mahal.



GOLDEN TRIANGLE - TOUR MAP

The Taj Mahal is India's most-photographed monument, and today you'll see why. After the Taj, return to your hotel for breakfast and travel onward by car to Jaipur, the Pink City. You will reach the capital of Rajasthan in the mid afternoon and have afternoon free to spend at your leisure, getting to know and explore the many colourful bazaars and restaurants of this bustling city.

**Overnight:** Hotel, Jaipur

## DAY 5: JAIPUR

Today, visit the magnificent Amber Fort. Amber fort was built in 1592; and it has seen renovations and improvements for over two centuries! Its name is said to derive from the many jewels that are used for decoration inside – come and see for yourself! You can choose to walk, take a jeep, or ride an elephant to the fort's entrance. The ascent to the fort, no matter your mode of transportation, is full of unbeatable views. After visiting the fort, head back to Jaipur for a tour of the city's iconic landmarks and visit the gorgeous Hawa Mahal (Palace of the Winds) and the City Palace Museum. The museum is filled with rich collections of Rajasthani costumes and medieval armoury.

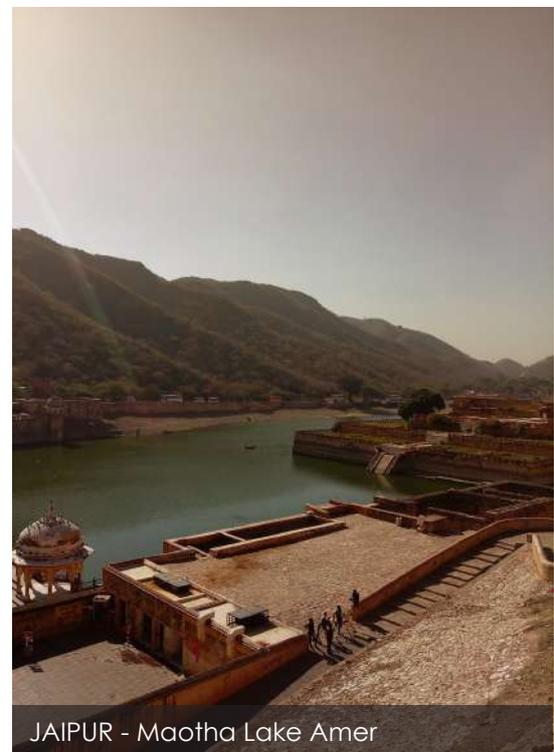
**Overnight:** Hotel, Jaipur

## DAY 6: DEPARTURE DAY

Your tour concludes after breakfast. Bid phir milenge (until we meet again) or continue onward to another exotic destination in India. We will transfer you to the airport in Jaipur for your onward international or domestic flight.



DELHI - Rashtrapati Bhawan



JAIPUR - Maotha Lake Amer

## EXTEND YOUR STAY

**UDAIPUR & EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL (Page 35)**

5 days, 4 nights

**JODHPUR (Page 36)**

4 days, 3 nights

**ANCIENT VARANASI (Page 33)**

4 days, 3 nights

**MUMBAI (Page 35)**

4 days, 3 nights

**SACRED RISHIKESH (Page 36)**

5 days, 4 nights



OLD DELHI - Morning rickshaw ride

# INSIDE RAJASTHAN

Escorted/Independent  
Delhi, Agra, Jaipur & Udaipur

9 days, 8 nights

**Dates:** 26 Sept-4 Oct, 24 Oct-1 Nov,  
28 Nov-6 Dec, 26 Dec 2022-3 Jan  
2023, 23-31 Jan, 27 Feb-7 Mar,  
27 Mar-4 Apr, 25 Sept-3 Oct,  
23-31 Oct, 27 Nov-5 Dec 2023

**Cost:** A\$3200 per person  
twin share



DELHI - Humayun Tomb

## INCLUDES

- Met by our representative at Delhi airport
- Services of a tour manager as your guide for the duration of the trip
- 9 nights' accommodation – twin share
- Complimentary breakfast at the hotels
- Welcome and farewell dinner
- Train 2nd AC or AC chair car from Jaipur to Udaipur
- Transport in AC Tempo Traveller / Innova / Etios or similar as per itinerary
- Entrance fee to all the monuments mentioned in the plan
- Dance performance at Udaipur
- Boat ride in Udaipur
- Local guides in Delhi, Agra, Jaipur and Udaipur

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Sunrise visit to the Taj Mahal
- Agra Fort, a wonder of Mughal architecture
- Amber Fort, City Palace and Hawa Mahal in Jaipur
- Colourful local bazaars of Jaipur
- Udaipur, the Venice of the East
- Tour of India Gate, Jama Masjid, Chandni Chowk and Raj Ghat (the memorial to Mahatma Gandhi) or Rajpath

## ITINERARY

### DAY 1: DELHI

You will be met by your tour manager at the international airport and transferred to your hotel in Delhi. Rest of the day at one of the bustling bazaars of Delhi. Tonight, you will be our guest for our welcome dinner.

**Overnight:** Hotel, Delhi

### DAY 2: AGRA

Morning drive to Agra, arriving with plenty of free time to explore, including the Agra Fort. Walk through the old Mughal city where the direct descendants of the 20,000 artisans who built the Taj Mahal still live.

The Taj Mahal is the world's most grand monument to love, built by Shah Jahan for his wife Mumtaz. However, not all love stories have happy endings, and Shah Jahan was imprisoned by his son in Agra Fort, where he spent his final years

**Overnight:** Hotel, Agra

### DAY 3: JAIPUR

Sunrise visit to the Taj Mahal. The Taj Mahal is India's most-photographed monument, and today you'll see why. Built between 1632 and 1653 in memory of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan's third wife, the Taj Mahal is world-renowned and widely admired.

After the Taj, return to your hotel for breakfast. Travel by car to Jaipur, known as India's pink city. You'll reach the capital of Rajasthan by mid-afternoon, and spend the rest of the day exploring with a visit to the colourful bazaars, Hawa Mahal or the City Palace.

**Overnight:** Hotel, Jaipur

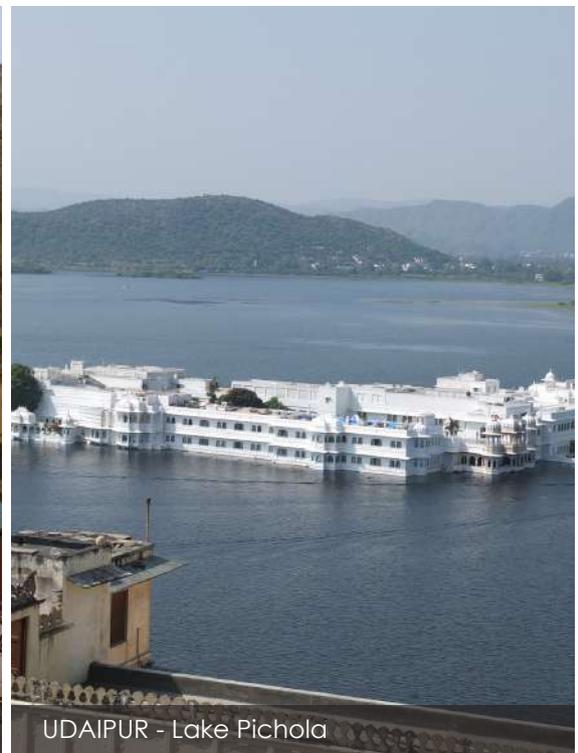
### DAY 4: JAIPUR

On your second day in Jaipur, you'll visit the magnificent Amber Fort as a group. Amber fort was built in 1592; and it has seen renovations and improvements for over two centuries! Its name is said to derive from the many jewels that are used for decoration inside...see for yourself!

**Overnight:** Hotel, Jaipur



KHEMPUR - Best Exotic Marigold Hotel



UDAIPUR - Lake Pichola

## DAY 5: JAIPUR

Experience the city waking up with a visit to the local Vishnu and Hanuman temples to observe the local people praying to their gods. You will get to see women coming to pray with flower baskets. You will also visit the wholesale flower, vegetable and milk markets. We head back to the hotel for a late breakfast and spend the rest of the day at leisure to wander around or explore the sights and colours of the Jaipur markets including the famous Johari Bazaar (Jeweller's Market). In the evening you can visit the most iconic cinema in Jaipur, Raj Mandir, for a taste of Bollywood's magical brand of entertainment.

**Overnight:** Hotel, Jaipur

## DAY 6: UDAIPUR

After an early breakfast leave for Udaipur by AC train (approx. 6 hours). As you pass through the Thar Desert you will witness desert life of villagers dressed in colourful clothes herding animals in the against the spectacular scenery. Arrive mid-afternoon and check into your hotel by the Lake Pichola. Relax in the evening with some traditional Rajasthani cuisine.

Udaipur, also known as the City of Lakes, is one of India's most picturesque cities. Palaces surround the city, the most famous being The Lake Palace, which covers an entire island and was featured in the James Bond film Octopussy. The city was founded in 1559 and was the capital of the Mewar kingdom. There's no doubt you'll enjoy this relaxing, seductive city.

**Overnight:** Hotel, Udaipur

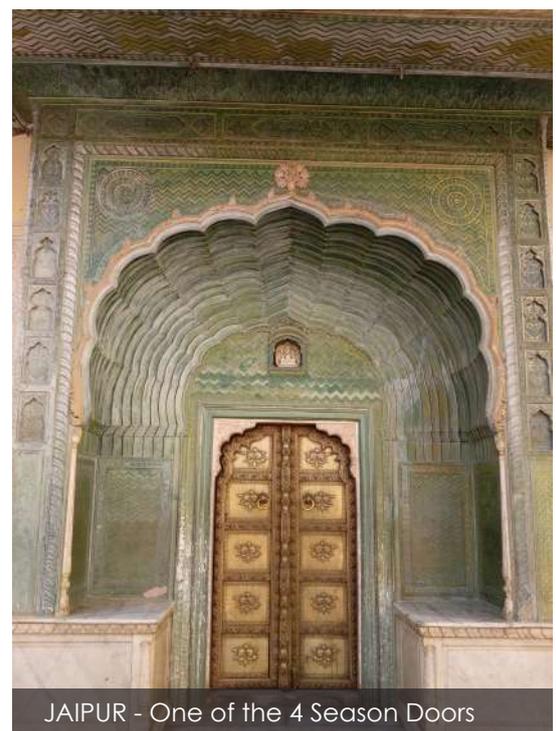
## DAY 7: UDAIPUR

Early morning heritage and bicycle ride around the Fatehsagar Lake to see the sun rise over the Aravali Hills. Return to the hotel for a late breakfast. Visit the massive treasure filled City Palace and enjoy a boat ride on Lake Pichola. Afternoon visit to Bagore-ki-Haveli, a beautiful mansion, housing an interesting art gallery and with traditional and contemporary dance performances. Dinner tonight is at a roof top restaurant overlooking Lake Pichola and the City Palace, sit back and enjoy the sweeping views.

**Overnight:** Hotel, Udaipur

## BESPOKE EXPERIENCES

- Heritage walk through Old & New Delhi
- Sultanate Delhi tour
- Walk through the old Mughal city in Agra
- Taj Mahal heritage tour
- Live theatre show on the story of the Taj Mahal
- Cooking class with a local family in Jaipur or Udaipur
- Morning heritage walk in Jaipur
- Visit the 'Best Exotic Marigold Hotel'
- Early morning heritage walk and bicycle ride in Udaipur



JAIPUR - One of the 4 Season Doors

## DAY 8: DELHI

After breakfast leave for your flight to Delhi. Upon arrival in Delhi transfer to hotel. The rest of the day is yours to shop or visit famous sites such as India Gate, Jama Masjid, Chandni Chowk, Rajpath and Raj Ghat (the memorial to Mahatma Gandhi). For dinner we will share a special farewell dinner.  
Overnight: Hotel, Delhi

## DAY 9: TOUR ENDS

This morning our trip will sadly come to an end as a group before we bid our farewells.

## EXTEND YOUR STAY

**JODHPUR (Page 36)**

4 days, 3 nights

**ANCIENT VARANASI (Page 33)**

4 days, 3 nights

**MUMBAI (Page 35)**

4 days, 3 nights

**SACRED RISHIKESH (Page 36)**

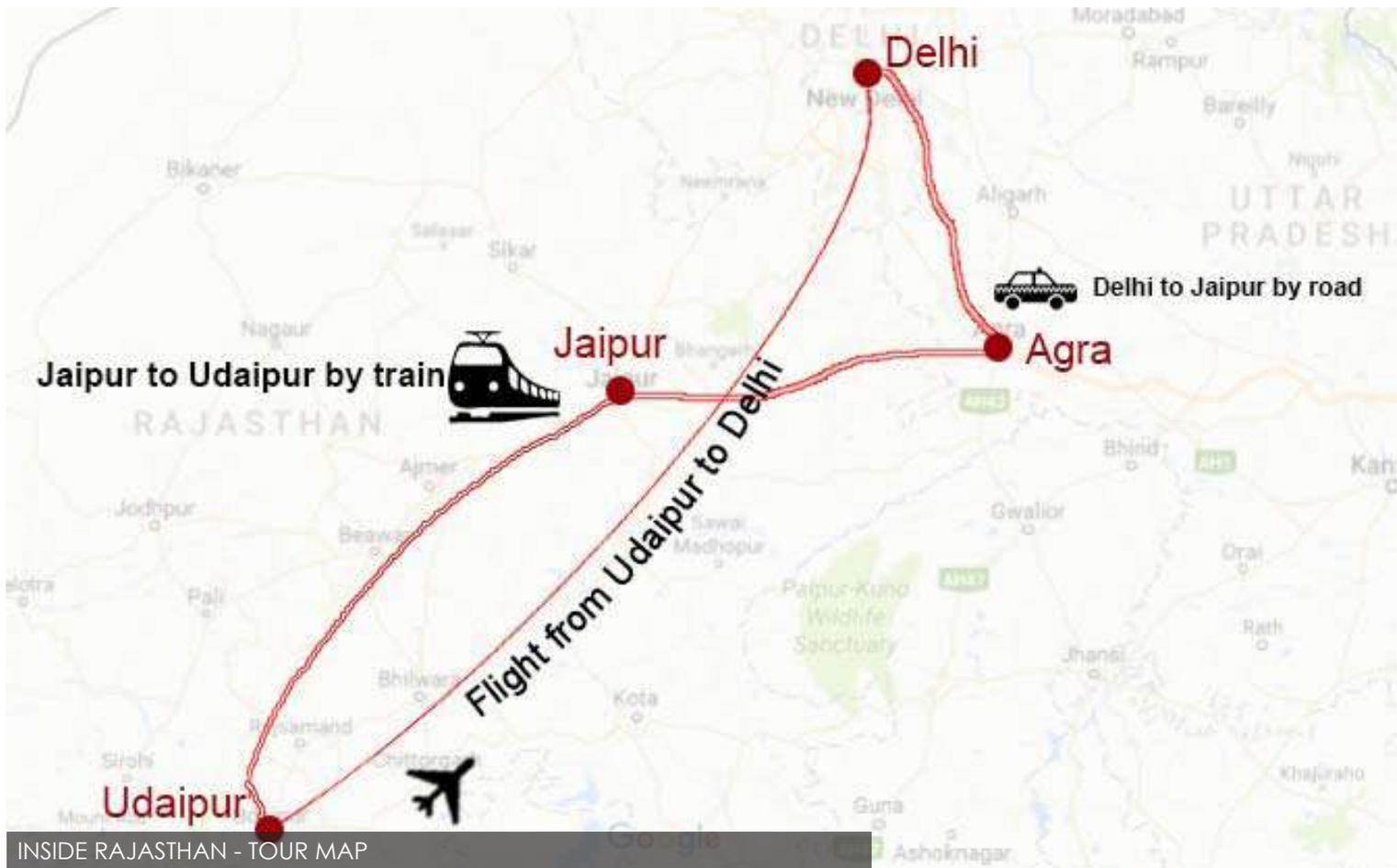
5 days, 4 nights



AGRA - Taj Mahal



RAJASTHAN - Woman in Traditional Dress



# HIDDEN GEMS OF THE HIMALAYAS

Escorted/Independent  
Delhi, Shimla, Dharamsala &  
Amritsar

11 days, 10 nights

**Dates:** 3-13 Oct 2022, 17-27 Apr,  
22 May-1 June, 19-29 Jun 2023

**Cost:** A\$2950 per person  
twin share



DHARAMSALA - Our guest with local women of Gaddi community

## INCLUDES

- Met at Delhi airport by our representative
- Services of the tour manager as your guide for the duration of the trip
- 11 nights' accommodation with breakfast
- Train from Delhi to Shimla
- Flight from Amritsar to Delhi
- All transfers by private vehicle (Toyota Innova/Etios or similar) as per the itinerary
- Welcome and farewell dinners in Delhi
- Himalayan tea tour and tea tasting in Palampur
- Local guides in Delhi, Shimla & Amritsar
- Entrance fees to all sights and monuments as per the itinerary

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Sights and wonders of Delhi
- Travel to the hill station of Shimla on the world famous 'toy train'
- Tour and stay at a family-owned tea estate in Palampur
- Heritage village of Pragpur, stay in a palatial country manor
- Dharamsala, home of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government in Exile
- Visit the Golden Temple, Sikhism's holiest shrine, in Amritsar

## ITINERARY

### DAY 1: ARRIVE DELHI

Welcome to incredible India and to the start of your holiday! Our representative will meet you at the airport and escort you to your hotel. After checking into the hotel, spend the rest of the day at your leisure exploring the local area and soaking up the vibrant atmosphere. Our guide will be on hand at the hotel if you need any assistance or recommendations.

Overnight: Hotel, Delhi

### DAY 2: DELHI TO SHIMLA

Rise and shine early and prepare yourself for a quintessential Indian experience – travelling on the world famous Indian Railways. Your driver will collect you from your hotel in Delhi (at approximately 4am) and you will set off with our guide for a day of eye opening travel.

You will take a train from North Delhi to Kalka before transferring to the narrow gauge Kalka – Shimla Railway, known affectionately as the 'toy train'. This route travels along a mountainous track known for its dramatic views of the hills and surrounding villages. This railway was built in 1898 to connect Shimla, the summer capital of India during the British Raj, with the rest of the Indian rail system. At the time of construction 107 tunnels and 864 bridges were built throughout the course of the track. Sit back and enjoy the views and listen as our guide shares his knowledge of this beautiful part of the world. We will arrive in Shimla in the early evening in time for us to check into our hotel and go out for dinner.

Overnight: Hotel, Shimla

### DAY 3: SHIMLA

This morning our guide will take you on a heritage walk, taking in some of the many sights of Shimla. Wander along the Ridge Maidan and Mall Road, pick up some crafts at Lakkar Bazaar, visit the Gaiety Theatre and marvel at the impressive neo-Gothic Christ Church.

Shimla is one of the most popular hill stations in India – and with its stunning views, wide boulevards and mist covered mountains it's not hard to see why. The town is situated at an altitude of 2276 metres and was initially chosen as a sanatorium for invalid European officers, but soon developed into a big hill town and became the summer capital of the country during the British Raj.

In the evening enjoy the jovial atmosphere of the town in one of the many Indian or international restaurants.

Overnight: Hotel, Shimla

## DAY 4: PALAMPUR

After breakfast we will leave Shimla and travel by car Palampur (approximately 7 hours). Sit back and enjoy the beautiful views as we wind our way through the valleys and foothills of the mighty Himalayas. In the afternoon arrive at our unique eco accommodation in a local tea estate. After settling in you can relax at the lodge or take a walk through the estate, which has been run by the same family since the 1950s.

Overnight: Tea Estate, Palampur

## DAY 5: PRAGPUR

This morning take a bespoke tour of the tea estate, which was established in 1857 by the British. You'll learn about the journey from shrub to teacup, try your hand at tea plucking and learn to taste like a tea sommelier.

In the afternoon we will travel by car to the heritage village of Pragpur (approximately 2 and half hours). Upon arrival we'll check into the palatial Judges Court Hotel. Wander the grounds and soak up the atmosphere of this country manor.

Overnight: The Judges Court, Pragpur

## DAY 6: SIDHPUR, DHARAMSALA

Spend the morning relaxing and exploring the heritage village of Pragpur, nestled in the shadows of the Dhauladhar mountains. In the afternoon we will travel by car to Dharamsala, known the world over as home to the Dalai Lama. This scenic drive will take you through the vibrant lower hills of Himachal Pradesh before reaching this fascinating North Indian hill station.

Spend the afternoon exploring – starting with a visit to the temple of His Holiness The Dalai Lama, the Namgyel Monastery. Our guide will then lead the group to the Tibet Museum and the Tibetan Houses of Parliament. In the evening you will once again find plenty of lovely roof top restaurants to choose from; including Japanese, Indian and Tibetan.

Overnight: Norbulingka, Dharamsala

## DAY 7: DHARAMSALA

After breakfast our guide will take the group to visit a local village, Naddi – a beautiful local village with magnificent views of the spectacular Himalayas. You will then travel to the Tibetan Children's Village which is a thriving educational community for Tibetan children living in exile. Lunch will be enjoyed at the tranquil Norbulingka Institute which is located in the lush valley below McLeod Ganj. In the afternoon you will have the opportunity to visit the arts centre which preserves the work of Tibetan artisans.

Overnight: Norbulingka, Dharamsala

## DAY 8: DHARAMSALA

The day is free for you to choose from any of our bespoke experiences (optional extras).

Overnight: Norbulingka, Dharamsala

## DAY 9: AMRITSAR

You will leave our hotel early this morning for the picturesque drive down to the plains of the Punjab. Arrive in time to visit to the Wagah border to witness the closing ceremony of the border between India and Pakistan.



PALAMPUR - Himalayan tea walk

## BESPOKE EXPERIENCES

### Dharamsala

- Tibetan Buddhist circuit in McLeod Ganj
- Himalayan forest walk
- Tea plantation walk in the Kangra Valley
- Tibetan Homestay



TOY TRAIN - Kalka to Shimla



SHIMLA

This ceremony takes place every evening and involves a display of pomp and ceremony by the Indian and Pakistani border guards. After the closing ceremony, head back to Amritsar where the rest of the evening at leisure. Enjoy a tasty dinner in one of the many Punjabi restaurants or take an evening stroll around the holy Sikh Golden Temple, which is open 24 hours a day.

Overnight: Hotel, Amritsar

## DAY 10: DELHI

This morning we will visit the Golden Temple to enjoy a quiet stroll through the inner corridors as the priests chant from the Sikh holy book. We will visit the langar hall, a massive free community dining room run entirely by volunteers. The Golden Temple langar can serve hot meals to up to 100,000 people a day.

In the early afternoon we will fly back to Delhi. The rest of the afternoon in Delhi is at your leisure to relax or shop for last minute souvenirs.

Overnight: Hotel, Delhi

## DAY 11: TOUR END

Our tour concludes after breakfast. We will transfer you to the airport for your onward international or domestic flight.



AMRITSAR - Golden Temple

## EXTEND YOUR STAY

**GOLDEN TRIANGLE (Page 4)**

6 days, 5 nights

**ANCIENT VARANASI (Page 33)**

4 days, 3 nights

**KERARI LAKE TREK (Page 25)**

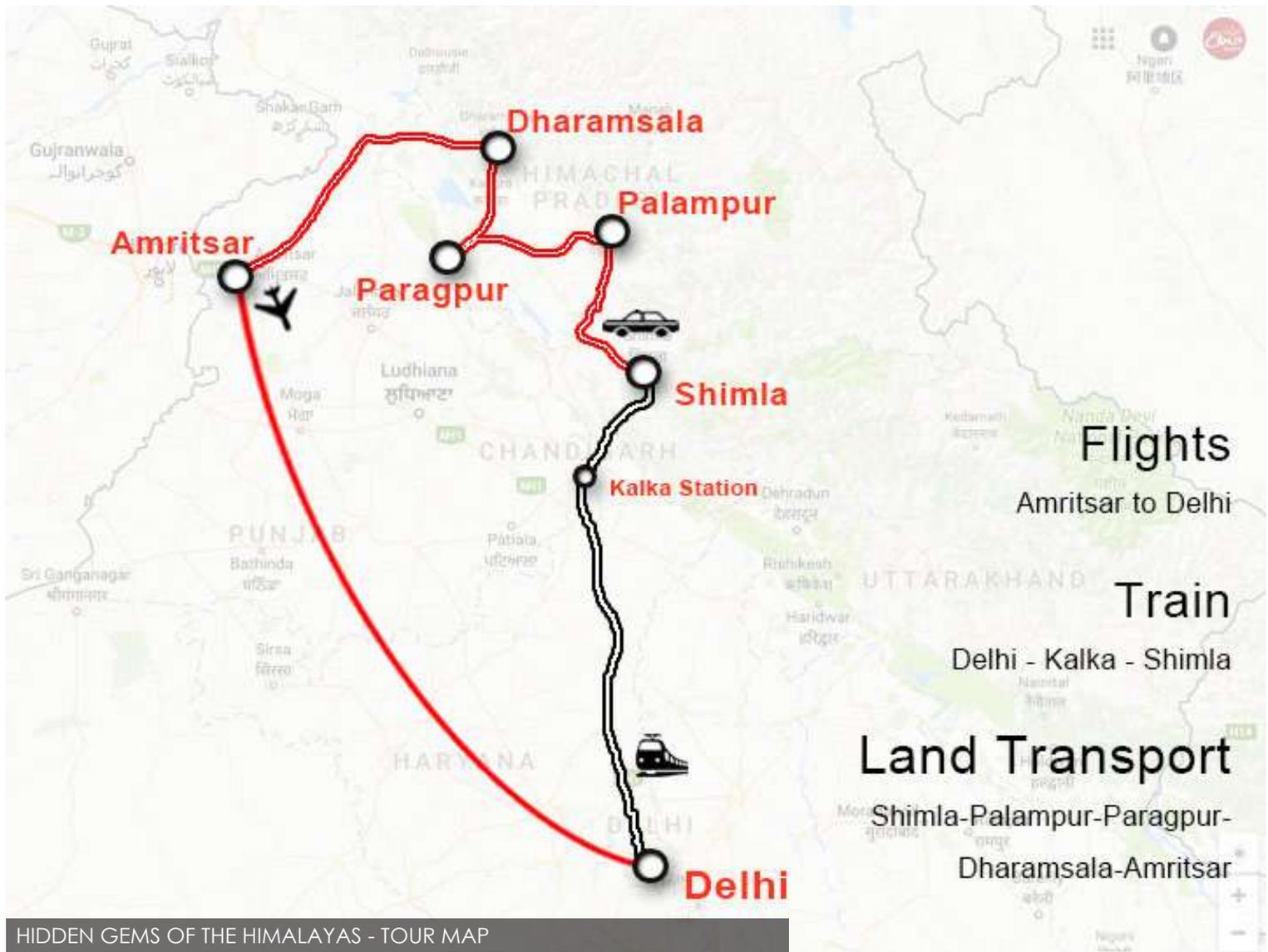
7 days, 6 nights

**SACRED RISHIKESH (Page 36)**

5 days, 4 nights

**AGRA & TAJ MAHAL (Page 32)**

2 days, 1 night



# BEST OF LADAKH

including Hemis Festival

Escorted/Independent

Delhi, Leh, Lamayuru & Alchi

8 days, 7 nights

**Dates:** 5-12 July 2022, 25 June-2 July 2023

**Cost:** A\$2950 per person twin share



LADAKH - Mask Dance at Hemis Festival

## INCLUDES

- Pick up and drop off to/from Delhi airport
- 7 nights' accommodation and daily breakfast
- Internal airfares from Delhi-Leh-Delhi
- All transfers and sightseeing trips by private car including driver
- Entrance fees to all museums and monuments
- Local English speaking guide throughout tour



LADAKH - Sankar Gompa in Leh

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Colourful chaos of Old Delhi
- Leh, the Ladakhi capital
- Stunning views of the Himalayas from Leh Palace
- Ancient Alchi temple
- Mesmerising Lama dancing at Hemis Festival (July 2022 departure only)

## ITINERARY

### DAY 1: ARRIVE DELHI

Welcome to India! Upon your arrival at the airport in Delhi, our representative will meet you and escort you to the hotel. After checking into your hotel, spend the rest of your day at your leisure exploring the local area and relaxing in the hotel. Our friendly guide and hotel staff will be on hand should you need restaurant recommendations or general provisions.

Overnight: Hotel, Delhi

### DAY 2: DELHI TO LEH

Take an early morning flight to Leh, the spectacular capital of Ladakh. Your flight will pass over multiple Himalayan ranges and serves as a fantastic photo opportunity. Leh is framed on all sides by the towering Himalayas, with the mighty Indus River roaring in the valley below. After landing take a walking tour of Leh Bazaar, which has been an important stop on trade routes dating as far back as the third century. The rest of the afternoon is at your leisure to rest and acclimatise.

Overnight: Hotel, Leh

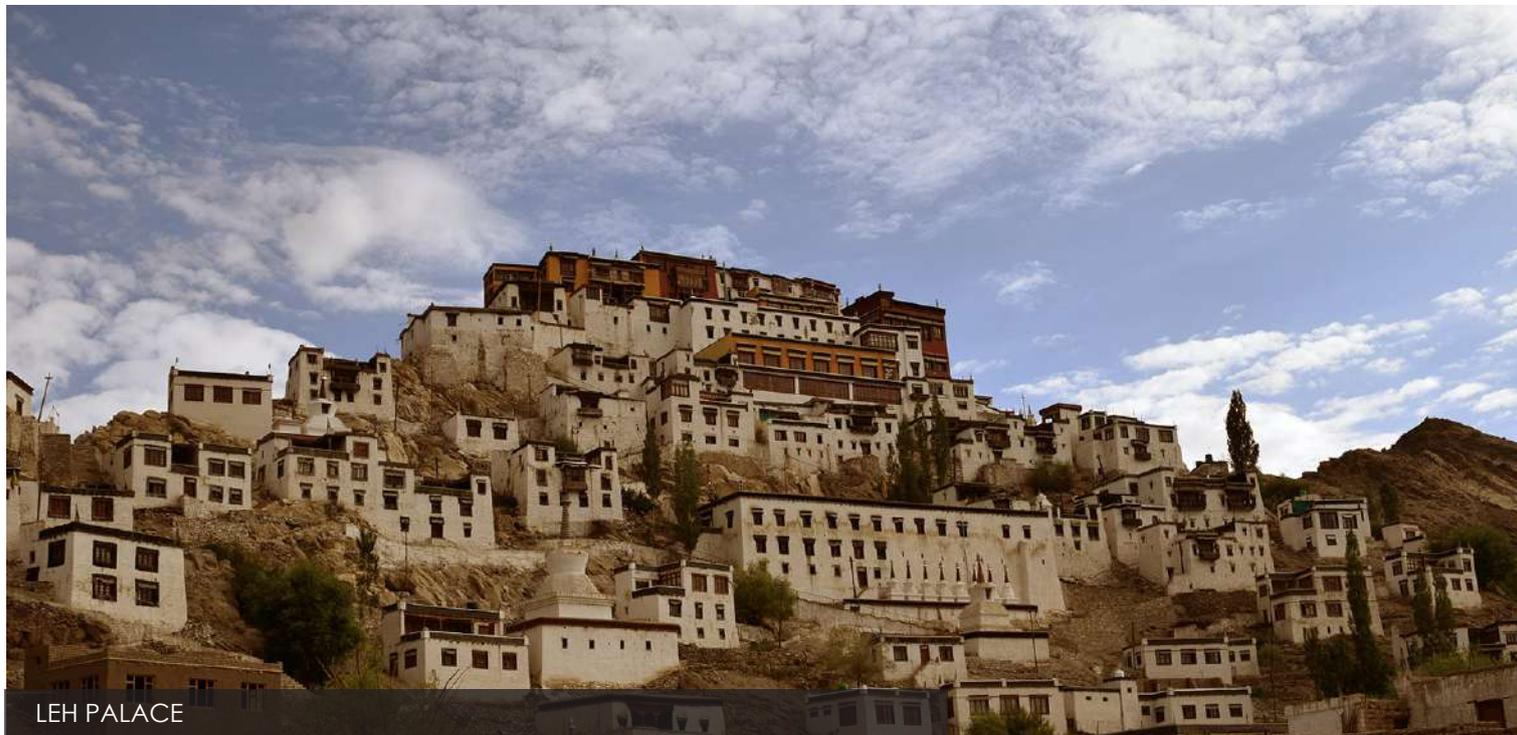
### DAY 3: LEH

After breakfast, visit Gompa Soma, a Buddhist temple constructed in 1840 at the base of the towering Leh palace. Afterwards, head to Moti Market, Leh's old bazaar, for an exploration of its ancient lanes with a history that can be traced back to the Asian spice trade. You will eat lunch together followed by free time to rest, explore, or sip traditional Tibetan butter tea at your leisure.

Overnight: Hotel, Leh

### DAY 4: HEMIS FESTIVAL

Today, you will witness the celebrations of the Hemis Festival, which commemorates the birth of Guru Padamasambhava. After an early breakfast travel to the Hemis Monastery, the largest and richest monastery in all of Ladakh. At 9am the birthday celebrations of Guru Padamasambhava begin in the courtyard, which quickly fills up with local Ladakhis and Buddhist pilgrims. A raised platform with a richly cushioned seat and a finely painted small Tibetan table is placed with the other ceremonial items – cups full of holy water, uncooked rice, tormas made of dough and butter and



LEH PALACE

incense sticks. A number of musicians play traditional music with four pairs of cymbals, large-pan drums, small trumpets and large sized wind instruments. The festival highlight is the gathering of the lamas around the central flagpole to perform the mystic mask dances (Chams) and sacred plays. Dressed in colourful bright brocades with vibrantly decorated and richly adorned paper-mache masks the dancers enact an elaborate combat between good spirits and evil demons to the clatter of drums, cymbals and long horns. (This is only for Hemis Festival Tour) For other dates not including Hemis Festival Tour – Spend the day around Leh for a guided tour of the city, including a visit to the Royal Palace. Constructed in the 17th century, this imposing nine story stone palace is one of the most captivating architectural ruins in the region. Situated in the foothills of the barren landscape, the palace was built as a residence for the King and to mark the reunification of Upper and Lower Ladakh. Above the Royal Palace, on Namgyal Tsemo (Victory Peak), are the ruins of Leh's earliest royal residence, a fortress type structure built by King Tashi Namgyal in the 16th century.

Overnight: Hotel, Leh

## DAY 5: LEH

After breakfast, take a sightseeing tour of Stok Palace, Shey Palace and Thiksey monastery.

Stock Palace is the home of the present day royal family. The palace and accompanying museum were built in the year 1825, by King Tespal Tondup Namgyal. At present the place has a collection of elaborate royal dresses and crowns which are open for travellers to explore.

Shey Palace was built by Deldan Namgyal at the beginning of the 17th century AD. The main image in the monastery is a three story statue of Buddha Shakamuni, made of copper gilt which was made by Deldan Namgyal in the memory of his father Singay Namgyal. The statue is the only one of its kind in the region.

Thiksey Gompa belongs to the Gelukspa order of Buddhism and is considered to be the most beautiful of all the monasteries in Ladakh. After our day of sightseeing we will return to Leh in the evening to rest and eat dinner.

Overnight: Hotel, Leh

## DAY 6: LAMAYURU / ALCHI

After breakfast, travel to the town of Lamayuru, a spectacular 3 hour drive outside of Leh. Your journey weaves through remote mountain passes and deep river valleys

## BESPOKE EXPERIENCES

### Leh

Homestay – stay with a local family and experience the Ladakhi lifestyle  
2 days, 1 night



LEH LADAKH

that embed themselves eternally in your heart and mind. You will visit the local monastery and gomba and climb to the high point overlooking the town for unrivalled views across this spectacular region. The afternoon is at your leisure to enjoy the lunar-like white stone surroundings.

Overnight: Guest house, Lamayuru/Alchi

## DAY 7: LEH

You begin your return journey to Leh by way of Alchi, an ancient Buddhist village tucked into the Indus River valley. The Alchi Gompa is considered one of the most ancient Buddhist sites in the region, dating back to 10th Century. You will have time to observe the comings and goings of the monastery as well as to browse for handicrafts. Your drive back to Leh offers a spectacular setting for thought and reflection on our week's journey and discoveries.

Overnight: Hotel, Leh

## DAY 8: TOUR END

Prepare for your morning flight to Delhi. Arrive in Delhi and continue to your final destination.

## EXTEND YOUR STAY

**SPITI VALLEY** (Page 15)

13 days, 12 nights

**GOLDEN TRIANGLE** (Page 4)

6 days, 5 nights

**ANCIENT VARANASI** (Page 33)

4 days, 3 nights

**AGRA & TAJ MAHAL** (Page 32)

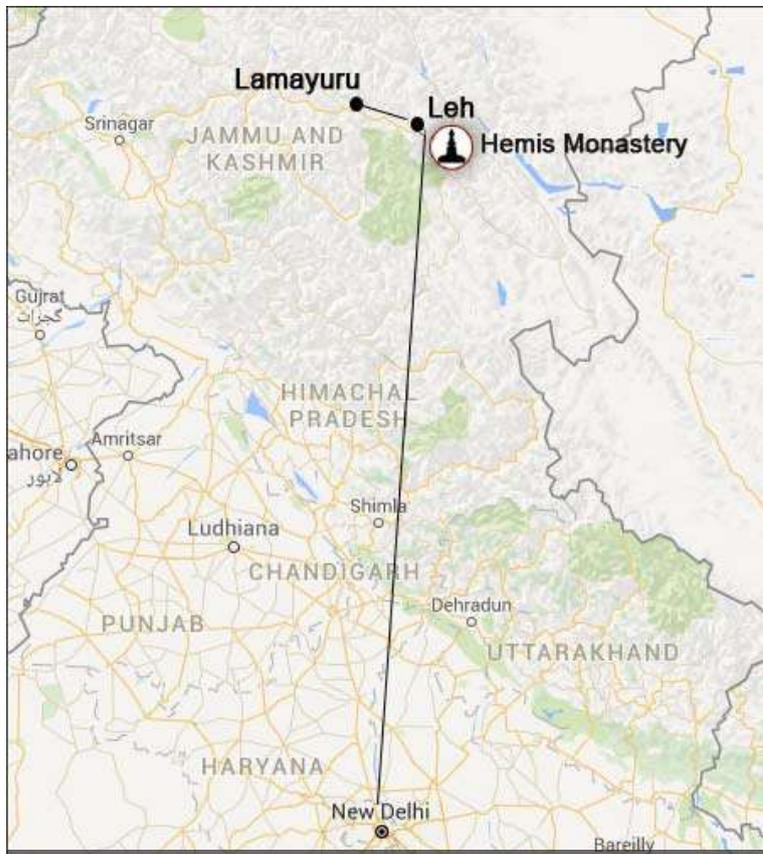
2 days, 1 night

**MCLEOD GANJ** (Page 34)

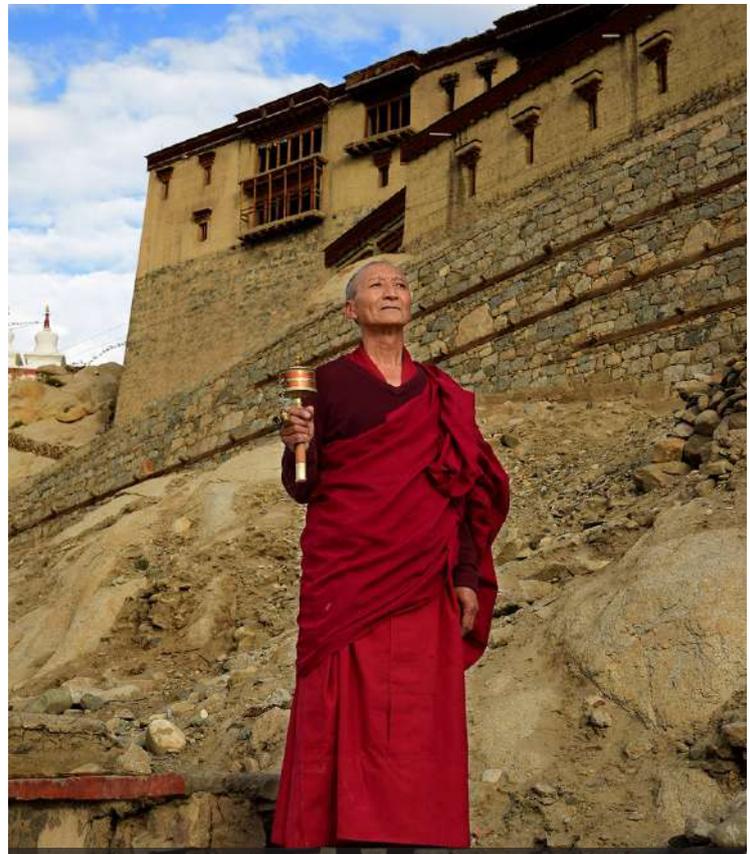
5 days, 4 nights

**SACRED RISHIKESH** (Page 36)

5 days, 4 nights



BEST OF LADAKH - TOUR MAP



A Ladakhi Monk at Leh Monastery



Ladakhi Yak



Gompa at Leh

# SPITI VALLEY

Escorted/Independent  
Delhi, Shimla, Kalpa, Nako,  
Tabo, Kaza, Manali &  
Chandigarh

13 days, 12 nights

**Dates:** 5-17 August 2022, 4-16  
August 2023

**Cost:** A\$3450 per person  
twin share



SPITI - Kaza Monastery

## INCLUDES

- 12 nights' accommodation and breakfast for the duration of the trip
- Transportation by AC Toyota Innova or AC Tempo Traveller Mini Bus
- Trains – connecting train from Delhi to Shimla via Kalka
- Flights – Chandigarh to Delhi
- Entrance fees to all museums and monuments
- Local English speaking guide for the duration of the tour
- Local guide in Delhi



SPITI - Rural Museum in Dhankar Village

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Wonders of Delhi
- Shimla – the queen of hill stations
- Beautiful Kinnaur Valley
- Ancient Buddhist monasteries at Nako and Tabo
- Key Buddhist monastery at Kaza
- Manali hill station

## ITINERARY

### DAY 1: ARRIVE DELHI

Welcome to India! Upon your arrival at the airport in Delhi, our representative will greet you and escort you to the hotel. After checking into your hotel, spend the rest of your day at your leisure exploring the local area and relaxing in the hotel. Our friendly guide and hotel staff will be on hand should you need restaurant recommendations or general provisions.

Overnight: Hotel, Delhi

### DAY 2: DELHI

Head to the iconic and bustling area of Old Delhi after breakfast. We'll admire the magnificent Jama Masjid (India's largest mosque) and enjoy a rickshaw tour through the ancient alleyways of Chandni Chowk bazaar. Before heading back to New Delhi we'll pass by the fantastic Red Fort, constructed in 1638; as well as Raj Ghat, the cremation site of Mahatma Gandhi. As we continue to weave our way to New Delhi, we will pass majestic British era landmarks such as the India Gate, the President's House, Parliament House & the Government Secretariat Buildings. Our final stop of the day is the Laxmi Narayan Hindu Temple.

Overnight: Hotel, Delhi

### DAY 3: DELHI TO SHIMLA

Today you will leave our hotel in the early hours of the morning and set off for a day of exciting rail travel on the world famous Indian Railways. You will take a train from North Delhi to Kalka before transferring onto the narrow gauge 'toy train' Kalka-Shimla Railway. This route travels along a mountainous track known for its dramatic views of the hills and surrounding villages. This railway was built in 1898 to connect Shimla, the summer capital of India during the British Raj, with the rest of the Indian rail system. At the time of construction 107 tunnels and 864 bridges were built throughout the course of the track.

You will arrive in Shimla in the early evening in time for a dinner.

Overnight: Hotel, Shimla.

### DAY 4: SHIMLA

After breakfast, set off on a sightseeing tour of Shimla.

Visit Kufri, Ridge Maidan, Mall Road and the impressive Christ Church. Shimla is one of the most popular hill stations in India, and with its stunning views, wide boulevards and mist covered mountains it's not hard to see why. The town is situated at an altitude of 2276 metres and was initially chosen as a sanatorium for invalid European officers, but soon developed into a big hill town and became the summer capital of the country during the British Raj.

Overnight: Hotel, Shimla

## DAY 5: KALPA

This morning you will leave Shimla and make your way to Kalpa as you head into the beautiful Kinnaur Valley. From Kalpa, see the spectacular Kinnar Kailash, one of the highest mountains in the Indian Himalayas at 6055 metres.

The Kinnaur Valley is known as the gateway to the remote Spiti Valley. Kinnaur is famous for its apple orchards as just about all of India's apples are produced in this area. The cultural tapestry is rich as modernity has only touched it in the past couple of years. You will be able to observe as people go about their everyday life in their stunning traditional dress. Kalpa is surrounded by snowy peaks for most of the year, which makes for a beautiful sunset backdrop.

Overnight: Guest house, Kalpa

## DAY 6: NAKO

The morning is at your leisure to explore Kalpa, before we head towards Rekonig Peo. You will stop for lunch and get your permit for the Spiti Valley and head towards Nako, which is located just 60kms from the Tibetan border.

Nako is a very picturesque village high in the Himalayas (altitude 3625 metres) which has an ancient monastery dating back to 1025 AD, as well as several Buddhist chortens dotted throughout the town. The villagers are extremely proud of their heritage and the town is well maintained by the local community. A pretty lake also surrounds the town and is a lovely spot for an afternoon stroll.

Overnight: Guest house, Nako

## DAY 7: TABO

Today, you will take a morning drive to Tabo. Tabo is famous for its monastery, which dates back to 966AD and is a World Heritage Site. The Dalai Lama maintains that the Tabo Monastery is one of the holiest sites in the world. Due to its height at 3280 metres, Tabo has short summers and very cold winters.

Overnight: Guest house, Tabo

## DAY 8: TABO

Leave after breakfast for the drive to Kaza, stopping off on the way at Dhankar Monastery. Dhankar Monastery was built on a 300-metre high spur overlooking the Spiti and Pin Rivers. It truly is one of the world's most spectacular settings for a monastery and has many holy stories attached to it.

In the afternoon, bid farewell to Dhankar and head towards Kaza where you will spend the next two nights.

Overnight: Guest house, Kaza

## DAY 9: KAZA

You will spend the day around Kaza, exploring the local Sakya monastery and the world famous Ky Monastery. This Tibetan Buddhist monastery is located on top of a hill at an altitude of 4166 metres above sea level and is 11kms from Kaza. The monastery has the distinction of being the oldest and the biggest in the Lahaul and Spiti district as well as being a religious training centre for monks. It is home to around 300 novice monks who receive their religious education here.

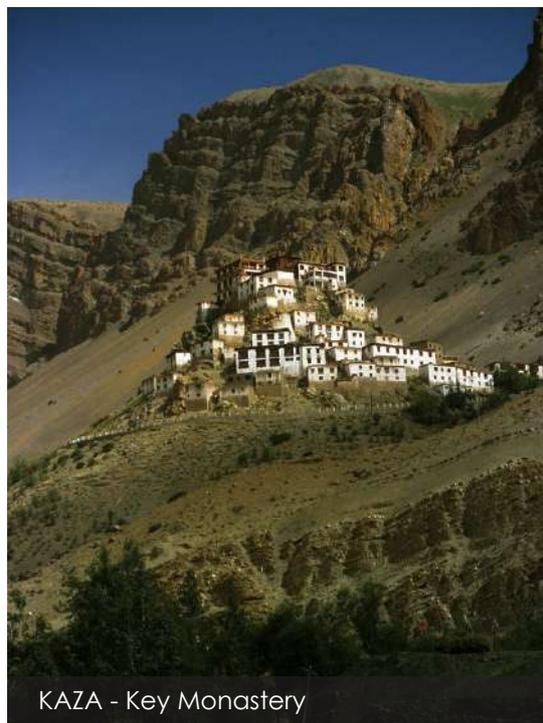
Drive to the remote town of Kibber at 4270 metres for lunch and to soak in the remoteness and beauty of the Spiti Valley.

## BESPOKE EXPERIENCES

### Kaza

Homestay – stay with a local family and experience the Spiti lifestyle

2 days, 1 night



KAZA - Key Monastery



KAZA - Primary School in Kaza



KAZA - Friendly local people

With sweeping views of the mountains on one side and the Spiti Valley on the other, it is great place to relax and to enjoy the view. The Kibber area is also home to the elusive Blue Sheep, and if you keep your eyes peeled on the horizon you may see one of these shy creatures in the distance. In the late afternoon we drive back to Kaza.

Overnight: Guest house, Kaza

## DAY 10: MANALI

You will leave Kaza very early in the morning for the drive to Manali and follow the valley floor before gradually rising and crossing the spectacular Rothang Pass (3980m) which offers some of the most spectacular mountain views in the world. You will stop at the pass to admire the stunning view, before continuing on to Manali and arriving by early afternoon.

Manali is nestled amongst the Himalayas on the banks of the Beas River and offers an exotic charm unlike any other place in India. Old Manali has maintained its old world charm despite modern conveniences such as the many restaurants offering a variety of local and international cuisines. The rest of the afternoon is at your leisure to explore this picturesque town or to take a well deserved rest.

Overnight: Guest house, Manali

## DAY 11: CHANDIGARH

After breakfast, leave Manali and begin your descent to the Indian plains, and to the modern metropolis of Chandigarh. The drive will take 7 hours by car. You follow the Beas River from Manali to Mandi, passing through one of the most beautiful gorges that Himachal Pradesh has to offer. Sit back and admire the stunning views as we travel in comfort through what is known as 'the valley of the gods'.

Overnight: Hotel, Chandigarh

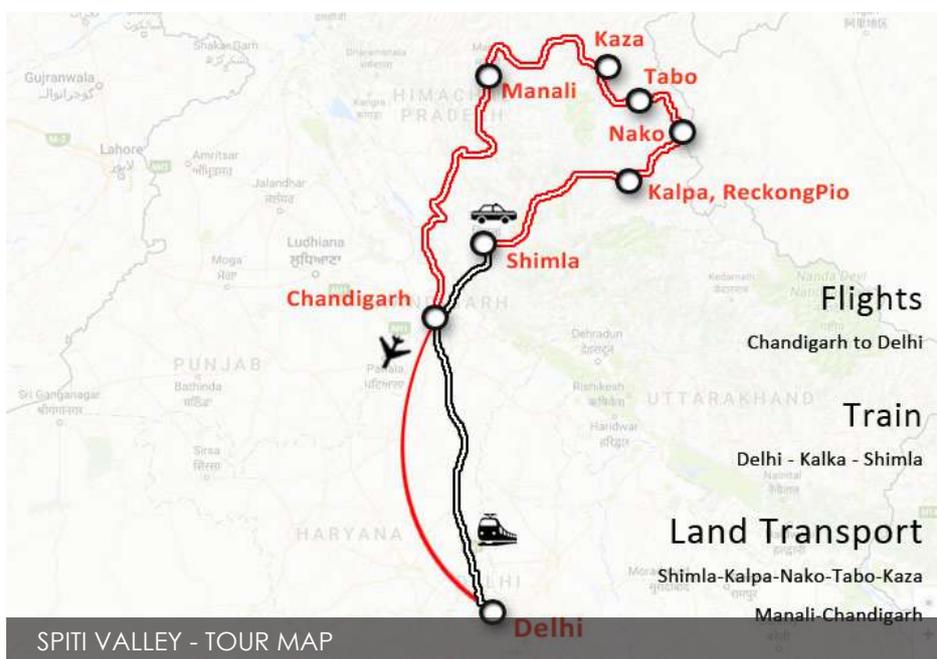
## DAY 12: DELHI

After breakfast we will take a morning flight to Delhi. The rest of the day is at your leisure to relax in our modern hotel or to shop for any last minute souvenirs in the bustling bazaars of Delhi.

Overnight: Hotel, Delhi

## DAY 13: TOUR END

Transfer to the Indra Gandhi International Airport for your return flight home. We look forward to seeing you on another Ekno experience soon



## EXTEND YOUR STAY

**BEST OF LADAKH** (Page 12)  
8 days, 7 nights

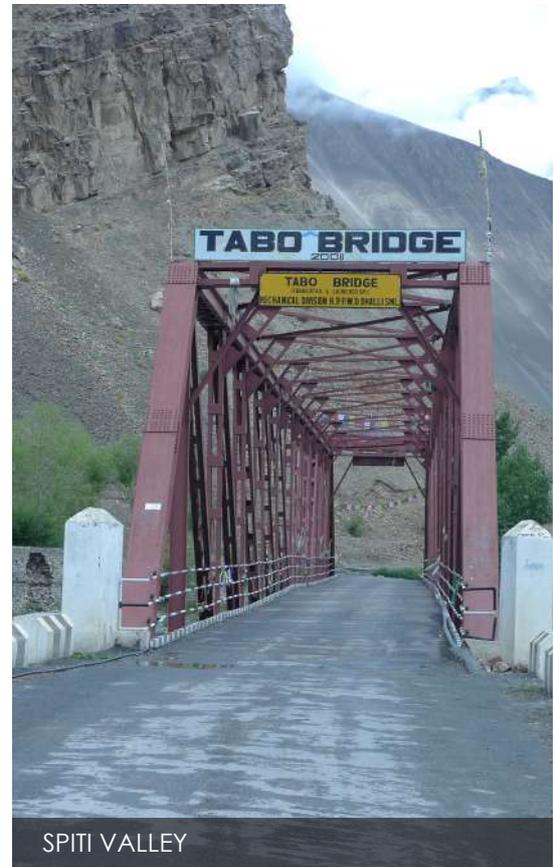
**GOLDEN TRIANGLE** (Page 4)  
6 days, 5 nights

**ANCIENT VARANASI** (Page 33)  
4 days, 3 nights

**AGRA & TAJ MAHAL** (Page 32)  
2 days, 1 night

**MCLEOD GANJ** (Page 34)  
5 days, 4 nights

**SACRED RISHIKESH** (Page 36)  
5 days, 4 nights



SPITI VALLEY



SPITI VALLEY

# ENCHANTING KERALA

Escorted/Independent  
10 days, 9 nights

**Dates:** 14-23 Oct, 18-27 Nov,  
16-25 Dec 2022, 13-22 Jan,  
17-26 Feb, 17-26 Mar, 13-22  
Oct, 17-26 Nov, 15-24 Dec  
2023

**Cost:** A\$3000 per person  
twin share



KERALA - Houseboat in Alleppey backwaters

## INCLUDES

- Met at airport by our representative
- Services of an English-speaking guide for the duration of the tour
- 7 nights' accommodation in hotels with breakfast
- 1 night on a luxury houseboat with lunch, dinner and breakfast
- 1 night home stay accommodation with lunch, dinner and breakfast
- Private vehicle for all transfers and sightseeing as per the itinerary
- Entrance fees as per the itinerary
- Activities as mentioned in the itinerary

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Heritage city of Kochi
- Traditional Kathakali dance performance in Kochi
- Tea plantation trek in Munnar
- Periyar National Park
- Spice plantations and markets in Thekkady
- Backwaters of Alleppey with an overnight stay on a Kettuvalam boat
- Village homestay on a car free backwater island
- Delicious South Indian delicacies

## ITINERARY

### DAY 1: ARRIVE KOCHI

Welcome to India! On arrival at Kochi airport, you will be met by our guide and transferred to your hotel in Fort Cochin. Spend the afternoon exploring this historical area, famed for its colonial era architecture and iconic Chinese fishing nets. There are also galleries, cafes and boutiques in addition to beautiful old churches. In the evening you can wander down to the fishing nets where the local fishermen will let you have a go for a small tip. For a truly local experience you can buy fresh sea food from one of the nearby fishmongers, take it to a nearby shack to be cooked and then enjoy it as you watch the sun going down.

Overnight: Hotel, Kochi

### DAY 2: EXPLORE KOCHI

After breakfast take a bespoke heritage walk around the local area. Fort Cochin is a maze of older style southern Indian houses and colonial era buildings which makes for an interesting walk. Along the way visit some of the most important landmarks which include Fort Immanuel, the Dutch Cemetery, Santa Cruz Basilica and Saint Francis Church, believed to be the oldest European church in India.

You will then visit Mattancherry, the old bazaar district and home to the famous spice warehouses, along with Mattancherry Dutch Palace, built by the Portuguese in 1555. You will then explore Jew Town, home to an interesting synagogue as well as antique and curio shops. The area is also home to many heritage restaurants and cafés with excellent street views when it is time for a break.

In the afternoon relax and enjoy an Ayurvedic massage (optional). Ayurveda is a holistic form of medicine established over 3000 years ago in India and is the perfect way to unwind after a busy day of exploring. In the evening don't miss the opportunity to catch a traditional Kathakali dance performance.

Overnight: Hotel, Kochi

### DAY 3: KOCHI - MUNNAR

After a leisurely breakfast you will depart for Munnar (1600m above sea level), a scenic 4 hour drive up into the Western Ghats Mountain range. Check into the accommodation and enjoy the fresh air of South India's largest tea growing region.

In the afternoon, take a drive up to the Top Station (1880m) for picturesque views of the Western Ghats and out across to the neighbouring state of Tamil Nadu. There is a good chance we might see wild elephants wandering through the lush hills and jungles on our way.

Overnight: Hotel, Munnar

## DAY 4: EXPLORE MUNNAR

Today, take a trek through the beautiful tea plantations around Munnar, the best way to enjoy the beauty of the rolling verdant hills. The mountain scenery is breathtaking, and you'll often be above the clouds or amongst the veils of mist. Be amazed at the variety of fresh local produce as we stop to admire the many tea and spice plantations.

Overnight: Hotel, Munnar

## DAY 5: MUNNAR - THEKKADY

After breakfast, take a spectacular 3-hour drive through the Cardamom Hills to Thekkady, along a route lined with plantations of tea, cocoa, tapioca, bamboo, coconut, banana, and of course cardamom. Thekkady is the gateway to Periyar National Park, which is home to tigers, elephants, primates and deer.

The afternoon is at your leisure to relax or wander the village and explore the local markets. You may also wish to enjoy an optional extra such as a guided hike or safari in the national park, a therapeutic Ayurvedic treatment or a traditional South Indian cooking class.

Overnight: Hotel, Thekkady

## DAY 6: PERIYAR NATIONAL PARK

Take a scenic walk through the spice gardens before visiting the fragrant and colourful spice markets, which is a great opportunity to purchase spices.

In the afternoon, you will take a wildlife cruise on Periyar Lake. This is a great opportunity for wildlife spotting, especially for deer, boar, otters and the many varieties of birdlife.

Overnight: Hotel, Thekkady

## DAY 7: HOUSEBOAT ALLEPPEY BACKWATERS

After an early breakfast, depart for Alleppey (4 hours) where you will board our houseboat for a trip along the backwaters. Local houseboats have been made in the traditional rice barge or Kettuvalam style and luxuriously fitted out with bedrooms, a dining room, open lounge and deck. A captain and cook are on hand to look after your every need. Spend the afternoon cruising around the backwaters, drifting along coconut lined canals and past the small villages that line the banks. Enjoy the delicious South Indian food and the peace of sleeping on board a boat. For many people this is a highlight of their time in India.

Overnight: Houseboat, Alleppey Backwaters

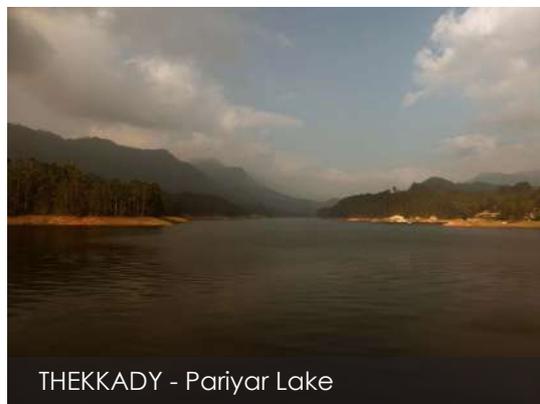
## DAY 8: ALLEPPEY HOMESTAY

After a delicious breakfast, you will be dropped at your homestay on a backwater island. Your homestay is with a local family in a picturesque village surrounded by lush rice paddies. The homestay is situated on a car-free island and the only way to get around is on foot, bicycle or by boat. Do all three or just chill in a hammock watching life pass by at a snail's pace. You can also take the optional extra of trying out a South Indian cooking class.

Overnight: Homestay, Chennamkary (Alleppey Backwaters)

## DAY 9: ALLEPPEY - KOCHI

After a relaxed breakfast we will depart Alleppey for the drive back to Kochi (2 hours).



THEKKADY - Pariyar Lake



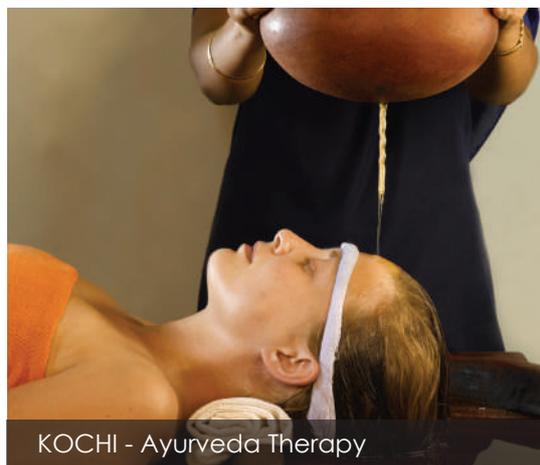
KOCHI - Kathakali Dance Show



Tea Gardens



Traditional South Indian food



KOCHI - Ayurveda Therapy

Spend the rest of the day at your leisure or exploring Fort Cochin. Princess Street is one of the oldest streets in the city and is an excellent place to go for people-watching. It is also home to countless cafes, restaurants, bookstores, tea shops, art galleries and boutiques, making it a perfect place to enjoy good South Indian coffee or to do any last minute souvenir shopping.

Overnight: Hotel, Kochi

## DAY 10: DEPARTURE

After breakfast transfer to either Kochi or Trivandrum airport for your onward flight.



ALLEPPEY - Houseboat on Backwaters

## BESPOKE EXPERIENCES

### Vypeen Island

Ayurvedic massage in Kochi

Cooking class on Vypeen Island

## EXTEND YOUR STAY

### KOCHI (Page 37)

3 days, 2 nights

**GOAN HOMESTAY** (Itinerary on application) 5 days, 4 nights

### ANCIENT VARANASI (Page 33)

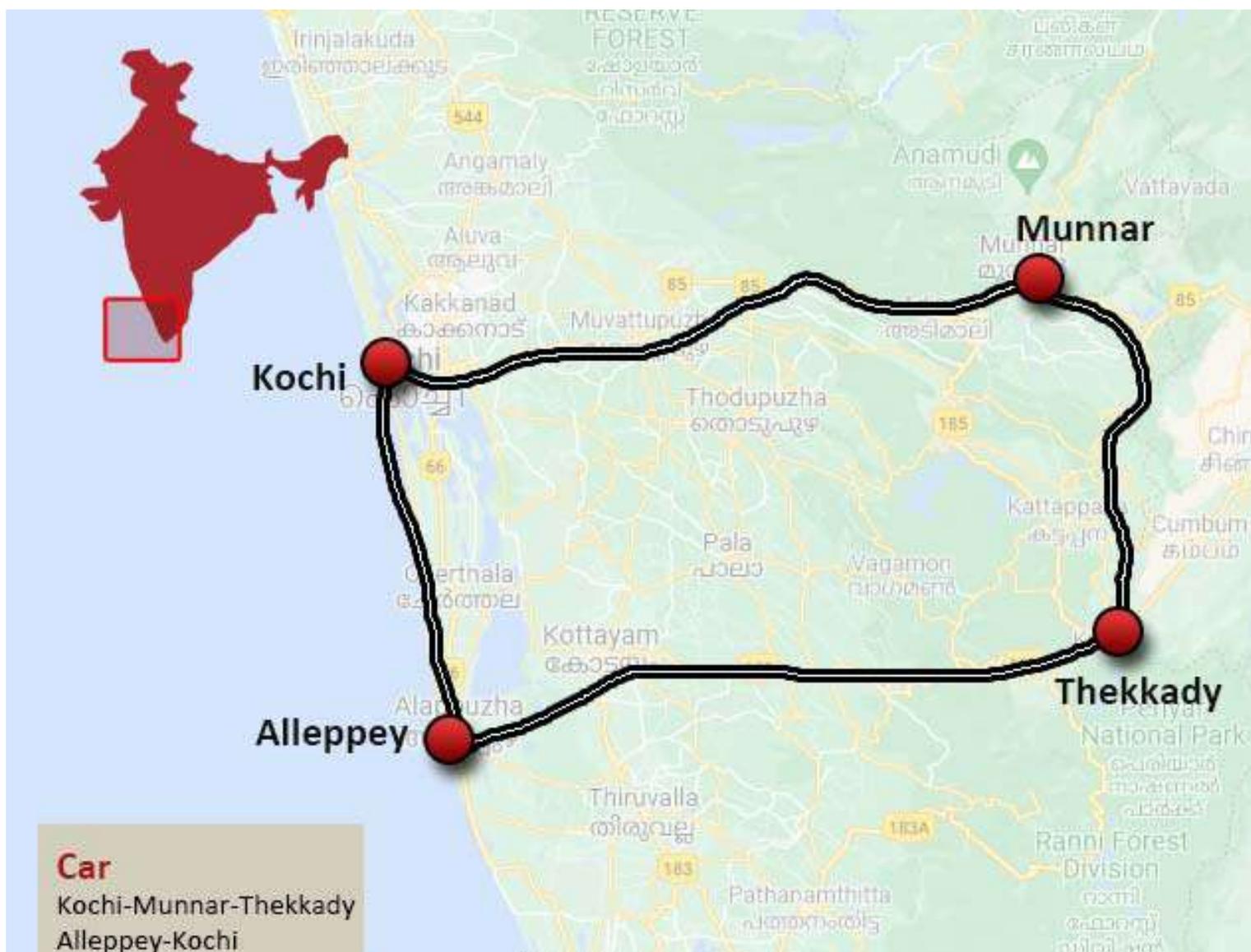
4 days, 3 nights

### MUMBAI (Page 35)

4 days, 3 night

### AYURVEDA WELLNESS SPA

Individual times



### Car

Kochi-Munnar-Thekkady  
Alleppey-Kochi

ENCHANTING KERALA - TOUR MAP

# WONDERS OF NORTH EAST INDIA

including Hornbill Festival

Escorted/Independent

Kolkata, Majuli Island,  
Kaziranga, Kohima

13 days, 12 nights

**Dates:** 21 Nov-4 Dec 2022/23

**Cost:** Price on Application



NAGALAND - Hornbill Festival

## INCLUDES

- Met by our representative at Kolkata airport and accompanied by tour manager throughout the tour
- 12 nights' accommodation with breakfast and dinner
- All transfers and sightseeing by private car unless otherwise specified in the itinerary
- Domestic flights from Kolkata to Jorhat and Dimapur to Kolkata
- Return ferry from Neemati Ghat to Majuli Island
- One-way train travel from Mariani to Dimapur
- Entrance fees to all sights and monuments as per the itinerary
- All activities as per the itinerary

## ITINERARY

### DAY 1: ARRIVE KOLKATA

Welcome to incredible India! On arrival you will be met by one of our representatives at transferred to the hotel. The rest of the day is free to relax or explore the local surrounds. Kolkata is a fascinating city – full of life, vibrancy and culture. Although no activities are planned, your guide will be on hand to offer help and recommendations. Overnight: Hotel, Kolkata

### DAY 2: KOLKATA SIGHTSEEING

Kolkata is an intoxicating city to explore, and today you will discover why. As one of India's largest cities and the former capital of British India, the city is regarded as the artistic and cultural capital of the country.

After breakfast at the hotel we will head to Kumartuli, the potters or sculptors district. This atmospheric area is made up of maze-like alley ways that house over 550 different workshops that create religious idols all year-round. The idols are primarily created for the Durga Puja Festival, and wandering the narrow streets offers a rare glimpse into the ritual and skill involved in creating these idols from clay and bamboo. Watching the idols come to life is also a photographer's dream.

After exploring you will take a ferry to the Mullick Ghat Flower Market, the largest in Asia. Crossing the mighty Hooghly River by boat is a chance to view this heaving metropolis from the water as you pass under the iconic Howrah Bridge. You will also visit the grand marble Raj era Victoria Memorial.

Return to our hotel late afternoon where the rest of the day is free to spend at your leisure.

Overnight: Hotel, Kolkata

### DAY 3: MAJULI ISLAND, ASSAM

After breakfast at the hotel you will fly to Jorhat where you will be picked up at the airport and continue your journey to Majuli Island. Along the way, stop at the 115-year-old Haroocharai Tea Estate for lunch.

After lunch continue to Neemati Ghat, from where you will board a ferry Majuli Island. Majuli is the world's largest river island but it is slowly disappearing as the land is eroded away by the mighty Brahmaputra River to monsoonal floods.



MAJULI ISLAND, ASSAM

Majuli is renowned in Assamese culture as home to the medieval Xatras (monasteries) where monks practice Assam's distinctive form of Vishnu worship. There will be time to visit the Xatras, an eye-opening glimpse into the lives of the monks who still lead an austere life mastering religious scripts, art, music, dance and handicraft.

The afternoon is yours to relax at our beautiful resort and enjoy the change of pace after bustling Kolkata.

Overnight: Hotel, Majuli Island

## DAY 4: MAJULI ISLAND

After breakfast, set off to visit some of the significant Xatras on Majuli. We will visit Dakshinpaat Xatra, where monks lead a celibate life; followed by Natun Samaguri Xatra where the monks are allowed to marry. Natun Samaguri Xatra is known for its 400-year-old tradition of religious mask making started by Srimanta Shankardev for religious plays.

The afternoon is free for you to soak up the atmosphere of the beautiful island. Take a walk through the rice fields or enjoy some bird watching at the water meadows.

Overnight: Hotel, Majuli Island

## DAY 5: MAJULI ISLAND

After breakfast, pick up some local bikes and cycle around some of the nearby villages. The bike hire scheme has been set up to promote sustainable tourism in the area and is also one of the best ways to slowly explore the villages and beautiful surrounds. Alternative transport will be provided for those who don't wish to cycle.

You will pay a visit to Mishing Village, home to the Mishing tribe, who make up almost half of the population of Majuli. As you explore the village will notice their distinct houses which are traditionally built on raised platforms.

After our bike ride return to your accommodation and the rest of the afternoon is yours to relax or explore. Don't forget to watch the sun set over the Brahmaputra, as people head home by boat.

In the evening, enjoy a traditional tribal feast. The food you will try is very distinctive, and there will be plenty of unusual fish, meat and vegetarian delicacies on offer. Finish off the meal by trying the local rice beer, known as Apong (optional).

Overnight: Hotel, Majuli Island

## DAY 6: KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK

After breakfast you will say goodbye to Majuli Island and start the journey to Kaziranga National Park, home to elephants, tigers, primates and India's famed one-horned rhino.

After travelling by ferry and private vehicle, reach your accommodation and check in. The park consists of several ranges, and over the next two days you'll visit the Central Range (home to Tigers), the Bagori Range (home to rhinos, elephants and water buffaloes) and the Burapahar Range (home to India's only ape, the Hoolock Gibbon, as well as Capped Langurs).

The afternoon is yours to relax in our luxurious riverside accommodation, from where you might even be able to spot rhinos grazing in the neighboring grasslands.

Overnight: Resort, Kaziranga National Park

## DAY 7: KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK

Today, take morning and afternoon jeep safaris. Your safari guide will choose which range of the park to cover and will make sure that you pay a visit to all three over the next two days.

In between the safaris you can relax at the resort and enjoy some of their delicious food.

Overnight: Resort, Kaziranga National Park

## HIGHLIGHTS

- The wonders of Kolkata
- Majuli Island, known for its unique Assamese monasteries
- Tribal feast prepared by the Mishing community
- Stay at Kaziranga National Park – home to the elusive Bengal Tiger as well as rhinos, elephants and primates
- Kohima, the capital city of Nagaland
- Sights, sounds and flavours of the Hornbill Festival
- Kigwema village, home to the Angami people.



ASSAM - Kaziranga National Park



ASSAM - Kaziranga National Park



ASSAM - Majuli Island

## DAY 8: JORHAT

This morning enjoy your final jeep safari in Kaziranga National Park. In the afternoon, drive to Jorhat where you will spend the night before your next adventure - the tribal north-eastern state of Nagaland. Overnight: Hotel, Jorhat

## DAY 9: JORHAT – KOHIMA, NAGALAND

Rise and shine early so that you can catch the Shatabdi Express to Dimapur. Drive to Mariani station where you will board one of India's famed trains. Your train journey will take two hours and is a perfect time to sit back and enjoy the passing scenery. Arrive in Dimapur in time for a late breakfast before continuing by private vehicle to Kohima, the capital city of Nagaland. Kohima is scattered across a series of forested ridges with some picturesque views of the valley below. After checking into your hotel, visit the War Cemetery, which stands at a battle site of the 64-day Battle of Kohima where the Allied Forces won a decisive battle over the Japanese. The cemetery is one of the most historically significant reminders of the war that was fought in this part of the world. Visit the Central Market, where tribal people gather to buy and sell local delicacies. Overnight: Hotel, Kohima

## DAY 10: HORNBILL FESTIVAL

After breakfast, attend the colorful opening ceremony of the Hornbill Festival at the Kisama Heritage Village festival grounds. At the festival you will experience traditional Nagaland dances, songs, games, food, religious ceremonies and tribal lore. Attending the festival and witnessing the Naga tribes in their full warrior dress is truly a once in a life time experience. The Hornbill Festival is organised annually to preserve the culture of the diverse local tribes. Although each tribe has their own festivals, the Hornbill Festival is an important social and cultural event for all the tribes to meet. The festival is named after the Hornbill Bird, common to the folklore of all the tribes. Spend the day at the festival site and enjoy the local delicacies on offer as well as the famous Naga hospitality. After leaving the festival site, visit Kigwema Village. The village is home to the Angami people, one of the major Naga ethnic groups. Several households in the village welcome tourists, giving you a rare peek into the lives of the tribes people away from the festival site. Overnight: Hotel, Kohima

## BESPOKE EXPERIENCES

### KOLKATA

Heritage Walk of the old city

## EXTEND YOUR STAY

**KOLKATA** (Itinerary on application)  
3 days, 2 nights

**GANGTOK & DARJEELING**  
(Itinerary on application)  
7 days, 6 nights

**ANCIENT VARANASI** (Page 33)  
4 days, 3 nights



NAGALAND - Chapel at Kisama

## DAY 11: HORNBILL FEST & CATHEDRAL

After breakfast head to Kisama Heritage Village to enjoy the festivities for another day. Today you will be able to watch jaw-dropping performances and enactments of the traditional way of life for the various tribes as well as eat delicious Naga food till you can take no more.

In the evening, visit the iconic Kohima Cathedral to enjoy the panoramic views of the city.

Overnight: Hotel, Kohima

## DAY 12: KOHIMA – DIMAPUR – KOLKATA

Today we will say good bye to Nagaland. We will have breakfast at the hotel before taking a scenic drive to Dimapur, where we will board a flight to Kolkata. We will arrive in Kolkata by mid-afternoon and transfer to our accommodation.

The rest of the afternoon is at your leisure. You might wish to explore the local area or do some last-minute souvenir shopping.

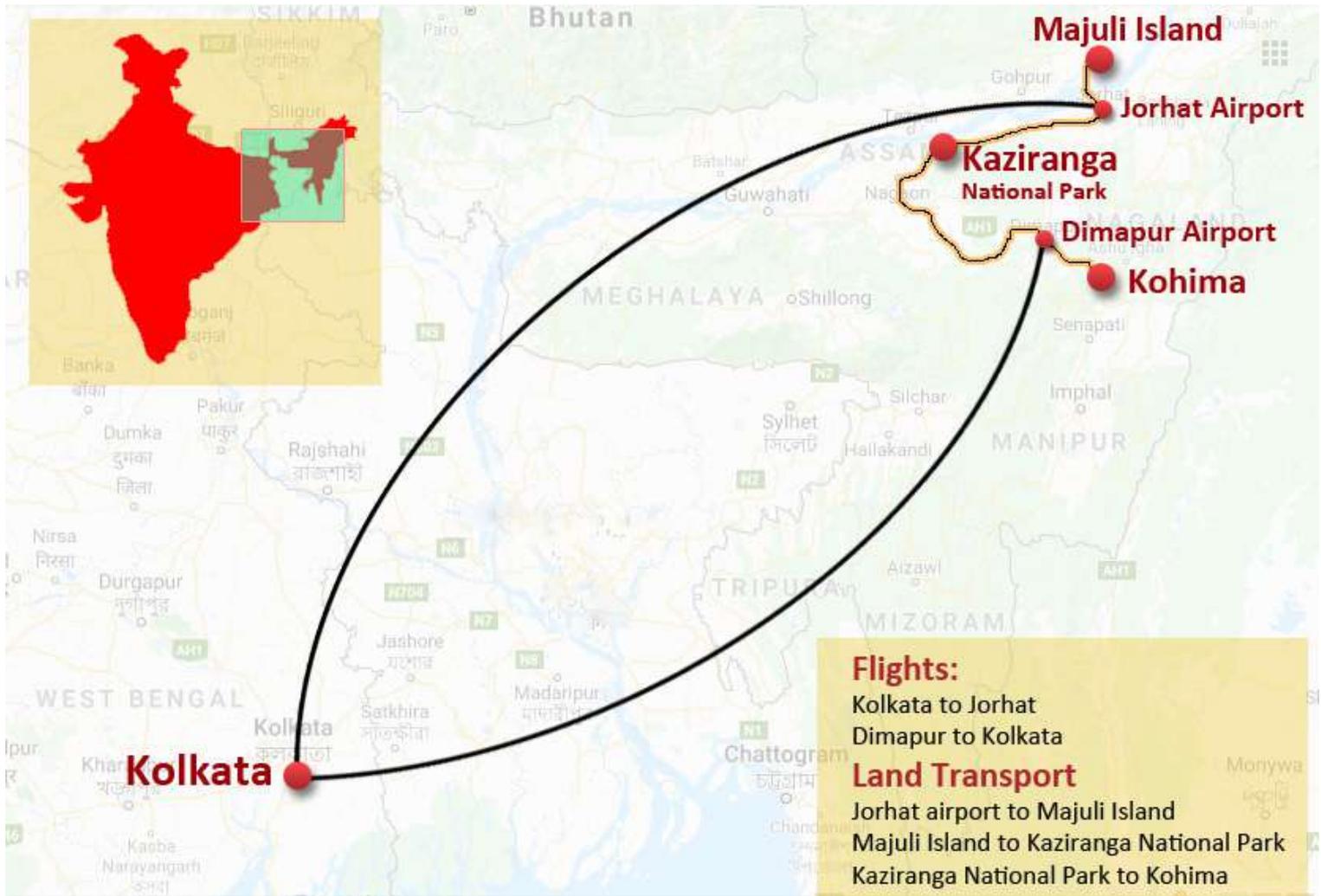
Overnight: Hotel, Kolkata

## DAY 13: DEPARTURE DAY

We will transfer you to the airport in time for your return flight home.



NAGALAND - Hornbill Festival



WONDERS OF NORTH EAST INDIA - TOUR MAP

# KARERI LAKE TREK

Escorted/Independent  
McLeod Ganj-Kareri Lake

8 days, 7 nights

**Dates:** May to November

**Cost:** A\$900 per person  
twin share



Kareri Lake in winter

## INCLUDES

- 2 nights' accommodation in McLeod Ganj
- 2 breakfasts in McLeod Ganj
- Tour of McLeod Ganj, Bhagsu, Dharamkot and Naddi villages
- 6 nights trekking accommodation in a tent, all trekking food and a guide and porter for 7 days

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Temple of His Holiness The Dalai Lama in McLeod Ganj
- Visit local villages for cultural experiences
- Trek through stunning natural landscape
- Camp at beautiful Kareri Lake

## ITINERARY

### DAY 1: MCLEOD GANJ

Welcome to McLeod Ganj! You will be met by our representative and escorted to your guest house, before heading out on a tour of this fascinating North Indian hill station. We'll visit the temple of His Holiness The Dalai Lama, the Namgyel Monastery; as well as the Tibet Museum. Spend the afternoon with your guide and porters learning about the route and making final preparations for the trek.  
Overnight: Guest house, McLeod Ganj

### DAY 2: KARERI VILLAGE

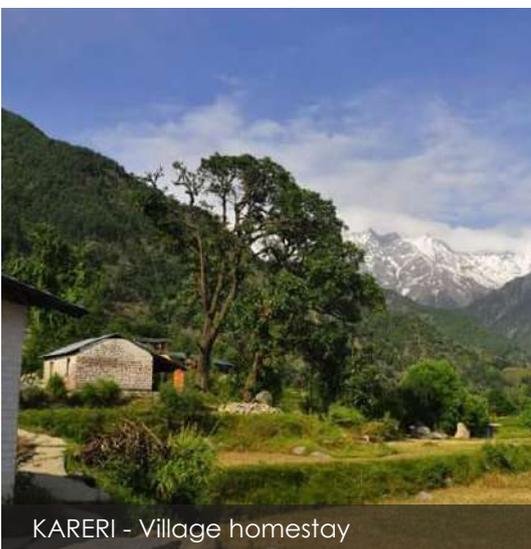
We'll depart from McLeod Ganj (at an altitude of 1780m) by early morning and begin our trek. We'll walk for 11 km, approximately 5 hours, ending at Kareri Village Forest Rest House, at an altitude of 2175 m. Along the way we will pass through thick pine forests and traditional villages before enjoying the spectacular sunset views of the valley below.  
Overnight: Camping, Kareri Village Forest Rest House.

### DAY 3: LIOTI

Trek from Kareri Village to Lioti at 2915 metres (approximately 6 hours). The trail passes through lush forests of oak, rhododendron and pine and follows flowing river streams. Lioti is a stunning alpine grassland with beautiful sweeping views and we will make our camp here tonight.  
Overnight: Camping, Lioti

### DAY 4: KARERI LAKE

Trek from Lioti to Kareri Lake at 3200 metres, which will take approximately 4 hours. Kareri Lake is a common grazing spot for Gaddi shepherds as they head for the high passes overhead. The trail follows a deep river gorge, with densely forested and soaring mountains rising to the other side. Enjoy camping in the beautiful meadow next to Kareri Lake and soak in the pristine mountain air.  
Overnight: Camping, Kareri lake



KARERI - Village homestay

## DAY 5: BAGGA

Rise in time for the sunrise, it's worth it. You will be able to witness the sun light up the high mountain peaks of the Baleni Pass as well as the valley below. Today we'll trek for approximately 4 hours as we take the steep descent from Kareri Lake to Bagga, located at 2500 meters.

Overnight: Camping, Bagga

## DAY 6: GUNA

Today we trek from Bagga to Guna at 2600 meters. Approximately 6 hours of trekking through thick pine forests with a steep descent.

Overnight: Camping, Guna

## DAY 7: TRIUND

Trek from Guna to Triund at 3350 meters. Triund is a popular location with stunning views of the valley and McLeod Ganj below it. In Triund you may wish to eat in one of the small restaurants or drink a hot chai (tea) from one of the many roadside tea stalls. Approximately five hours of trekking today.

Overnight: Camping or guest house, Triund

## DAY 8: MCLEOD GANJ

Today weaves us back to where we started, McLeod Ganj. Enjoy an easy four hour trek back and arrive by mid-afternoon. Freshen up and treat yourself at one of the many fantastic restaurants the town has to offer – from Korean or Indian to traditional Tibetan, McLeod Ganj has food for all palates.

Overnight: Guest house, McLeod Ganj

## DAY 9: MCLEOD GANJ

Our tour ends after breakfast. We hope to see you again for your next Ekno Travels experience.

## BESPOKE EXPERIENCES

### DHARAMSALA

Tibetan Buddhist Temple & Forest Walk  
Himalayan Tea Walk  
Kangra Valley  
Tibetan Buddhist Circuit  
Homestays

## EXTEND YOUR STAY

**GOLDEN TRIANGLE** (Page 4)  
6 days, 5 nights

**ANCIENT VARANASI** (Page 33)  
4 days, 3 nights

**SACRED RISHIKESH** (Page 36)  
5 days, 4 nights

**AGRA & TAJ MAHAL** (Page 32)  
2 days, 1 night

**AMRITSAR** (Page 32)  
3 days, 2 nights



# GREAT HIMALAYAN TREK

Escorted/Independent  
Delhi-Tirthan Valley-Shimla

9 days, 8 nights

**Dates:** May to November

**Cost:** A\$ 2150 per person  
twin share

## Adventure Tours and Trekking



Great Himalayan National Park

### INCLUDES

- 6 nights' accommodation with complimentary breakfast
- 2 nights' homestay accommodation with all meals
- Domestic flights: Delhi to Chandigarh, Chandigarh to Delhi
- Train from Shimla to Kalka (or car if train is not available)
- All transfers and transportation in AC Toyota Innova/Tempo Traveler or similar throughout the tour
- Entrance fees to all museums and monuments
- Local English-speaking guide for the duration of the tour
- Met on arrival at Delhi airport

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the riverside temples and ghats in Mandi
- Enjoy a unique home stay in the picturesque Tirthan Valley
- Discover the beauty of the Great Himalayan National Park with a day hike
- Experience Himalayan village life
- Take in the sights of the stunning Kinnaur region, including the Jalori Pass
- Visit the historical hill station of Shimla
- Marvel at the scenery as you travel on the world-famous 'toy train'

### ITINERARY

#### DAY 1: ARRIVE DELHI

Welcome to incredible India! Our representative will meet you and escort you to your hotel upon your arrival at the airport in Delhi. After checking into the hotel, spend the rest of the day at your leisure exploring the local area and soaking up the vibrant atmosphere. Our friendly guide will be on hand should you need any assistance.  
Overnight: Hotel, Delhi

#### DAY 2: DELHI-CHANDIGARH-MANDI

After breakfast, take an early morning flight to Chandigarh. Upon arrival in Chandigarh you will be met by a driver and driven to Mandi. Arrive in Mandi in the afternoon and settle into your hotel. In the early evening take a walking tour of Mandi bazaar and explore some of the ancient temples and ghats along the Beas River. Mandi, formerly known as Mandav Nagar, is a major town in Mandi District in the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. Famed for its many temples dotted along the banks of the Beas River, it's also known as 'little Kashi' after the holy Indian city of Varanasi.  
Overnight: Hotel, Mandi

#### DAY 3: MANDI-TIRTHAN VALLEY

After breakfast you will be driven to the picturesque Tirthan Valley. This unspoilt valley is home to traditional Himalayan villages, charming homestays, great walks and spectacular valley and mountain scenery. Your accommodation for the next two days is an inviting Himalayan homestay right in the lap of nature. Spend the rest of the day in the village experiencing and observing the traditional way of life.  
Overnight: Homestay, Tirthan Valley

#### DAY 4: GREAT HIMALAYAN NATIONAL PARK

Today you will take an easy trek that explores the Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP). The trek will follow the river along a steep sided and thickly forested trail. Walk to the scenic waterfalls and enjoy a picnic lunch before heading back to your homestay. In the afternoon you can try your hand at trout fishing in the Tirthan River or head to the local market at Banjar village, known for traditional handmade woolens.  
Overnight: Homestay, Tirthan Valley

## DAY 5: TIRTHAN VALLEY - RAMPUR

After breakfast you will be driven to Rampur, a bustling bazaar town and former winter capital of the Kinnaur district. This is a scenic drive that crosses the Jalori Pass and winds through Himalayan cedar pine and conifer forests. At the high pass you will be able to stop and rest as you take in the wonderful views of the Himalayan mountain ranges. If the weather is good you will also be able to watch the Himalayan griffon vultures, the largest birds in the Indian Himalaya.

After checking into your hotel in the afternoon you will be able to visit the famous Bhimakali temple, dedicated to the goddess of Himalaya and built in the distinctive Kinnauri style. The rest of the evening is at your leisure.

Overnight: Government Tourist Bungalow, Rampur

## DAY 6: RAMPUR-SHIMLA

After breakfast you will be driven to Shimla. The drive starts off following the Sutluj River, one of the major rivers in Himachal Pradesh. Along the way you will stop for lunch in Narkanda, the main apple growing region of the Himalayas. After lunch take a drive through the scenic apple orchards before continuing to Shimla. Arrive in Shimla by late afternoon and check into your hotel.

Shimla is one of the most popular hill stations in India – and with its stunning views, wide boulevards and mist covered mountains it's not hard to see why. The town is situated at an altitude of 2276 meters and was initially chosen as a sanatorium for invalid European officers, but soon developed into a big hill town and became the summer capital of the country during the British Raj. In the evening take a stroll along the Mall, a 7km traffic free stretch and the beating heart of the hill station. Enjoy the atmosphere and choose from the many restaurants along this strip for dinner or a nightcap.

Overnight: Hotel, Shimla

## DAY 7: SHIMLA

This morning you will be taken on a heritage walk that explores some of the many sights of Shimla. Wander along the Ridge Maidan and the Mall, pick up some crafts at Lakkar Bazaar, visit the historical Gaiety Theatre and marvel at the impressive neo-Gothic Christ Church.

The afternoon is free for you to explore the local area. You can take the steep hike up the Jakhu temple, thronging with monkeys; visit the bazaars for souvenir shopping or take it easy strolling along the Mall.

Overnight: Hotel, Shimla

## DAY 8: SHIMLA - KALKA - CHANDIGARH - DELHI

After breakfast you will take a trip on the World Heritage listed Kalka-Shimla Railway. Known as the 'toy train', this route travels along a mountainous track known for its dramatic views of the hills and surrounding villages. This railway was built in 1898 to connect Shimla with the rest of the Indian rail system. At the time of construction 107 tunnels and 864 bridges were built throughout the course of the track. Sit back and enjoy the journey from Shimla to Kalka which will take around 5 hours.

When you reach Kalka you will be transferred to Chandigarh for your ongoing flight to Delhi. Upon arrival in Delhi transfer to your hotel and spend the rest of the evening at your leisure.

Overnight: Hotel, Delhi

## DAY 9: DEPART DELHI

After breakfast the tour ends. You will be transferred to the airport for your ongoing flight. We look forward to seeing you on another India experience soon.

## BESPOKE EXPERIENCES

### SHIMLA

Mall Road Heritage Walk

Hatu Peak Day Trek

Shimla to Kalka Heritage Toy Train ride

Sultanate Tour in Delhi

## EXTEND YOUR STAY

**GOLDEN TRIANGLE** (Page 4)

6 days, 5 nights

**ANCIENT VARANASI** (Page 33)

4 days, 3 nights

**SACRED RISHIKESH** (Page 36)

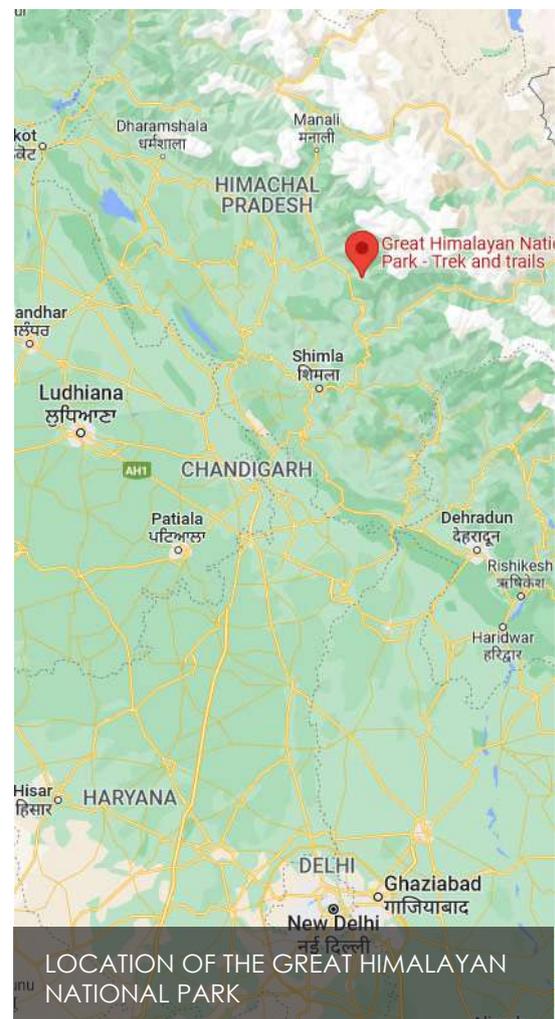
5 days, 4 nights

**AGRA & TAJ MAHAL** (Page 32)

2 days, 1 night

**AMRITSAR** (Page 32)

3 days, 2 nights



# BUDDHA'S SACRED SITES

Escorted/Independent  
Delhi-Varanasi-Sravasti-  
Kushinagar-Vaishali-Rajgir-  
Bodhgaya

12 days, 11 nights

**Dates:** October-March

**Cost:** A\$2650 per person  
twin share

# Buddhist Pilgrimages



BODHGAYA - Japanese Buddha Statue

## INCLUDES

- 11 nights' accommodation with breakfast
- Domestic flight from Delhi to Varanasi
- Private Small AC taxi for all transfers and sightseeing as mentioned in the itinerary
- All charges related to transport such as tolls, parking, fuel etc.
- Local English speaking guide in Varanasi and Sarnath
- Boat ride in Varanasi

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Wonders of Delhi
- Varanasi, the spiritual gateway of India
- Sarnath, where Buddha gave his first teachings
- Ancient Buddhist ruins at Sravasti
- Kushinagar, home of the reclining Buddha Statue
- Vaishali and the Kesariya Buddha Stupa
- Nalanda Monastery
- Bodhgaya, the most important Buddhist pilgrimage site

## ITINERARY

### DAY 1: ARRIVE DELHI

Welcome to incredible India! Our representative will meet you and escort you to your hotel upon your arrival at the airport in Delhi. After checking into the hotel, spend the rest of your day at your leisure exploring the local area and soaking up the vibrant atmosphere. Our friendly guide and hotel staff will be on hand should you need recommendations or general provisions.  
Overnight: Hotel, Delhi.

### DAY 2: DELHI

After breakfast at the hotel you will be collected by your guide and taken on a tour taking in the many sights and sounds of Delhi, including a visit to the National Museum which houses the Sacred Relics of Buddha (5th-4th century BC) which were discovered in Uttar Pradesh. The relics are outstanding specimens of Buddhist art and are illustrated through exhibits in a variety of materials and forms from the three principal Buddhist traditions – Hinayana, Mahayana & Vajrayana. In the afternoon you will visit some of the famous monuments of Delhi, including India Gate, Rajpath and the Secretariat Buildings.  
Overnight: Hotel, Delhi.

### DAY 3: VARANASI

This morning you will take a flight to Varanasi, considered to be the spiritual gateway of India and one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world. Upon arrival you will check into your hotel before taking a sightseeing trip to the Main Ghat area and the Vishwanath Temple. Varanasi is the holiest of the seven sacred cities in Hinduism and Jainism and played an important role in the development of Buddhism. This evening you will have the opportunity to participate in the breathtaking evening puja (prayer ceremony) which accompanies sunset on the Ganges.  
Overnight: Hotel, Varanasi.

### DAY 4: VARANASI

After breakfast you will be driven to Sarnath, one of the four main Buddhist pilgrimage sites in North India.

On arrival in Sarnath, visit the Deer Park where the Buddha taught The Four Noble Truths (his first teachings) after attaining enlightenment. Afterwards you will visit Dhamekh Stupa and other important Buddhist ruins including Chaukhandi Stupa and Mulganda Kuti Vihar. The Dhamekh Stupa is said to mark the exact spot of the Buddha's first teaching of the Four Noble Truths. In the late afternoon you will return to Varanasi. The evening is free to explore or rest at your leisure.

Overnight: Hotel, Varanasi.

## DAY 5: SRAVASTI

After a very early breakfast, you will be driven to Sravasti (approximately 8 hours), stopping for breaks along the way. Sravasti is where the Buddha spent the greater part of his monastic life, as well as many rainy seasons teaching to his disciples.

Overnight: Hotel, Sravasti.

## DAY 6: SRAVASTI

Today you will spend the day exploring the ruins of Sravasti, the capital of an ancient kingdom. You will be able to see age old stupas, majestic viharas, and several temples, the remains of which have been used to established Buddha's association with the town.

Overnight: Hotel, Sravasti

## DAY 7: KUSHINAGAR

This morning you will leave for Kushinagar (approximately 6 hours drive). Kushinagar is an important pilgrimage site where the Buddha attained paranirvana after his death and is where the statue of the reclining Buddha is housed. You will also have the opportunity to visit the site of the Maitreya Statue Project.

Overnight: Hotel, Kushinagar

## DAY 8: KUSHINAGAR

The first stop after breakfast is the Mahaparinirvana Temple – the site of the reclining Buddha, unearthed during excavations in 1876. Carved from sandstone, the statue represents the dying Buddha reclining on his right side.

You will then visit the Rambhar Stupa, which marks Lord Buddha's cremation ground.

Overnight: Hotel, Kushinagar

## DAY 9: VAISHALI

After breakfast you will leave for Vaishali, an important pilgrimage location known as the place where 500 women were ordained by the Buddha. On the way you will visit Kesariya Stupa, the venue where the Buddha delivered his Kalama Sutta. The Stupa has 5 large terraces which vary in shape and house a life like statue of Lord Buddha.

Overnight: Hotel, Vaishali.

## DAY 10: RAJGIR

After breakfast you will depart for Nalanda Monastery (4 hours drive). Nalanda was the most renowned university in ancient India and was home to the great Buddhist scholars of the time. Established in the 5th century BC, it remained the center of learning up until the 12th century AD. In the afternoon you will leave Rajgir, which during the Buddha's lifetime was the capital of the powerful Magadhan kingdom, ruled by the virtuous King Bimbisara.

Overnight: Hotel, Rajgir.

## BESPOKE EXPERIENCES

### DELHI

Sultanate Tour in Delhi

### VARANASI

Evening Boat Ride in Ganges river

Walk through Ghats on Varanasi

## EXTEND YOUR STAY

### GOLDEN TRIANGLE (Page 4)

6 days, 5 nights

### ANCIENT VARANASI (Page 33)

4 days, 3 nights

### SACRED RISHIKESH (Page 36)

5 days, 4 nights

### AGRA & TAJ MAHAL (Page 32)

2 days, 1 night

### AMRITSAR (Page 32)

3 days, 2 nights



BODHGAYA, Mahabodhi Temple

## DAY 11: BODHGAYA

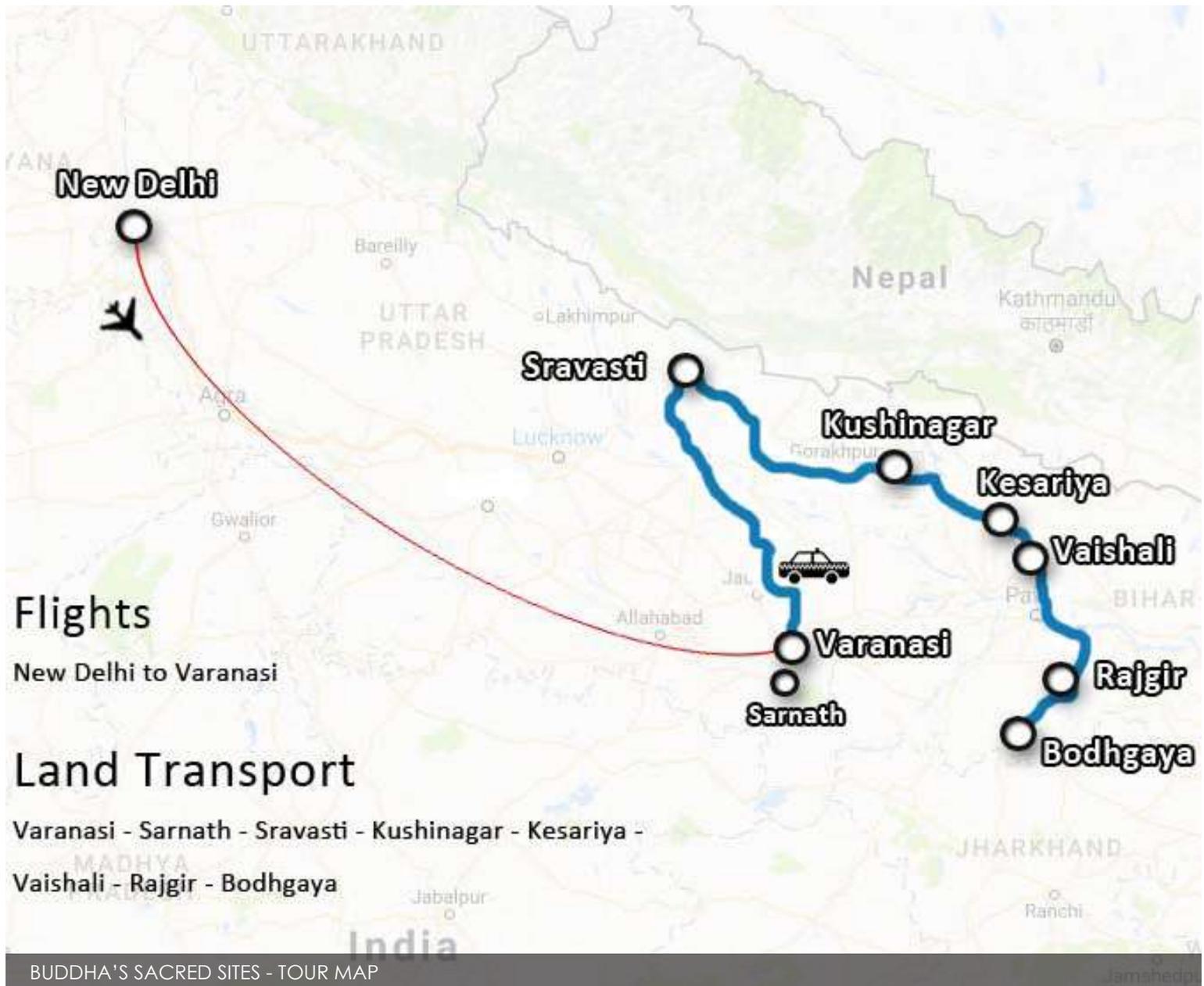
After breakfast you can take the chairlift to visit Vultures Peak and the Japanese Stupa. Vulture Peak Mountain is one of several sites that were frequented by the Buddha and his community of disciples for both training and retreat. It is also the location where the Buddha gave sermons including the renowned Heart Sutra. During the late afternoon you will be driven to Bodhgaya. In the centre of Bodhgaya is the ancient Mahabodhi Temple, the holiest Buddhist temple in the world. The temple marks the location where the Buddha is said to have attained enlightenment. Overnight: Hotel, Bodhgaya.

## DAY 12: DEPARTURE DAY

After breakfast you will make your final pilgrimage to the Mahabodhi Stupa. We will transfer you to the airport in time for your ongoing flight. We look forward to seeing you on another India experience soon. If you wish this pilgrimage package can be combined with one of our other tours or extensions.



KUSHINAGAR, Mahaparinirvana Temple



# Extensions



## AMRITSAR

3 days, 2 nights

Cost: A\$750 per person twin share

### INCLUDES

- Transfers from Amritsar train station/airport
- Executive class train ticket to Amritsar
- Return flight from Amritsar
- 2 nights' accommodation and breakfasts
- Car and driver for the return trip to the Wagah border/Golden Temple
- English speaking guide for 2 days (including pickup at airport)

### DAY 1: AMRITSAR

Your train leaves New Delhi Station at approximately 7am and will take you on a vivid journey from the urban sprawl of Delhi through to the fertile plains of Haryana and the Punjab. Travelling by train is also one of the many highlights of India as it a fantastic way to witness everyday Indian life and meet the locals. Your train arrives at Amritsar Station in the early afternoon where you will be met by your local guide to transfer to your hotel.

After a short rest you will be collected by your guide and taxi at 4pm for a trip to the Wagah border to witness the 'Closing of the Border'. This ceremony takes place every evening and involves a display of pomp and ceremony by the Indian and Pakistani border guards. After the closing ceremony, head back to Amritsar where the rest of the evening is at your leisure. Enjoy a tasty dinner in one of the many Punjabi restaurants or take an evening stroll around the Golden Temple, which is open 24 hours a day.

Overnight: Hotel, Amritsar

### DAY 2: AMRITSAR

Enjoy a full day of sightseeing in Amritsar. Take an early morning walk to the Golden Temple to stroll around the serene environment of the inner corridors as the priests chant from the Sikh holy book. Go to the langar hall, a massive free community dining room run entirely by volunteers. The Golden Temple langar can serve hot meals to up to 100,000 people a day.

After the Golden Temple, visit Jallianwala Bagh, the memorial gardens for the 1919 British massacre. Today, it is a peaceful garden open to all for strolling and relaxing. Finally, visit the Katra Jaimal Singh Bazaar, famous for its textiles and saris.

After sunset, head back to the Golden Temple for an evening stroll and to enjoy its night time serenity. You will be amazed by not only the stunning beauty of this temple but also by the openness of the Sikh people who will be happy to explain any questions that you may have.

Overnight: Hotel, Amritsar

### DAY 3: TOUR ENDS

Depart Amritsar by flight late morning. Your tour arrangement ends upon arrival in Delhi.



## AGRA

2 days, 1 night

Cost: A\$480 per person twin share

### INCLUDES

- One nights' accommodation and breakfast in Agra
- Private car (Toyota Innova or similar) and driver to and from Delhi
- Local English speaking guide for 2 days in Agra
- Entrance fees at Taj Mahal and Red Fort

### DAY 1: AGRA

Leave Delhi in the early morning and head for Agra, arriving by early afternoon. Spend the afternoon relaxing in the hotel or visit Agra's Red Fort, one of the most beautiful forts in Northern India. Agra's Red Fort was the main residence for the emperors of the Mughal Dynasty until 1638, when the Mughal capital was moved from Agra to the Red Fort in Delhi. It is also a UNESCO World Heritage site and is a walled city located 2 kms from the Taj Mahal.

Overnight: Hotel, Agra

### DAY 2: AGRA

Rise and shine early to witness a once in a lifetime event, a spectacular sunrise visit to the magnificent Taj Mahal. You will be picked up from your hotel by your local guide. The Taj Mahal is India's most-photographed monument, and today you'll see why. Built between 1632 and 1653 in memory of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan's third wife, the Taj Mahal is world-renowned and widely admired as a wonderful photo opportunity.

After visiting the Taj, return to the hotel for breakfast and after a short rest return to Delhi early afternoon.



# VARANASI

4 days, 3 nights

**Cost:** A\$1200 per person twin share

## INCLUDES

- 3 nights' accommodation with 3 breakfasts
- Return airfares Delhi-Varanasi-Delhi
- Transportation as per itinerary
- Private car and driver for Sarnath day trip
- Sunrise boat ride on the Ganges
- English speaking guide for 3 days

### DAY 1: VARANASI

Transfer from your hotel in Delhi to the airport for your flight to Varanasi. Transfer from the airport to your hotel which is situated right on Assi Ghat. Take a stroll around the area to soak up the atmosphere of the Ganges River and the amazing Varanasi.

Overnight: Hotel, Varanasi

### DAY 2: VARANASI

Full day of sightseeing in Varanasi. You will rise early in the morning, getting ready to experience one of the most memorable moments of your life, as you will be taken on a sunrise boat ride on the Ganges. It is on the Ganga ghats of Varanasi where you will witness both life and death together. Walk along the many and varied ghats, where you will get a glimpse of the sacred life which is at the heart of 'Mother Ganga'. Following this you will go to Godaulia, the old city, to visit the ancient riverside temples including the Durga temple, Vishwanath temple, Sankat Mochan temple, Tulsi Manas temple and the Bharat Mata temple. During the evening you will visit the main ghat to watch the spectacular daily puja (offerings) made to the Ganges.

Overnight: Hotel, Varanasi

### DAY 3: VARANASI

Your driver and private car will collect you after breakfast and take you to nearby Sarnath where you will visit Dhamekh Stupa, the ancient Buddhist ruins, Chaukhandi Stupa and Mulganda Kuti Vihar, followed by a visit to the Deer Park and Archaeological Museum. The rest of the afternoon is at your leisure to wander the thriving ancient alleyways of Varanasi or to relax in one of the many riverside cafes.

Overnight: Hotel, Varanasi

### DAY 4: TOUR ENDS

Transfer to airport for your flight to Delhi. Your arrangement with us ends at Delhi Airport.



# DELHI

3 days, 2 nights

**Cost:** A\$400 per person twin share

## INCLUDES

- Transfer from Delhi international or domestic airport to the hotel
- 2 nights' accommodation and breakfast
- English speaking guide
- Private car and driver for sightseeing around Delhi

### DAY 1: DELHI

Arrive in Delhi and transfer to your hotel for check in. The rest of the day is free for you to relax and explore the local markets.

Depending on your arrival time, you may wish to venture out to Connaught Place – the entertainment, shopping and dining hub of New Delhi. You will find a vast array of upmarket shops and street stalls as well as restaurants serving cuisine from all over the world.

Overnight: Hotel, Delhi

### DAY 2: DELHI

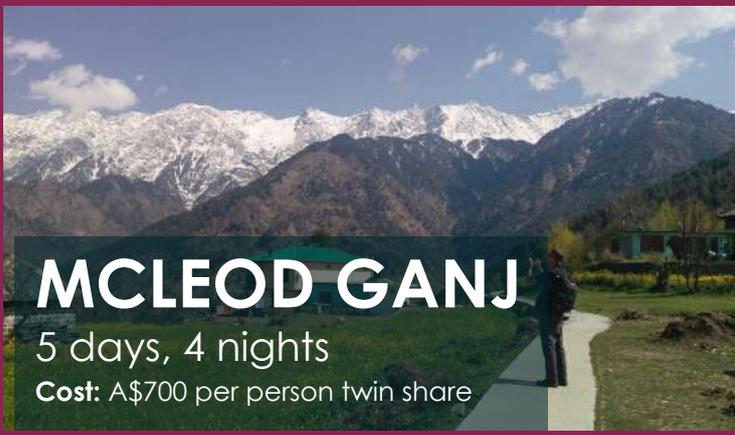
Spend the day touring old and new Delhi by private car. Head to the iconic and bustling area of Old Delhi after breakfast. Admire the magnificent Jama Masjid (India's largest mosque) and enjoy a rickshaw tour through the ancient alleys of Chandni Chowk bazaar. Pass by the Red Fort, constructed in 1638 and visit Raj Ghat, the cremation site of Mahatma Gandhi.

On the way back to New Delhi, pass British era landmarks such as India Gate, Rajpath, the President's House, Parliament House and the Government Secretariat Buildings. Pay a visit to the Lakshmi Narayan Hindu temple and serene Humayun's Tomb. Spend the afternoon shopping at one of Delhi's many bustling outdoor bazaars.

Overnight: Hotel, Delhi

### DAY 3: DELHI

The tour ends upon check out at your hotel. We hope you enjoyed your stay.



## MCLEOD GANJ

5 days, 4 nights

Cost: A\$700 per person twin share

### INCLUDES

- 4 nights' accommodation
- 4 breakfasts
- Pick up from Gaggal, Dharamsala Airport
- Local car and driver for days 3 & 4

#### DAY 1: MCLEOD GANJ

Upon arrival, check into your hotel. After freshening up, take a walk to the temple of His Holiness the Dalai Lama followed by a visit to Namgyel Monastery and the Tibet Museum. After your walking tour of McLeod Ganj, settle down into one of McLeod Ganj's many cafes for a coffee or a hot ginger lemon tea. The rest of the day is at your leisure.

Overnight: Hotel, McLeod Ganj

#### DAY 2: MCLEOD GANJ

You'll spend the day exploring McLeod Ganj including a walk to local villages such as Bhagsu, Dharamkot, and Naddi. The afternoon is free for shopping or relaxing at a café of your choice.

Overnight: Hotel, McLeod Ganj

#### DAY 3: DHARAMSALA

Head down the mountain to visit Dharamsala and the surrounding villages. Pay a visit to Thosamling Nunnery, Norbulingka (an institute for the preservation of Tibetan arts and culture) and the Nishtha Community Centre (a village health and resource centre). The rest of the afternoon is free to explore Dharamsala bazaar, including the many Indian sweet shops.

Overnight: Hotel, McLeod Ganj

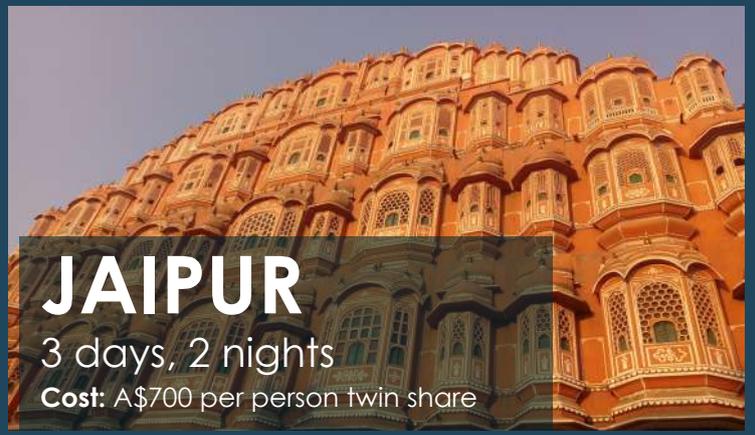
#### DAY 4: MCLEOD GANJ

After breakfast, you will set off on a lovely hour and a half drive through tea plantations to visit Tashi Jong and Dongyu Gatsal Ling nunnery in Palampur. From Palampur, you head to Bir, a Tibetan settlement with several monasteries, including Sherab Ling Monastery. In the evening, return to McLeod Ganj.

Overnight: Hotel, McLeod Ganj

#### DAY 5: MCLEOD GANJ

The tour ends upon check out at your hotel. We hope you enjoyed your stay.



## JAIPUR

3 days, 2 nights

Cost: A\$700 per person twin share

### INCLUDES

- 2 nights' accommodation with breakfast
- Following transportation by Toyota Innova Car or similar: Pickup and drop off Jaipur airport/train station
- Sightseeing in Jaipur
- Services of a local English speaking guide for 2 days

#### DAY 1: JAIPUR

Welcome to the Pink City! Transfer from the station/airport to your hotel. In the afternoon visit one of Jaipur's famous gem or fabric markets. Jaipur's bazaars are a sight to be seen carrying a vast array of products from everyday necessities to fine silks and gems.

Overnight: Hotel, Jaipur

#### DAY 2: JAIPUR

After breakfast, start your day with a tour of the Hawa Mahal (Palace of Winds) and spend some time exploring the local markets. From there, drive a short distance outside of Jaipur to the Amber palace, an impressive medieval fortress towering above the village of Ajmer. You can choose to walk, or ride an elephant, to the fort's entrance. Both options offer beautiful views of the surrounding scenery. After the tour, head back to Jaipur to visit the City Palace Museum and the Jantar Mantar, a royal medieval observatory. Time permitting, finish your souvenir shopping in Jaipur's old city bazaars.

Overnight: Hotel, Jaipur

#### DAY 3: DEPART

After breakfast, depart from Jaipur for your return journey.



# MUMBAI

4 days, 3 nights

Cost: A\$850 per person twin share

## INCLUDES

- Pickup from Mumbai airport
- 3 nights' accommodation and 3 breakfasts
- Local guide for 2 days (travelling by local transport)

### DAY 1: MUMBAI

Arrive in Mumbai and transfer to your hotel for check in. The rest of the day is free for you to relax and explore the local surrounds. Depending on your arrival time, you may wish to venture out for a stroll around Colaba, where you will find a vast array of street stalls and restaurants serving cuisine from all over the world. It is a fascinating area to explore and you might even enjoy a visit to the world famous Leopold Cafe and Bar, which has stood on the corner of Colaba Causeway since 1871.

Overnight: Hotel, Mumbai

### DAY 2: MUMBAI

After breakfast set off for a full day of sightseeing around Mumbai. Start by visiting the colourful Crawford Market, the ornate Flora Fountain and then stop to admire the Gothic architecture of CST train station (formerly known as Victoria Terminus). You will then travel up to Malabar Hill and Kamala Nehru Park to admire the views of the city sprawling below.

You will then head to Chowpatty Beach – famous for having some of the best street food in Mumbai. On your way back to your hotel you can take a promenade down Marine Drive, a popular walking spot also known as the 'queen's necklace' due to its twinkling night lights resembling a string of pearls. You will return to Colaba to soak up the nightlife and enjoy eating at one of the many fantastic restaurants.

Overnight: Hotel, Mumbai

### DAY 3: MUMBAI

Today you will visit some of the surrounding areas of Mumbai. You will start by admiring the splendour of the Taj Mahal Palace Hotel, before taking a boat from the Gateway of India out to the rock-cut temples on Elephanta Island.

When you return to the mainland you will visit Mani Bhavan, the house where Mahatma Gandhi stayed. You will then visit Mumba Devi Mandir – an old Hindu temple and the origin of the city's name; followed by a visit to the Haji Ali mosque and shrine. This shrine is 600 years old and can only be reached at low tide as it is located on an islet reached by a causeway.

In the afternoon you can visit Juhu, an upmarket area known for its sprawling beach.

Take a stroll along the beach and watch as people indulge in two of Mumbai's favourite pastimes – playing cricket and eating street food! This area is home to many Bollywood stars and tonight you will have the option of going to the cinema to watch one of Mumbai's famous Bollywood movies.

Overnight: Hotel, Mumbai

### DAY 4: DEPART

The tour arrangement ends upon check out at your hotel.



# UDAIPUR & Best Exotic Marigold Hotel

4 days, 3 nights

Cost: A\$1200 per person twin share

## INCLUDES

- 3 nights accommodation and breakfast
- All transfers and travel by private vehicles
- Local English speaking guide

### DAY 1: UDAIPUR

After an early breakfast leave Udaipur/Jaipur for Khempur. As you drive through the Thar Desert you will pass by desert scenery filled with villagers dressed in colourful clothes herding animals.

Arrive mid-afternoon and check into your hotel, where "The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel" was filmed. Relax in the hotel and enjoy traditional Rajasthani food for dinner.

Overnight: Hotel, Khempur

### DAY 2: KHEMPUR

Today is for relaxation – reflect on your adventure and enjoy the beautiful old building. The hotel, Ravla Khempur, exudes historical ambience, and has a passionate history that dates back to 1628 AD. The lofty terraces, open courtyards, sprawling gardens, canopied balconies, stables and horses will transport you back in time. Take time to stroll through the surrounding small village and sample local life as you reflect on your favourite scenes from the movie.

Overnight: Hotel, Khempur.

### DAY 3: UDAIPUR

After breakfast at the hotel, drive to Udaipur (approximately 90 minutes). Arrive in Udaipur and check in at your hotel on

the ghats. Tour the City Palace, Jagdish Temple, Jag Mandir, Bhartiya Lok Kala Mandal and Sahelion Ki Bari, followed by a boat ride on Lake Pichola (subject to the water level).

Overnight: Hotel, Udaipur

## DAY 4: DEPART

Your tour ends after breakfast when you check out of your hotel.



## SACRED RISHIKESH

5 days, 4 nights

Cost: A\$1050 per person twin share

## INCLUDES

- 3 nights' hotel accommodation (twin share) with breakfast
- Train from Haridwar to Delhi
- Following transport in AC Innova / Etios or similar
  - Pick up from Delhi airport
  - Delhi – Rishikesh
  - Sightseeing in and around Rishikesh
  - Haridwar – Rishikesh
  - Drop off at Haridwar train station
- Local guide in Rishikesh for 2 days

## DAY 1: DELHI

Welcome to incredible India and to the start of your holiday! Our representative will meet you at the airport and escort you to your hotel. After checking into the hotel, spend the rest of the day at your leisure exploring the local area and soaking up the vibrant atmosphere.

Overnight: Hotel, Delhi

## DAY 2: RISHIKESH

Take a scenic drive to Rishikesh (approximately 6 hours), arriving in the afternoon. Check into your accommodation at Tapovan, right near the Luxman Jhula bridge. After settling in, take a walk to Tapovan market and Laxman Jhula, soaking in the sights and sounds of this very spiritual town. In the evening you can enjoy dinner at one of the restaurants overlooking the River Ganges.

Overnight: Hotel, Rishikesh

## DAY 3: RISHIKESH

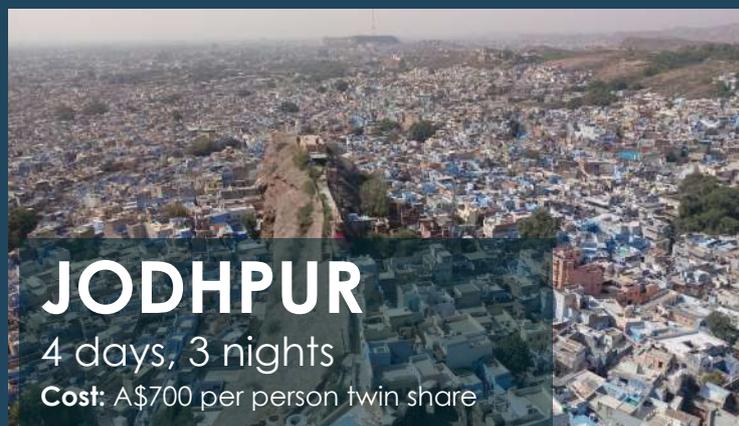
Enjoy the morning relaxing. You might enjoy some of our bespoke extras, which include yoga classes, holistic Ayurveda treatments, sound healing and palmistry sessions.

After lunch you will have the afternoon to explore some of the many temples and ashrams around Rishikesh, including the ashram where the Beatles stayed. In the evening, sit, enjoy and witness the Ganga Aarti (evening fire prayer), which is performed every night on the banks of the Ganges. The ceremony attracts large numbers of devotees and is accompanied by bhajans (holy songs), drums and bells. You might like to join the worshippers by lighting an oil lamp and setting it afloat on the holy waters of the Ganges.

Overnight: Hotel, Rishikesh

## DAY 4: HARIDWAR

After breakfast check out of your hotel and drive to Haridwar (1 hour). Take a walk to the Haridwar street markets, enjoying the exciting buzz of the Hindu devotees as they head to the Ganges. Visit some of the many significant temples including Pareshwar Mahadev Temple, Daksha Mahadev Temple and Mansa Devi Temple. As you head down to the ghats you can visit Har-ki-Pauri (the footsteps of God) – one of the most sacred ghats in India. In the late afternoon you will take a train to Delhi, where your tour concludes.



## JODHPUR

4 days, 3 nights

Cost: A\$700 per person twin share

## INCLUDES

- 2 nights' accommodation with breakfast
- 1 nights' accommodation with a local homestay
- Following transportation by Toyota Innova Car or similar:
  - Pick up and drop off from Jodhpur airport
  - Sightseeing in Jodhpur
- Services of a local English speaking guide for 4 days

## DAY 1: JODHPUR

Arrive in Jodhpur and settle into your hotel where your local guide will meet you. Jodhpur is known as the 'blue city' owing to the many blue houses set against the backdrop of the Mehrangarh Fort. You will be staying close to one of the liveliest attractions in Jodhpur, the Sadar Bazaar. Sadar is one of the oldest markets in India, known for handicrafts and antiques. The diversity of what's on offer is impressive and there is something for everyone. Take a stroll and soak in the ambience. You can either have the late afternoon free or attend a cooking class at a local family home, where you can try using traditional Indian spices - taste the difference!

Overnight: Hotel, Jodhpur

## DAY 2: JODHPUR

Take an early morning heritage walk through the old city to the base of Mehrangarh Fort. Experience the city waking up with a local chai along the way. Return to the hotel for a late breakfast before heading up explore the Mehrangarh Fort, one of the largest in India, where you can take in the sweeping view of the city.

Overnight: Hotel, Jodhpur

## DAY 3: BISHNOI VILLAGE

After breakfast, leave the hotel and take a short drive to your next destination, a Bishnoi village homestay. The Bishnoi people are famous for their harmonious and eco-friendly lives lived with animals and nature. You will have the opportunity to learn about Bishnoi culture and rural village life as you meet and visit families.

Visit craftspeople including weavers, potters and block printers and have the chance to buy their work.

Overnight: Homestay, Bishnoi village

## DAY 4: DEPART

Leave for your next destination.

Today, head to the mainland area of Ernakulam where you will visit the Kerala Folklore Museum. This privately-owned museum offers a unique way to learn about the culture of Kerala with over 4000 artifacts and magnificent architecture, including the main entrance which is made from the remnants of a temple.

Whilst you are in Ernakulam, visit the bustling Broadway Bazaar markets, where it is possible to find just about anything you could ever want. Enjoy a walk along Marine Drive promenade before catching a ferry back to Fort Cochin.

Enjoy your last night in Kochi by taking a final promenade from Mahatma Gandhi Beach to the fish markets.

Overnight: Hotel, Kochi

## DAY 3: DEPARTURE

After breakfast we will transfer you to Kochi airport for your onward flight.

### Traditional houseboat on the backwaters of Kerala



## KOCHI

3 days, 2 nights

Cost: A\$450 per person twin share

## INCLUDES

- 2 night's accommodation and breakfast in Kochi
- Local guide for 2 days
- Drop off at Kochi airport

## DAY 1: KOCHI

This morning join the locals and catch the ferry to Vypeen Island. The island is quiet with beautiful long beaches and a chilled-out atmosphere. Relax on Cherai Beach, explore the quiet backwaters and visit the 16th century Pallipuram Fort.

In the afternoon return to Fort Cochin by ferry. The afternoon is yours to try out a unique local experience (optional extra). Choose from a Kathakali dance lesson, a cooking class at a local's home, an Ayurvedic spa treatment, a guided bike tour or a sunset boat cruise.

Overnight: Hotel, Kochi

## DAY 2: EXPLORE KOCHI



# BESPOKE EXPERIENCES

\*Prices on Application

## Varanasi

- Sunset boat ride with musicians
- Visit to home of musician family
- Musical concert at an ashram
- Walk through the classical 'music street'

## Delhi

- Walk through Old Delhi - Chandi Chowk
- Community kitchen, Bangla Sahib

## Agra

- Walk behind the Taj
- Walk through the old Mughal city
- Live theatre - story of the Taj

## Mathura

- Elephant SOS - visit to see the care for rescued elephants
- Bear Rescue Center

## Jaipur

- Morning heritage walk of pink city
- Cooking class with local family
- Elephant village

## Jodhpur

- Sunset heritage walk of the blue city
- Cooking class with local family
- Spice girls of India
- Sunrise nature walk
- Bishnoi village & homestay

## Udaipur

- Overnight stay at The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel
- Heritage Walk - Morning bicycle tours around the Fatehsagar Lake

## Amritsar

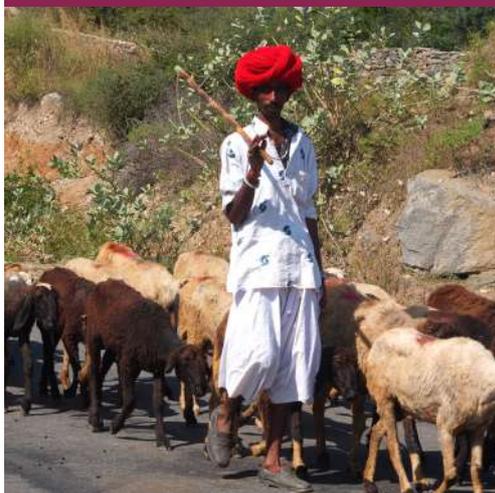
- Heritage walk
- Community kitchen

## Dharamsala / McLeod Ganj

- Tibetan Buddhist temple & forest walk
- Himalayan tea walk
- Kangra Valley Tibetan Buddhist circuit
- Homestays
- Palampur & Andretta

## Kochi

- Vypeen Island & Ayurveda
- A day of Ayurveda
- Homestay in the Backwaters



# Get in Touch

If you have a story to share or a question that has not been answered in our eBrochure/ website, please get in touch with us via our contact details listed below.



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