

EXPLORE!

TRIP NOTES



Family Taj, Tigers and Palaces (FMG 2017)



TRIP DURATION
10
DAYS



Tour Style: Classic
Tour Pace: Full On

Tour Type: Small Groups
Accommodation
Grade: Standard

Trip Code: FMG

Trip Highlights - Family Taj, Tigers and Palaces

- ✓ Ranthambore National Park - Take two game drives in search of tigers, monkeys and sloth bears (park closed in the summer months, visit an old Maharajah's house instead)
- ✓ Agra - Visit the incredible Taj Mahal at sunrise
- ✓ Bharatpur National Park - Spot birdlife from a cycle rickshaw
- ✓ Pachewar - Discovering a typical rural village
- ✓ Jaipur - Explore the Amber Fort and use the Observatory's giant sun dial to check the time
- ✓ Pushkar - Ride camels and climb up to Savitri Temple for sunset
- ✓ Delhi - Explore the wide streets of New Delhi and the winding market lanes of Old Delhi

Trip Essentials

Accommodation: 8 nights Standard Hotel
1 night Simple Hotel

Included Meals: 9 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 3 dinners

Start Point: Join trip: New Delhi

End Point: Trip ends: New Delhi

Transport: 4WD, Rickshaw, Bus, Train

Countries: India

Minimum Age: From 4 years

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Family Taj, Tigers and Palaces

Enjoy this fascinating introduction to northern India as we search for the Bengal Tiger in its natural habitat and visit the magnificent Taj Mahal at sunrise. We also visit a hilltop fortress, explore villages and take a camel safari across sand dunes. This varied holiday takes us from the bustling streets of Delhi, to the desert plains of Pushkar.

SUMMER ITINERARY - During the summer months Ranthambore National Park is closed so there is no option to take a jeep safari in search of tigers. Instead we spend time in Karauli, staying in an old Maharajah's house and taking a camel cart ride to explore the former Royal Palace.

TRIPLE ROOMS

This trip allows the option for triple rooms to be included within the booking on a selected number of night stops within the holiday. If you would like this option, a discount may be applicable on the cost of the trip - please ask our Sales team for further information.

Why Book this trip

India is an amazing place and this adventure combines the historic Taj Mahal and Amber Fort with game viewing to see tigers. This holiday is for families who enjoy discovering new cultures and regions of the world and want to immerse themselves into its cuisine, people and traditions (along with viewing tigers!).

Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Accommodation Grade: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Tour Pace: Full On

These fast paced tours move on quickly from place to place and with lots of early starts and long busy days, they're packed with experiences.

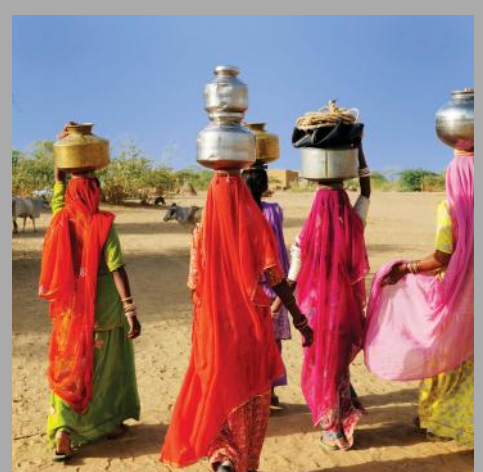
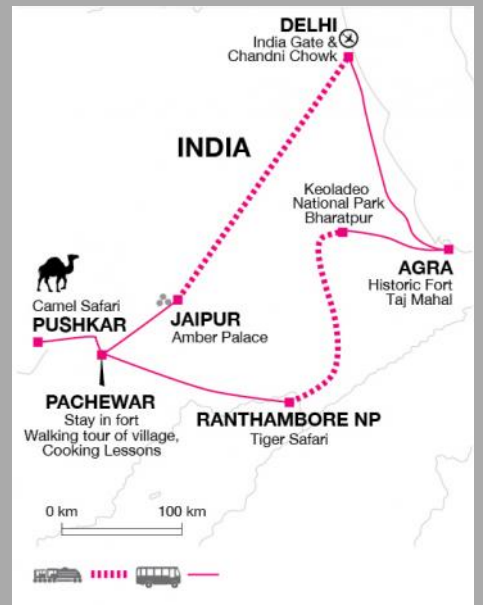
Your trip itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced Tour Leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your Tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.



DAY 1 Join tour in Delhi; city tour of New Delhi

Arrive in Delhi and check in to our hotel. The Indian capital has long been a phoenix rising again and again out of its own ruins. New Delhi was the creation of the British Raj of the 30's and our tour includes a look at the Lok Sabha building (Parliament), India Gate, the Rajpath and Qutb Minar. We plan for a quick turnaround after arriving at the hotel to get out and explore the city however if you wish to relax after the flight it is possible to opt out of today's sightseeing and relax at the hotel.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** None

DAY 2 Old Delhi sightseeing; drive to Agra and visit the Fort

Compared to New Delhi the Old City is much closer to the image conjured up by Rudyard Kipling. We travel by cycle rickshaw to its hub at Chandni Chowk Bazaar, a jamboree of deafening barter and a wonderful introduction to the 'real' India. The major sights nearby are the Jami Masjid Mosque and we pass by the Red Fort on our way out of the city. We drive to Agra which takes approximately three hours. In the afternoon we plan to visit Agra Fort, built by Akbar the Great, which contains the incomparable Moti Masjid (Pearl Mosque). Before returning to the hotel we will get our first sight of the Taj Mahal in the evening light.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 3 Taj Mahal tour, onto Keoladeo Ghana National Park and train to Ranthambore

This morning we aim to visit the Taj Mahal, the world's most perfect and poetic building, at sunrise. Over 300 years have elapsed since its construction, yet it stands today unscarred by age; its beauty and symmetry seemingly beyond man, time and space. Created by Shah Jahan as a funerary monument to his favourite wife, Mumtaz, it took 22 years to build (1630-52). The Great Moghul lies beside his beloved under the white marble dome. Inlaid with precious gems, the building cost a fortune. Later Shah Jahan moved his capital to Delhi before being overthrown by his son, Aurangzeb. After breakfast we will drive to the entrance of Keoladeo Ghana National Park. Formerly a royal duck-shooting reserve and now an ornithologist's paradise, the sanctuary is best visited either at dusk or dawn. Covering 12 square miles, some 7000 acres are under water: the lakes and marshlands offer a safe habitat for large numbers of breeding waterbirds and migrants. More than 300 species have been sighted, among them herons, storks, geese and the huge and rare Siberian crane. We will be taken on a birdwatching tour by cycle rickshaw and we hope to see some of these magnificent birds. This afternoon we will head to the train station to catch our train to Ranthambore (approximately 2 hours). Please note: There is currently a restoration project taking place at the Taj Mahal, which involves applying a mud pack to the outer walls of the monument. In order to carry out the work, temporary scaffolding is being erected around the minarets and portions of the main dome. The work is being carried out in phases and is expected to continue into 2017.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 


 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 4 Game drives in Ranthambore National Park

Ranthambore is one of the best examples of the country's tiger conservation projects. The best chance of sightings is between September and May. During this period water is scarce and the animals must stay close to the lakes and river. It is little wonder that this was once one of the best hunting areas of the Maharajahs. We include a game drive this morning into the Reserve, in search of the wildlife which, as well as tiger, includes sloth bear, langur, jackal and fox as well as crested hawk eagle, crested serpent eagle, jacana, parakeet and white-breasted kingfisher. The park itself is very picturesque with lakes, rivers and forests surrounded by steep cliffs and rocky outcrops. In the afternoon there is another opportunity to do a game drive to get a chance to see more wildlife and views. The vehicles used for game drives are open top jeeps, with 6 seats and ideal for spotting wildlife. Due to regulations aimed at keeping traffic to a minimum in the parks we cannot guarantee exclusive use of the jeeps so you may be sharing with non-Explore customers. Please note that because the jeeps can only accommodate 6 people there is a chance we may have to split family groups up, this will depend entirely on the make up of your group and we will avoid this wherever possible.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 5 Optional game drive before driving to Pachewar

This morning there is chance for an optional game drive before we drive to Pachewar (approximately 4 hours drive). A small village, Pachewar is famous for cenotaphs, blue pottery kilns, metal toy makers and interesting surroundings. It is a lively place that was once ruled by Khangarot Rajputs. The caretaker of Khandar, Thakur Anoop Singh Khangarot, had captured the fort of Ranthambore from the captivity of Marathas and annexed the fort to the state of Jaipur. Maharaja Sawai Madho Singh I of Jaipur bestowed upon him the fief of Pachewar. After that, the nobles from the Khangarot clan of Rajputs ruled Pachewar. We will be staying in a family run heritage hotel, Pachewar Garh. This fort with its huge ramparts, turrets and gates, was built about 300 years ago and bears testimony to its

rich heritage. After checking in, we will spend the afternoon exploring the village by foot visiting the local temple and a village home where we have a cooking demonstration which gives a great opportunity to meet local families and sample first hand traditional rural life.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 6 Drive to Pushkar with opportunity to climb up to Savitri temple

From Pachewar we drive to Pushkar (approximately 3 hours). This popular lakeside town has a wonderful atmosphere and gives us a real insight into rural India. This evening it will be possible to climb up to Savitri temple to watch the beautiful sunset views.

Overnight: **Simple Hotel**

Triple Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 7 Camel trek; drive to Jaipur

This morning we leave the bus behind and take a camel trek to the Brahma Temple. This traditional method of transport has been used for centuries and is a great way to meet some of the locals. This afternoon we will then drive to Jaipur. The drive will take about 5 hours although there is always something new or different to see along the roadside in rural India. There is an optional puppet show at the hotel this evening or you may wish to see a Bollywood movie at the local cinema.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 8 In Jaipur visiting Amber Palace and Fortress

Today, we drive the short distance to the foot of Amber Palace and drive up to the gateway. This impressive hilltop fortress possesses what must be the world's finest Chamber of Mirrors and also affords glorious views of the surrounding plains. We will visit the palace with a local guide after which we will return to Jaipur. Sometimes called the Pink City, Jaipur's palaces and fortified walls were first painted terracotta pink by Maharajah Swai Ram Singh to celebrate the visit of Prince Albert in 1853. This afternoon we will take a city tour with a local guide. We will visit the lavish and well preserved City Palace with its fine collection of textiles, costumes and armoury and the Palace of the Winds, a 5-storied façade (built about 1760) which has been the subject of countless Indian posters. Jai Singh, the great Maharaja astronomer, built his extraordinary (and very accurate) stargazing Observatory (Jantra) here. The Old City has several fine gates let into the pink walls, and there are many opportunities for photos and shopping.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 9 Train to Delhi

We have a very early start this morning as we take the train back to Delhi. On arrival we are free for last minute sightseeing or picking up some souvenirs at the Chadni Chowk bazaar.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 10 Tour ends Delhi

Our tour ends in Delhi this morning after breakfast.

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

Included Activities

Tiger Safari permit requirements

Ranthambore National Park is closely managed by the Indian Authorities. The number of vehicles permitted to enter the park at any one time is restricted and all game drives must now be booked and paid for well in advance. We recommend you book as early as possible in order to have the best chance of securing a space on a game drive.

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In order to secure a booking we must provide your passport copy and full payment for the safari at the time of booking. Once a game drive has been booked no changes are permitted and the payment is non-refundable. In order to proceed with bookings we require the following: A scanned copy of your passport - you must carry your passport during the game drive and if you renew your passport before travelling then you will need to take both passports with you.

We book all of our game drives in shared jeeps, with a maximum of 6 passengers per jeep with a driver and naturalist guide. On occasion we will be sharing jeeps with non-Explore passengers. We will purchase seats for all passengers as soon as permits become available, usually 4 months prior, after this point it is not always possible to secure additional spaces.

We cannot guarantee the operation of any game drives until the necessary permits have been purchased. We aim to purchase the permits as soon as they are put on sale, whilst this is usually at 120 days before the date of the game drive on going changes to the booking system means that we cannot guarantee this.

Ability to swim required

Whether in swimming pools, rivers, lakes, the sea or the ocean, participation requires that you are able to swim unaided for your safe enjoyment

Accommodation and Meals

Accommodation Notes

Accommodation in India is as varied as the country itself. On our tours we stay in a mix of hotels, heritage properties, camp sites and homestays. Standards do not equate to standards in the UK and it's best to approach each type of accommodation with an open mind. Service can be slow in places especially when travelling with a group. For the most part hotels do not have heating so in the winter months it can be chilly and if you feel the cold you may wish to ask for extra blankets. Hot water is not always available 24 hours a day in some of the smaller properties, and with a group staying you might find if you are showering last you may miss out on the hottest water.

Food & Drink

Included meals: 9 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 3 dinners included in the price of this trip. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Trip

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the trip price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

India

Lunch £: 6.00

Dinner £: 8.00

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

India

Bottle of Beer £: 1.40

Water £: 0.50

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

Delhi - Craft museum; Train museum, £5.00 Rickshaw Ride; Akshardham Temple, free entry but transport there will be needed.
Ranthambore - Extra game drives £25.00 per person - subject to availability, in a shared jeep. Fort visit £7.00.
Pushkar - Optional camel rides £8.00.

Tipping - Tour Leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Tipping - Local Crew

In this area, tipping is a recognised part of life. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow approximately £30.00 per person.

Foreign Exchange

India

ATM Availability: ATMs are available in most large cities in India but they are very limited elsewhere so please do not rely on this.

Credit Card Acceptance: Very rarely, only in the larger outlets.

Travellers Cheques: Opportunities to exchange are limited.

Local Currency: Indian Rupee Recently new 500, 1000 and 2000 rupee notes have been brought in to circulation and as the old notes are no longer accepted there have been some cash flow issues. You don't need to worry about being given old notes as it's very easy to tell the difference, the new notes are pristine in comparison with most Indian money which is fairly tatty.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: GBP/US\$ are the best currency to change into local currency.

Where to Exchange: The Indian rupee is a restricted currency and it is best not to obtain in the UK as rates are very poor. You can either change money at the airport on arrival or in major towns during the tour. Your Tour Leader will advise you on the best places in each town. Both GBP and USD cash are easy to exchange at the airport and at hotels however you will be restricted to changing £60 cash at a time and it's not possible to change money at these locations using a credit or debit card.

Joining your Trip

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

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The Adventure Travel Experts

CAMPBELL IRVINE
DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE



Travel Insurance is essential. If you have not already arranged cover, please contact our recommended Travel Insurance providers www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore who offer Travel Insurance specifically designed to cover travel with Explore or call **Campbell Irvine Direct** on Tel: 020 7938 1734

Explore Worldwide is an Introducing Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Ltd who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Travel Aware

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety

We strongly advise that you register with the FCO to receive updates to the travel advice for your chosen destination. A hard copy of the current FCO Travel Advice for your chosen destination is available by contacting cr@explore.co.uk or 01252 379438.

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Visa Information

India: Holders of passports endorsed 'British citizen' may be eligible for the e-Tourist Visa to enter India.

The visa can be applied for through the official Indian government visa website only - <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/visa/tvoa.html>. Please check all eligibility criteria that can be found on the website but important points are listed below -

You must be arriving into one of 24 selected entry points which can be found via the official Indian Government website link above. However, you can exit from any of the authorised immigration check posts in India.

Passports must have at least 6 months validity from the date of arrival in India and at least two blank pages for stamping. The visa application will take approximately 4 days to process.

It is valid for 60 days from the date of arrival in to India, and double entry is permitted on the e-Tourist visa. You can only obtain 2 e-visas for India in a calendar year.

The visa costs \$75. Biometric data will be collected on arrival in India.

Whilst the online form offers a relatively quick way to apply for a visa, a number of applicants have reported difficulty in completing the form. Travcour will complete the on-line visa on your behalf for a fee of £25 + the visa cost. Please contact them directly if you wish to take up this service.

If you are not eligible for the e-Tourist Visa, please refer to VFS Global to apply for your Indian visa - http://in.vfsglobal.co.uk/how_to_apply.html.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on **0208 5431846**.

Lone Parents

India

Single parents or other adults travelling alone with children should be aware that some countries require documentation confirming that the individual has authority to travel with the minor. It is crucial that you contact the Indian embassy for further information on exactly what may be required.

Vaccinations & Protection

India

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against Tetanus, Infectious Hepatitis, Typhoid and Polio. Please consult your travel clinic for the latest advice on Malaria, Dengue and Zika Virus. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth> and from your local healthcare provider.

Preparing for your Trip

Climate

India

There is considerable variation between the different regions of India but, in general, the climate is tropical. Summer temperatures on the plains are very hot, but cooled by the South-West Monsoon, which lasts from June- September. During these months it can be very wet and therefore very humid. At altitude, temperatures can become quite cool at night even in the summer and may drop below freezing between December and February so warm clothing is necessary. In the winter, northern and mid India can be very cool, with cold evenings, so warm clothing, including plenty of layers, are essential. The south of India remains warm and sunny during the winter months.

Clothing

In general only lightweight clothing is needed during the day, but bring warmer clothing for the winter evenings from mid November to mid February, (especially December and January) when a windproof jacket, several warm layers, gloves and hat are also recommended for the game drives. Hotel heating arrangements are not on a par with UK standards and from December to February thermals can be useful. Local people may be offended by western styles of dress and brief shorts, tight fitting clothing etc, should be avoided by both men and women.

Equipment

Binoculars are useful for game/ bird viewing. Also a 2 litre water bottle, a torch, insect repellent, sunhat and high factor suncream.

Footwear

Comfortable shoes for walking, and sandals.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of baggage and daypack. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

Luggage allowance on trip: 20kg

Transport

In order to make reservations on Indian trains we require your full passport details. It is important that we receive these details as soon as possible so we are ready to make the arrangements as soon as train tickets are available to buy.

Travelling on an Indian train is a fantastic experience, with millions using the rail network every day it is the perfect opportunity to meet local families. Due to the system for booking train tickets in India, whilst we'll try to ensure groups are as close together as possible, it may not be possible to have customers sat together in the same carriages. In such cases our Tour Leaders will help everyone to find their seats and ensure you get the most out of your journey.

General Information

Country details

India

Population: 1,210,193,422

Size of Country: 3,287,263 sq km

Major Language: Hindi and English.

Religion: Catholicism, Hindu, Muslim and Sikhism

Time Difference to GMT: +5

Electric Supply & Plugs

India

3 Pin Round

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailor-made holidays.
- Award-winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one of the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, or any number of unusual forms of transport. Often you will stay in family-run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

Earth Matters

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people) and have recently supported women's cooperatives in Borneo and Morocco. We are a member of Tourism Concern's Ethical Tour Operator Group (www.tourismconcern.org.uk) and support their campaign for fair and ethical tourism. We also care passionately about the world's wildlife and actively support and promote the Born Free Organisation and Mahouts Elephant Foundation.

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

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100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2016 and 31st December 2017.

Trip Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2017 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2017. 2018/19 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2018.

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