

# EXPLORE!

## TRIP NOTES



### Rajasthan - Land of the Maharajahs (RD 2017)



TRIPDURATION  
**14**  
DAYS



**Tour Style:** Classic  
**Tour Pace:** Full On

**Tour Type:** Small Groups  
**Accommodation**  
**Grade:** Premium

**Trip Code:** RD

#### Trip Highlights - Rajasthan - Land of the Maharajahs

- ✓ Delhi - Take a rickshaw through the winding streets of Old Delhi
- ✓ Agra - Visit the magnificent Taj Mahal at sunrise
- ✓ Jaipur - Test the accuracy of the sun dials at the observatory
- ✓ Bikaner - Explore the colourful bazaar in this ancient trade centre
- ✓ Jodhpur - Discover the majestic Mehrangarh Fort
- ✓ Udaipur - Relax in this historic city set on the banks of Lake Pichola.

#### Trip Essentials

**Accommodation:** 4 nights Standard Hotel  
9 nights Premium Hotel

**Included Meals:** 13 breakfasts, 0 lunches, 0 dinners

**Start Point:** Join trip: Delhi

**End Point:** Trip ends: Udaipur

**Transport:** 4WD, Bus

**Countries:** India

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## Rajasthan - Land of the Maharajahs

On this memorable journey we trace the old camel caravan routes through Rajasthan, discovering magnificent forts, ornate temples and market towns. We travel to the ancient 'Golden City' of Jaisalmer, visit the hilltop Amber Fort overlooking the 'Pink City' of Jaipur and watch the sunrise over the incredible Taj Mahal.

### 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: Premium

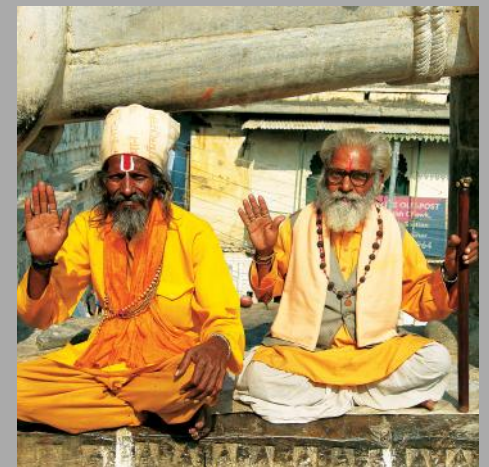
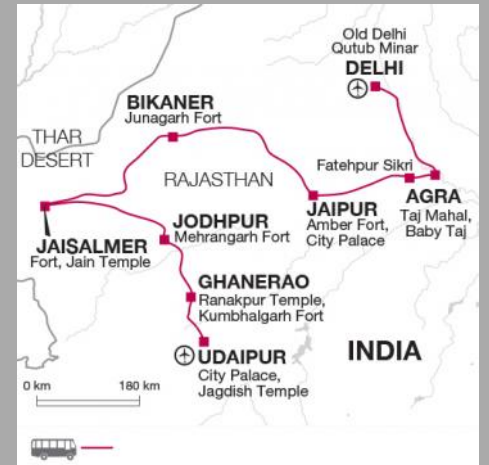
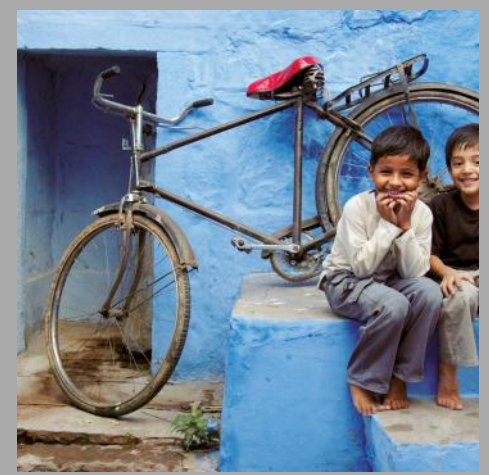
Our comfortable accommodation is hand-picked and chosen for its character, location or local importance. These properties have excellent facilities and a higher level of comfort and service.

### 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. Explore New Delhi's Qutub Minar

On arrival in Delhi we check in to our hotel and have time to freshen up. This afternoon we go on a city tour and see the main sights of New Delhi, which include the President's Palace, Lok Sabha (Parliament), India Gate, the Rajpath and we will visit Humayan's Tomb.

### Royal Plaza Hotel

The Royal Plaza has a unique feel to it, with various pieces of art through the ages adorning its vast lobby and various dining areas. The spacious rooms are well-equipped with Wi-Fi access. The hotel's facilities include a gym, spa, swimming pool and a host of dining options.

Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available 

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 **Included Meals:** None

## DAY 2 Explore Old Delhi's narrow streets. Drive to Agra

This morning we explore the narrow streets of Old Delhi. We take to cycle rickshaws to explore the winding lanes of Chandni Chowk bazaar, a sprawling market where you can buy almost anything you need from household wares to souvenirs. We view the Red Fort from the outside before leaving the capital and driving to Agra. Our journey to Agra takes approximately 4 hours.

### Hotel Clarks Shiraz

Located just two kilometres from the Taj Mahal the Hotel Clarks Shiraz is a large property situated within almost eight acres of landscaped gardens. There are two restaurants, a coffee shop and a bar area offering a variety of cuisines plus an outdoor swimming pool and small spa for relaxation. A great combination of traditional and modern style this property offers a relaxed atmosphere and friendly and helpful staff.

Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

## DAY 3 Watch the sun rise over the beautiful Taj Mahal

An early start this morning to one of the world's most famous buildings, the magnificent Taj Mahal. 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 and later Shah Jahan moved his capital to Delhi before being overthrown by his son, Aurangzeb. Later in the day we visit Agra Fort, built by Akbar the Great, which contains the Moti Mosque, a beautiful building decorated with pearls and the Itimad-ud-daula, more commonly known as the Baby Taj. 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 until January 2017.

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Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

## DAY 4 Visit deserted Fatehpur Sikri en route to Jaipur

After breakfast we leave Agra and begin our drive to Jaipur. Along the way we stop and visit the deserted city of Fatehpur Sikri. Founded in 1569 and abandoned just 16 years later, it is a perfectly intact example of Akbar's imperial court. Among the many noteworthy buildings is the 5-storied Panch Mahal, probably a pleasure pavilion for the ladies of the harem. In the centre of the courtyard is the Pachisi Board where the emperor played a game of chess with dancing girls as pieces. Perhaps the finest structure of all is the lotus shaped carved central pillar of the Diwan-i-Khas (Hall of Private Audience), its extraordinary capital supporting a vaulted roof. We continue on to Jaipur where we have time to relax on arrival.

### Shahpura House

Set approximately four kilometres from the centre of Jaipur, the Shahpura House is a heritage hotel featuring traditional Rajput architecture. This mid-sized property offers comfortable rooms with Wi-Fi access. The hotel has three dining options including a rooftop restaurant and a pool side snack bar. As well as an outdoor swimming pool there is an on site spa to help you relax.

Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

## DAY 5 View the famous facade of the Palace of the Winds

Sometimes called the Pink City, Jaipur was first painted terracotta pink by Maharajah Sawai Ram Singh to celebrate the visit of Prince Albert in 1853. In the morning we head to the outskirts of the city and visit the dramatic Amber Fort, perched high on a hillside with impressive views back down to the city. We will make a stop on the journey to view the ornate facade of the Palace of the Winds, built to allow the ladies of the harem an opportunity to look out over the city. This afternoon we will visit the lavish and well preserved City Palace with its fine collection of textiles, costumes and armoury. Jai Singh, the great Maharajah-astronomer, built his extraordinary (and very accurate) star gazing observatory (Jantra) here. We will get an opportunity to visit the observatory and also the Old City with its fine gates set in to the pink walls.

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Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available 



Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY

## 6 Travel to Bikaner and visit Junagarh Fort

This morning we leave Jaipur and drive to the desert city of Bikaner. Situated directly on the ancient camel caravan routes that came from Africa and West Asia, Bikaner was once a great trading centre. Its colourful bazaars and buildings of reddish-pink sandstone still suggest its ancient wealth. We take a tour to the Junagarh Fort built by Raja Rai Singh (1571-1611) which is distinguished by its high defensive light red sandstone walls. The well preserved palaces within the fort area are noted for their fine stone carvings. Bikaner still remains a defensive town, and was the home of the famous Camel Corps. We will also take the opportunity to visit the Old town and Bhandasar Jain Temple.

### Gajner Palace

Gajner Palace stands like a jewel in the Thar Desert on the shores of Gajner Lake approximately 19km from Bikaner. It was one of the former palaces of the Maharajas of Bikaner and was frequented by them to entertain royalty and dignitaries. Built of intricately carved red stone, this palace is surrounded by six thousand acres of preserved wildlife sanctuary. Village and nature walks are available in the surrounding area and the well-kept gardens are perfect for relaxing.

Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY

## 7 Drive to the golden city of Jaisalmer

Today we make our way to Jaisalmer. The city is set in the vast Thar Desert and today still retains much of the medieval atmosphere as camel carts pass through the narrow streets alongside rickshaws. The fort is a lively hub of activity, with shops and restaurants, and well worth a wander through. The city is famous for handicrafts in particular stone carvings, leather ware and brass items and the bazaars are packed with stalls offering almost everything you can imagine.

### Gorbandh Palace

A luxurious heritage hotel, built in the style of Mughal architecture, this desert retreat lies two kilometres outside the walls of the main town en route to the sand dunes. The hotel offers contemporary facilities in peaceful surroundings with many of the rooms featuring balconies overlooking the grounds. Facilities include a swimming pool, health club, restaurant and bar.

Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY

## 8 Explore Jaisalmer's Fort and Jain Temple

After breakfast we will explore Jaisalmer on foot visiting the Gadi Sagar Tank, Jaisalmer Folklore Museum. We will also visit the fort and some of the many elaborately carved Jain Temples and havelis including the Patwon-ki Haveli considered to be the finest in Jaisalmer.

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Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY

## 9 Transfer To Jodhpur

This morning we drive to Jodhpur, where the impregnable fortress commands a superb panorama of the surrounding countryside (approximately 6 hours). The city itself has a unique atmosphere, with many fine old buildings and temples. Jodhpurs, those trousers-cum- riding breeches, are named after the horsemen of this city. Arriving mid-afternoon, the rest of the day is free to wander the atmospheric streets of the Old City.

### The Fern Residency

Single Room Available

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 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

## DAY 10 Discover the dramatic Mehrangarh Fort

The majestic Mehrangarh Fort in Jodhpur is built across the top of a steep escarpment 125m above the plains below. It has a huge, sheer drop to the south where it overlooks the city. Our visit this morning affords wonderful views, not only across Jodhpur, but also way into the distance across the surrounding desert plains. The Rajput palace buildings within the fort are typically Mughal - very ornate and flamboyant, but also very practical and as always, built with defence in mind. This afternoon there is the chance to make an optional visit to some nearby Bishnoi villages. The Bishnoi are renowned for their protection of wild animals and trees.

### The Fern Residency

Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

## DAY 11 Visit Ranakpur Temple on the way to Ghanerao

Our morning's drive takes us on to the temple town of Ranakpur, one of Rajasthan's gems (approximately 4 hours). Little visited, it is home to some of the most beautifully sculpted Jain Temples in India. Situated in a wooded valley the temples date back to the 15th century with the carvings depicting scenes from the lives of the Jain Saints at that time. We visit the Adinath temple, which contains 1444 exquisitely carved pillars, with no two alike. Continuing we then drive to Ghanerao (approximately 1 hour) where we will spend the night.

### Ghanerao Royal Castle

A magnificent showcase of marble and red sandstone Rajput architecture built in 1606 that serves as the home of the royal family who still reside. There is a nostalgic air of past glory and of the royal lifestyle that the Thakurs led. The castle has a small number of beautiful rooms, each with their own seating area or verandah. A recent developing project of the museum is under away, where you can see the old elephant hondas and palkis which were used by the rulers when elephants and horses were the only means of travel.

Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

## DAY 12 Explore Kumbhalgarh Fort en route to Udaipur

This morning we drive to visit Kumbhalgarh's imposing 15th century fort - one of the finest examples of defensive architecture in Rajasthan. Lying 1,100m above sea level, the fortified ramparts protected palaces, temples and even farms, ensuring that the complex was self contained and able to withstand a long siege. After lunch we drive to the beautiful lakeside city of Udaipur where we spend the next two nights. The city is dominated by Lake Pichola, its island palace (now a hotel) and Jag Mandir Island. Here the future Shah Jahan sought sanctuary from his father after he had been found guilty of plotting against him.

### Hotel Udai Kothi

The Udai Kothi is a boutique property that blends traditional Rajasthani architecture with modern amenities. The hotel boasts a roof-top pool and restaurant, and the rooms are spacious and well-appointed.

Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

## DAY 13 Take a boat on peaceful Lake Pichola

Our first stop today is the City Palace, located next to the Lake this huge Palace offers an insight in to the opulent life of the Maharajahs. We will also visit the Jagdish Mandir, a large ornately carved Hindu Temple set in the middle of the old town. In the late afternoon we will take a sunset cruise on the lake. At some times of the year the level of the water in the lake may drop or even, after a poor monsoon, dry up completely.

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Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

## DAY 14 Tour ends in Udaipur

Our tour ends this morning after breakfast.

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## 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: 13 breakfasts, 0 lunches, 0 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

### Tipping - Tour Leader

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

Local Staff: 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 an additional £30 for tips during your tour. Your tour leader will account to you for any organised tipping.

### 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](http://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](http://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 Introducer 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](http://www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety)

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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](mailto:cr@explore.co.uk) or 01252 379438.

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## 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.

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## 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](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](http://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](http://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.

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## Vaccinations & Protection

### India

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against Tetanus, Infectious Hepatitis, Typhoid and Polio. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria (eg. Paludrine, Chloroquine, Mefloquine etc.). 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.

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## Preparing for your Trip

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### 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.

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### Clothing

Bear in mind that between November and March daytime temperatures are warm and comfortable, but evenings and nights in the desert can be extremely cold and hotels rarely have heating arrangements comparable with the UK. Lightweight clothing plus warmer garments are essential. Local people may be offended by western styles of dress. Brief shorts tight fitting clothing etc. should be avoided by both men and women.

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### Footwear

Comfortable shoes and sandals.



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## Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of baggage and a daypack.

Luggage allowance on trip: 20kg

## General Information

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### 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

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### 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.

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### 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.

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### 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](http://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.

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## 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.

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### **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.

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### **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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