INDIA
Tour Planner

2015

ICS TRAVEL GROUP

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ICS TRAVEL GROUP is one of the first international DMCs to open our own offices in our destinations and has since become a market leader throughout the Mekong region, Indonesia and India. As such, we can offer you the following advantages:

Global Network
With a centralised reservations centre/head office in Bangkok and 7 sales offices.

Local Knowledge and Network
We have operations offices on the ground at every major destination – making us your in-country expert for your every need.

Quality Experience
Our goal is to provide a seamless travel experience for your clients.

Competitive Hotel Rates
We have contract rates with over 1000 hotels and pride ourselves on having the most attractive pricing strategies in the region.

Full Range of Services and Products
Wherever your clients want to go and whatever they want to do, we can do it.
Our portfolio includes the complete range of products for leisure and niche travellers alike.

Rapid Response
All quotation and booking requests are answered promptly and accurately, with no exceptions.

Innovative Online Booking Engine
Our booking and feedback systems are unrivalled in the industry.

Creative MICE team
Our team of experienced travel professionals in each country is accustomed to handling multinational incentives.

International Standards / Financial Stability
All our operational offices are fully licensed and financially stable. All guides and drivers are thoroughly trained and licensed.

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INDIA |

"India is the cradle of the human race, the birth place of the human speech, the mother of history, the grandmother of legend, and the great grandmother of traditions. Our most valuable and the most instructive materials in the history of man are treasured up in India only". – Mark Twain.

India is a mystical land that presents the traveler with a baffling array of unforgettable experiences. As the world's largest democracy with a population of over 1147 million, India, often said, is not a country but a continent. The people, the languages, the customs are different in each part of the country. It is one of the few countries in the world today in which the social and religious structures which define the nation's identity remain intact, and has continued to do so for at least 5000 years despite invasions, famines, religious persecutions, political upheaval and many other cataclysms.

Golden Triangle, 7 days |

Day 1 Arrive Delhi |
Arrive Delhi on Late evening Flight. You will be met by our representative outside the custom lounge and given a traditional welcome.

Delhi, the Empress of Indian cities has a fascinating history and a stimulating present. She has often been sacked and left naked and desolate. Despite this she still remains the metropolis of a great empire.

The capital of India, Delhi has been the seat of power of a number of dynasties – the Rajputs, the Afghans, the Turks and the Mughals who continued their imperial line until the British. Scattered over are surviving ruins, remnants of mighty edifices, tombs of warriors and saints – all of which are memorials not of a single city but of supplanted nations.
Overnight at hotel.

Day 02: Delhi – Agra 210 Kms / 05 Hours drive |
After breakfast spend the morning seeing the sights of Old & New Delhi.

Highlights:
• Jama Masjid
• Raj Ghat
• Drive Past Red fort
• Visit India Gate, President Palace, Parliament
• Qutab Minar
Later in the afternoon leave Delhi for Agra. On arrival check in hotel. Overnight at hotel.

Day 03: Agra |
After breakfast take a sightseeing tour of Agra:

Highlights:
• Taj Mahal
• Agra Fort
• Visit Mother Teresa Home
• Walking in Local market(Sadar Bazar)
Overnight at hotel.

Day 04: Agra – Jaipur |
Enroute visit Fatehpur Sikri & Abhaneri (235 Kms / 06 Hours drive)
After breakfast depart Agra for Jaipur.

Highlights:
• Fatehpur sikri
• Interact withRural Rajasthani village People
• Visit Abhaneri (Step Well)
• Witness evening ceremony at Birla Temple

After visit continue drive to Jaipur: Jaipur is where the enduring charisma of the past blends with the vitality of today. Where a colorful cast of characters – from printers and potters to artists and antique dealers - present a fascinating picture of a city that is alive to both tradition and change.

Raja Jai Singh, the founder of Jaipur was no ordinary man. He was a scholar and an astronomer, keenly sensitive to beauty, a formidable general, who tempered power with wisdom. In building Jaipur, Jai Singh's vision took him beyond architectural beauty: in the sprawling, barren plains beneath Amber the former capital, he gave India its first planned city, which has remained unique in two and a half centuries. Jai Singh made Jaipur a haven and it became a center of commerce and religion.

Today, Jaipur has spread far beyond the pink crenulated walls that once defined its boundaries. It presents a fascinating picture of a city where growth, evolution and change are sustained by tradition.

On arrival transfer and check in at hotel. Overnight at hotel.

Day 05: Jaipur |
After breakfast take a full day city tour of Jaipur.

Highlights:
• Elephant ride to Visit Amber fort
• City Palace
• Walk through Old town of Jaipur
• Cycle Rickshwa Ride
• Experience Hindi Movie at Famous Rajmandir Theater.

Overnight at hotel.

Day 06: Jaipur – Delhi (265 Kms / 06 Hours drive) |
After breakfast depart Jaipur for Delhi.

On arrival a Temple Tour of Delhi will be provided:
• Bahai Temple (Closed on Mondays)
• Gurudwar Bangla Sahib (Shikh Temple)

No hotel envisaged. Dinner will be provided in a hotel.

Transfer to the airport for connecting flight to onward destination, departing during the early hours on Day 07th.

END OF SERVICES

Culinary Tour, 12 days |

DELHI - AGRA - JAIPUR - DEOGARH - UDAIPUR – MUMBAI

The cuisine of India is characterized by its use of locally available resources, including spices and vegetables grown across India and in some parts of India for the widespread practice of vegetarianism across its society. Each family of Indian cuisine is characterised by a wide assortment of dishes and cooking techniques. As a consequence, it varies from region to region, reflecting the varied demographics of the ethnically diverse Indian subcontinent.

The character of cuisine in India is essentially regional; reasons for this must be found in the sheer size of the country, which forced every area to develop a style of cooking of its own. In times gone by transportation was a problem, and this meant that each area had to come up with a style of food, which made do with the locally available materials. As a result, not only dishes, but flavors, colors,methods of cooking, down to even the style of cutting the vegetables prior to be cooked changes as often as the landscape does.

What has helped along this diversity is the amazing number of religions and the sects and sub-sects within them; each of them often has strict dietary codes. For example, Hindu Brahmins may not eat onions, ginger and garlic, meat that meant that a special cuisine came up around that bias and so on. Whereas Christians and Muslims favors meat eating.

The most striking contrast in eating habits shows up between the meat-and-bread eating northern regions and the pulse-and-rice southern regions

Day 1 ARRIVAL DELHI |
On arrival in Delhi you will be greeted and escorted by our Representative to your hotel.
Overnight at hotel.

Day 02: DELHI |
After breakfast visit start your city tour with visit to Khari bawri - A wholesale market famous for dry fruits & spices.

Visit some traditional Indian sweetmeat (Mithai) shops in the vicinity and then continue to Old Delhi. Drive past the Red Fort, the 300-year-old walled city built by Emperor Shah Jehan in 1648 as his capital and named after him. The magnificent Red Fort built of red sandstone dates from the very peak of the Mughal power, Opposite the fort are the black and white onion dome and minarets of the Jama Masjid, the most elegant mosque in India. Drive past Kotla Firoze Shah, the ruins of an old fort of the 14th century with the 13 metre high Ashoka Pillar from the 3rd BC. Visit Raj Ghat, where Mahatma Gandhi was cremated in 1948. Drive through the old city subject to traffic restrictions.

IMP: RED FORT IS CLOSED ON MONDAY & MARKETS IN OLD DELHI ARE CLOSED ON SUNDAY

Lunch at Sikh Temple (Gurudwara Bangla Sahib).

In the afternoon visit New Delhi. You will drive past the President's Palace and India Gate (42m high), built to commemorate the 70,000 Indian soldiers who died in the 1st world war. Later visit Humayun's Tomb, and the Qutub Minar, the highest sand stone minaret in the world (73 meters). Today, you will have chance to taste street food of Delhi. Indians love street food, which they refer to as small plates of savory snacks called chaat. It's really worth trying some just to taste the different flavors and spices of India.

In the evening dinner with Traditional Indian family with cooking demonstration.
Overnight at Hotel.

Day 03: DELHI – AGRA |
After breakfast drive to Agra. Enroute visit Sikandra to see the mausoleum of great Mughal King Akbar (1556-1605). On the way you get to see the authentic routine village life. On arrival in Agra check in at the hotel
Lunch at hotel.

In the evening drive to a local sweetmeat shop to see how the Jalebis are prepared.

Jalebi is a South Asian fried sweetmeat. It is made by deep-frying batter in a pretzel shape, instead of the funnel cake shape common in the U.S., then soaked in a sugarsyrup. Jalebis are bright orange or yellow in colour

Jalebi is served hot. It has a somewhat chewy texture. Another populer sweetmeat avilable in Agra (State of Uttar Pradesh) is Imarti, which is red-orange in colour and sweeter in taste.
Dinner & Overnight at hotel.

Day 04: AGRA |
After breakfast visit Taj Mahal (1631-1653), a poem in white marble, built by Shah Jahan in memory of his beloved wife, Mumtaj Mahal. Later visit Agra Fort (Fort and Palace) situated on the west bank of the river Jamuna.

Taj Mahal : With its incredible lacy white grandeur the Taj Mahal is perhaps the most perfect architectural monument in the world. To the poet Tagore it was a `tear on the face of eternity'. In memory of his wife the great Mughal emperor Shah Jehan constructed this most extravagant and incomparable monument built for love. Amazingly graceful from any angle, it is the close up detail, which is really astounding.

Agra Fort: Agra Fort is situated on the banks of the river Yamuna and is another monumental mission accomplished by the great Mughal visionary Emperor Akbar. His son Jehangir and grandson Shah Jehan added to this imposing structure during their rule. The palaces, mosques and audience halls contained within its massive wall of red sandstone are perfect examples of blending Islamic and Hindu traditions.

Lunch at hotel Mughal Sheraton in Peshawari Restaurant with a short lecture on local cuisine (Northwest Frontier Cuisine).

Taste the authentic flavours of the Northwest Frontier cuisine at Peshawari restaurant. Barbequed specialties and freshly baked Indian breads are prepared in the restaurant's display kitchen.

In the afternoon visit the Marble Factory which still specializes in laying semi precsious and prescious stones on the heart of Marble rock. Evening witness cultural show at Kalakriti (Sound & Visual).

Overnight & Dinner at Hotel.

Day 05: AGRA – FATEHPUR SIKRI - JAIPUR |
After breakfast drive to Jaipur. On the way visit Fatehpur Sikri. It is a beautiful and deserted medieval city built by Akbar the Great in the 16th century to serve as the capital of his vast empire. The Mughals later abandoned this city for lack of water.
Lunch organized at Hotel Laxmi Vilas Palace (Bharatpur).

Continue on to Jaipur. Maharaja Jai Singh II built Jaipur in the 18th century. It is a planned city built with ancient Hindu rules as the colonial capital of a richly colorful state. The whole city was painted pink to welcome the visit of Prince Albert in 1853.
On arrival check in the hotel.

In the evening visit a local Indian family for Tea & Coffee followed by Rickshaw ride through local Market where almost all the household things are available such as vegetable, spices etc.
Dinner & Overnight at hotel.

Day 06: JAIPUR |
The day begins with a visit to the Amber fort, the former seat of the Rajput rulers of Jaipur. Ascending the fortress seated on elephants, wander around the beautiful palaces and visit the Shiladevi temple (which continues to be the private temple of the Royal family) with its exquisite marble carvings and silver door. After the visit to Amber, you get an opportunity to see craftman creating excellent pieces of jewellery which is traditional work of Jaipur.

Lunch at hotel Samode Haveli with a short lecture on local cuisine.
Afternoon visit the open-air royal observatory "Jantar Mantar", with gigantic, astronomical instruments, the City Palace and Museum stopping by the "Hawa Mahal" or the Palace of Winds.

CITY PALACE - A delightful blend of Mughal and traditional Rajasthani architecture, the City Palace sprawls over one-seventh of the area in the walled city. It houses the Chandra Mahal, Shri Govind Dev Temple and the City Palace Museum.

JANTAR MANTAR - This is the largest and the best preserved of the five observatories built by Jai Singh II in different parts of the country. This observatory consisting of outsized astronomical instruments is still in use.

HAWA MAHAL - The ornamental facade of this "Palace of Winds" is a prominent landmark in Jaipur. It is a five-storey structure of sandstone plastered pink encrusted with fine trelliswork and elaborate balconies. The palace has 953 niches and windows. Built in 1799 by Pratap Singh, the Mahal was a royal grandstand for the palace women.

After a visit to City Palace, you can watch weavers making carpets and take a look at block printing.

For your dinner that evening, you visit Chowki Dhani which is a traditional village setting.

The standard thing to do is to try the Rajasthani Thali which starts off with a Papad Mangori soup. Here you can see the influence of the desert. Without access to fresh vegetables, papads become the basis of the soup. Mangori is a local flavouring which gives it a slightly sour tang. The thali comes with ker sangri (capers and desert beans) bela Rajasthani (dumplings of besan in a yoghurt gravy) and panchmela (five vegetables of the chefs choice). Three different kinds of Indian breads are served: lachcha parathas, naan and missi rotis. You round it all off with paneer ghewar (cottage chease), a delicious concoction of paneer.

Overnight at hotel.

India | Private Tours

Day 07: JAIPUR - DEOGARH |

Morning after Breakfast drive to Deogarh via Pushkar.

Pushkar is an enchanting small town located on the edge of the desert but separated from it by Nag Pahar, the Snake Mountain. The town frequently visited by devotees lies to the side of the small Pushkar Lake with its multitudes of bathing ghats & temples. It also holds the most unique fairs of its kind in the world. It is a combination of an animal fair & the religious fair. Both the fairs are enchanting & have their own unique aspects & quality. As per the Indian calendar the fair is held in the first lunar cycle in the month of Kartik culminating on the Kartik Poornima (Full moon).

Lunch at Jagat Niwas Palace in Pushkar.

The fort of Deogarh with its greying battlements stands magnificent high up on a hillock towering over the town. The fort was built in the year 1670 by then Rawat Dwarkadasji of the Chaudawat clan of the Sisodia Dynasty. The fort went through many modifications in the years to come. The palace here has more than two hundred rooms, exotic mural paintings on the walls, and numerous balconies with carved pillars. The abundant use of marble enhances the aesthetic value of the palace. The fort and the palace today is a magnificent heritage hotel run by the Rawats.

On arrival check in at hotel.

In the evening, visit a colourful local market of the villagers - part of the entire complex

Dinner at hotel (typical Rajasthani cuisine). You are joined by the Royal family which still lives in the same palace.

Overnight at Hotel.

Day 08: DEOGARH - UDAIPUR |

After breakfast enjoy a village safari.

Later drive to Udaipur enroute visiting Ranakpur.

Visit the Jain temples situated in the remote and peaceful Aravalli valley. The temples are open for non-Jains at 12 noon. The most famous is the Adinath temple, a beautifully crafted and well-kept marble edifice which has 29 halls supported by 1444 pillars – no two of which are alike. Among the five holy Jain sites, this is one of the best temple complexes in the country.

Lunch at hotel Fateh Bagh in Ranakpur.

Continue to Udaipur.

The city of Udaipur or the city of `sunrise' combines real beauty with a great and glorious past. The legendary Ranas or kings of this state traced their ancestry back to the sun! The town stands in a valley, amidst green hills on the banks of the wide, steel blue Lake Pichola and is regarded as the most romantic spot in India. On little islands in the lake, from the waters edge, rise marble palaces of pure white that glisten like fairy castles. Crowning the ridge along the shore of the lake, in which the city clusters, stands the massive palace of the Maharana.

On arrival check in at Hotel.
Dinner at The Lalit Laxmi Vilas Palace.

Overnight at hotel.

Day 09: UDAIPUR |

Morning city tour of Udaipur.

Visit the City Palace, once the home of Mewar's rulers, is today a museum. It consists of several flawlessly integrated palaces, which overlook the clear blue of Lake Pichola. Visit Sahelion-ki-bari (Garden of the Maids of Honour) the scene of royal parties for centuries.

Lunch at Crystal Gallery in hotel Fateh Prakash.

Crystal Gallery has been hailed as probably the single largest private collection of crystal anywhere in the world. The visitors here are privy to one of the most exclusive and exquisite crystal collections. It was in 1877 that Maharana Sajjan Singh (period of reign: 1874-1884) ordered the crystal collection from the Birmingham-based F&C Osler company. The collection includes a bewildering number of objects d'art, dinner sets, perfume bottles, decanters, glasses, washing bowls and even furniture. The Crystal Gallery also houses the only crystal bed in the world! The collection has been customised for the House of Mewar; the Crest of Mewar being delicately etched on the crystal, adding yet another amazing facet.
The Durbar Hall, which adorns the Fateh Prakash Palace, is of historical significance. In 1909, Lord Minto the Viceroy of India, laid its foundation stone and, in his honour, the hall was originally called Minto Hall. Today its opulent interiors - with huge chandeliers and special lights, portraits of the Maharanas of Mewar, royal artifacts and the legendary armory of the Mewar dynasty - transport you to times past when the Maharanas held forth in The Durbar Hall.
The Audio Guide Service at Crystal Gallery narrates the history and anecdotes about how the present Custodian of the House of Mewar, Shriji Arvind Singh Mewar of Udaipur, conceptualised the Gallery; how the crystal was unpacked after it had been in crates for over half a century!

Later drive around Fateh Sagar Lake excavated in the late 17th century by Maharaja Jai Singh and past the Kala Mandir (Puppet Museum) and the Cenotaph of Maharana Pratap. And of course last but not the last - the Jagdish temple.

The rest of the day is at leisure.

Cooking demo and dinner at Jhoola Lawns, Shikarbadi Hotel.

This area at Shikarbadi is facing the beautiful sanctuary.

Cooking display of traditional Rajasthani food by Chef of the Hotel.

Overnight at hotel.

Day 10: UDAIPUR - MUMBAI |

After early breakfast transfer to the airport to connect morning flight to Mumbai.

Three hundred years ago the area now occupied by Mumbai was 7 islands inhabited by Koli fisherman and their families. With land reclamation the islands became connected, so that now Bombay occupies a thin isthmus. The British acquired these marshy islands for a pittance. Mumbadevi or Mumbai was part of Catherine of Braganza's marriage dowry when she married Charles II in 1661. Four years later, the British took possession of the remaining islands and neighbouring mainland area and in 1668 the East India Company leased the whole area for 10 pounds per year.

On arrival you will be met by our representative who will escort you to the hotel.

Lunch at hotel.

Rest of the day is at leisure.

Dinner at seafood restaurant.

The first Manglorean cuisine restaurant in Mumbai serves home-style food.

Overnight at hotel.

Day 11: MUMBAI |
Morning city tour of Mumbai.
Start with a stop at the Gateway of India –a Indo – Sarcenic style of architecture (1927), designed by George Wittet to commemorate the visit of George V and Queen Mary in 1911, drive, past the Victoria Terminus the most remarkable example of Victorian Gothic architecture in India opened during Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee Year, Marine Drive and visit the Hanging Gardens so named since they are located on top of a series of tanks that supply water to Bombay. Visit the Jain Temple built of marble and dedicated to the first Jain Tirthankara. Much of the decoration depicts the lives of the tirthankaras. And last but not the least; make a brief photostop at "Dhobi Ghat" the Indian laundry system.

Lunch with Indian local family with cooking demonstration.

Rest of the day is at leisure.

Dinner & Overnight at hotel.

Day 12: Leave MUMBAI |

Transfer to airport for flight for onward destination.

----------END OF OUR SERVICES----------

Fascinating India, 11 days |

Day 1 Arrive Delhi |
Arrive Delhi. You will be meet by our representative outside the arrival lounge.

Delhi, the Empress of Indian cities has a fascinating history and a stimulating present. The capital of India, Delhi has been the seat of power of a number of dynasties – athe Rajputs, the Afghans, the Turks and the Mughals who continued their imperial line until the British. Scattered over the city are surviving ruins, remnants of mighty edifices and tombs of warriors and saints.

On arrival check in at hotel. Overnight at hotel.

Day 02: Delhi |
After breakfast enjoy sightseeing of Old Delhi.

Visit the Red Fort (closed on Monday), the 300-year-old walled city built by Emperor Shah Jahan in 1648 as his capital. The magnificent fort built of red sandstone dates from the very peak of the Mughal power. Opposite the fort are the black and white onion dome and minarets of the Jama Masjid, the most elegant mosque in India. Drive past Kotla Firoze Shah, ruins of an old fort of the 14th century with the 13 meter high Ashoka Pillar of 3rd BC. Visit Raj Ghat where Mahatma Gandhi was cremated in 1948. Drive through the old city subject to traffic restrictions.

In the afternoon take a city tour of New Delhi, the new capital designed by Sir Edward Lutyens. Drive past the Presidential Palace, the Rashtrapati Bahaman and the secretariat buildings - the center of all government activity and down the main avenue, the impressive Rajpath to the World War I memorial arch, the India Gate, the High Court Building and the Old Fort. Visit Humayun's Tomb built in 1565 AD by his grieving widow Haji Begum, the Qutub Minar, 72 meters high and the ruins of Quwat-ul-Eslam (Light of Islam) Mosque.

Overnight at hotel.

Day 03: Delhi to Agra (approx.210 kms or 4 hrs drive) |
After breakfast drive to Agra

Agra is known for the famous monument of love -The Taj Mahal, constructed by the Mughal Emperor, Shah Jehan. It is said he built this monument in the memory of his beloved wife Mumtaj Mahal. The Taj Mahal is ethereal at any part of the day - blushing in the rosy glow of dawn or sunset, appearing like a pearly mirage in the moonlight or reflected in the pools of the garden.

On arrival transfer and check in at hotel. After lunch Visit Taj Mahal (Closed on Fridays).

The Taj Mahal is everything that has been said about it and more. Taking 22 years and 20,000 men to build, the white marble was quarried 200 miles away and was transported to the site by a fleet of 1000 elephants. Built by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan as an expression of his love for his wife Mumtaz Mahal, in mid 17th century, the Taj Mahal is truly one of the wonders of the world. Though the Taj appears to be amazingly perfect from almost any angle, it is the closeup marble inlay work, which is really astounding. You will have ample time to view and be mesmerized by this outstanding piece of architecture.

Day 04: Agra to Karauli (approx. 170 kms or 4-5 hours drive) |
Morning after breakfast visit Agra Fort

Agra Fort is situated on the banks of the river Yamuna, another monumental mission accomplished by the great Mughal visionary Emperor Akbar. His son Jehangir and grandson Shah Jehan added to this imposing structure during their rule. The palaces, mosques and audience halls contained within its massive wall of red sandstone are perfect examples of blending Islamic and Hindu traditions.

Later drive to Karauli enroute -The deserted city of Fatehpur Sikri.

The abandoned red sandstone city built in the 16th century by the Mughal Emperor Akbar, one of India's greatest rulers. Remarkably broadminded for his time, this Muslim king married a Rajput princess in order to win over his Hindu subjects. The architecture at Fatehpur Sikri is a combination of Hindu and Muslim styles, expressing Akbar's vision of synthesizing the cultures.

Continue drive to Karauli

On arrival transfer and check in at hotel.

Karauli is a holy city of Rajasthan, Situated 160 kms from Jaipur. Earlier called Kalyanpuri, after the local deity Kalyanji, Karauli was founded in 1348 AD. Karauli was strongly fortified by its rulers. The city is surrounded by a wall of red sandstone strengthened by bastions at several places. The peripheral wall, now dilapidated at several places, has six gates and eleven posterns.

Later in the afternoon camel cart ride will be provided to see the 600 year old city where one can see local handicraft shops like lacker work, bangle making, wooden toys, bamboo items, traditional sweets etc being made. Then go to see the 500 year old city palace full of frescos, fine stone carvings & paintings.

Overnight at the hotel.

Day 05: Karauli to Ramatharafort (approx. 70 kms or 1 ½ hours drive) |

After breakfast drive to Ramatharafort.

On arrival check in at hotel.

Ramathra Fort lies between two of India's internationally famous wildlife reserves, Keoladeo Ghana Bird Sanctuary in Bharatpur and Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve in Sawai Madhopur. The closest wilderness area, Kailadevi National Park, is just 15 kms away.

The fort, the lake and countryside are the three big attractions of Ramathra Fort. The ideal season to enjoy Ramathra is between the months of July and March. Regardless of how much time you have to spend, or how much you wish to do, the adventure is yours. Whether you prefer to stay home and take in the fort's tranquil atmosphere or wish to explore its many natural sites, your hosts at Ramathra promise you a memorable stay.

Rest of day at leisure. Overnight at hotel.

Day 06: Ramatharafort |
Ramathra was granted as a jagir (fiefdom) in 1645 AD to Thakur Bhoj Pal by his father the Maharaja of Karauli. The name Ramathra honours Lord Rama, who, it is believed, camped here while on his epic journey to Lanka. Today, Ramathra Fort belongs to Thakur Brijendra Raj Pal and his family who are descendents of the founder.

The fort has a strong perimeter wall crowned with parapets. Its ramparts are wide and offer a spectacular view from the hilltop. Inside there is a multi-story palace, parts of which are being restored using traditional building techniques and local craftspeople. Stone lattices and a painted ceiling ornament the otherwise simple facilities. It was, after all, designed to be a battle fort.

A complete walking tour of the Ramathra village, a small hamlet of farmers and herders, takes about 3 hours. You see all kinds of work associated with tending crops and animals, and caring for children. Absent is a bazaar with commercial traffic or food stalls. After the sun goes down, Bhajan-singing and community activities are more common than radio or television. Among its numerous shrines, the Ganesh Mandir and Shiva Mandir give the best flavour of local religious life. The pure white marble idol of Lord Shiva, the great Ascetic, is a masterpiece of early 18th century craftsmanship.

Overnight at hotel.

Day 07: Ramatharafort to Ranthambhore (approx. 160 kms or 3-4 hours drive) |
After breakfast drive to Ranthambore

On arrival transfer and check in at hotel.

Overnight at the hotel.

India | Private Tours

Day 08: Ranthambore |
Morning & afternoon enjoy the game drive to visit the Ranthambore National Park using shared canters.

Ranthambore National Park is one of the prime examples of Project Tiger's conservation efforts in Rajasthan. The forests around the Ranthambore Fort were once, the private hunting grounds of the Maharajas of Jaipur. The desire to preserve the game in these forests for sport was responsible for their conservation, and subsequent rescue by Project Tiger.

The Park sprawls over an estimated area of 400 sq kms. Steep crags embrace a network of lakes and rivers. A top one of these hills is the impressive Ranthambore Fort built in the 10th century. The terrain fluctuates between impregnable forests and open bushland. The forest is the typically dry deciduous type with dhok being the most prominent tree. The entry point to the Park goes straight to the foot of the fort and the forest rest house, Jogi Mahal. The latter boasts of the second-largest banyan tree in India.
The Padam Talab, the Raj Bagh Talab and the Malik Talab are some of the lakes in the area that attract the tiger population. They have been spotted at the edges of these lakes and Jogi Mahal itself. Old crumbling walls, ruined pavilions, wells, and other ancient structures stand witness to the region's glorious past. The entire forest is peppered with the battlements and spillovers of the Ranthambore Fort - tigers are said to frequent these ruins, too. As a result of stringent efforts in conservation, tigers - the prime assets of the Park - have become more and more active during the day. More than in any other park or sanctuary in India, tigers are easily spotted here in daylight. They can be seen lolling around lazily in the sun, or feverishly hunting down Sambar around the lakes.

Overnight at hotel.

Day 09: Ranthambore to Jaipur by surface approx 200 kms |
After breakfast leave Ranthambore for Jaipur. On arrival check in at the hotel.

Jaipur is where the enduring charisma of the past blends with the throbbing vitality of today. Where a colorful cast of characters – from printers and potters to artists and antique dealers - present a fascinating picture of a city that is alive to both tradition and change.
Raja Jai Singh, the founder of Jaipur was no ordinary man. He was a scholar and an astronomer, keenly sensitive to beauty, a formidable general, who tempered power with wisdom. In building Jaipur Jai Singh's vision took him beyond architectural beauty. In the sprawling, barren plains beneath Amber, the former capital, he gave India its first planned city which has remained unique for two and a half centuries. Jai Singh made Jaipur a haven and it became a center of commerce and religion.

Today, Jaipur has spread far beyond the pink crenulated walls that once defined its boundaries. It presents a fascinating picture of a city where growth, evolution and change are sustained by tradition.

On arrival transfer and check in at hotel.

Overnight at hotel.

Day 10: In Jaipur |

After breakfast at the hotel visit the Amer fort with a photo stop at Hawa Mahal

Amer Fort – The day begins with a visit to the Amber fort, the former seat of the Rajput rulers of Jaipur. Ascend the fortress seated on elephants (subject to availability) and then wander around the beautiful palaces and visits the Shiladevi temple (which continues to be the private temple of the royal family) with its exquisite marble carvings and silver door.

Hawa Mahal - The ornamental facade of this "Palace of Winds" is a prominent landmark in Jaipur. It is a five-storey structure of sandstone plastered pink encrusted with fine trelliswork and elaborate balconies. The palace has 953 niches and windows. Built in 1799 by Pratap Singh, the Mahal was a royal grandstand for the palace women.

City Palace - A delightful blend of Mughal and traditional Rajasthani architecture, the City Palace sprawls over one-seventh of the area in the walled city. It houses the Chandra Mahal, Shri Govind Dev Temple and the City Palace Museum.

Jantar Mantar - This is the largest and the best preserved of the five observatories built by Jai Singh II in different parts of the country. This observatory consisting of outsized astronomical instruments is still in use.

Overnight at hotel.

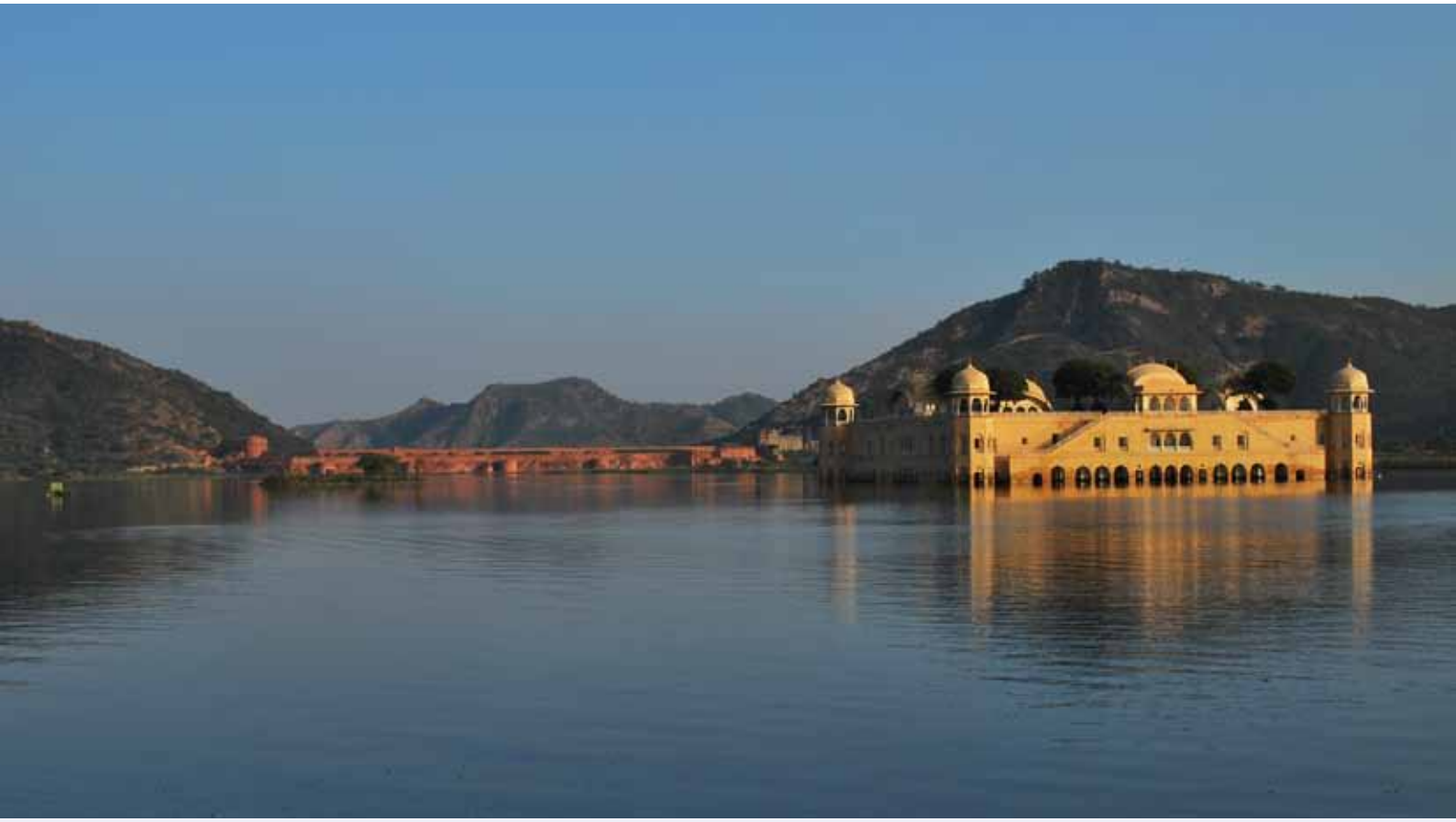
Day 11: Jaipur to Delhi (approx. 260 kms & 5-6 hours) |

Breakfast at hotel (check out from hotel at 12 noon)

After lunch leave for Delhi. No hotel envisaged

On arrival transfer to the international airport to board the flight for onward destination leaving late night of day 11 or early morning of day 12.

**********End of services**********



Small Palaces of India, 13 days |

Day 01: Arrive Delhi |

Arrive Delhi. You will be met by our representative outside the arrival lounge.

Delhi, the Empress of Indian cities has a fascinating history and a stimulating present. The capital of India, Delhi has
been the seat of power of a number of dynasties – the Rajputs, the Afghans, the Turks and the Mughals who continued
their imperial line until the British. Scattered over the city are surviving ruins, remnants of mighty edifices and tombs of
warriors and saints.

On arrival check in at hotel

Overnight at hotel.

Day 02: Delhi |

After breakfast proceed for sightseeing of Old Delhi.

Visit the Red Fort (closed on Monday), the 300-year-old walled city built by
Emperor Shah Jahan in 1648 as his capital. This magnificent Red Fort is built
from red sandstone and dates from the very peak of the Mughal power.

Opposite the fort are the black and white onion dome and minarets of the Jama
Masjid, the most elegant mosque in India. Drive past Kotla Firoze Shah, ruins of
an old fort of the 14th century with the 13 metre high Ashoka Pillar of 3rd BC.

Visit Raj Ghat, where Mahatma Gandhi was cremated in 1948. Drive through the old city subject to traffic restrictions.

In the afternoon take a city tour of New Delhi - the new capital designed by Sir Edward
Lutyens.
Drive past the Presidential Palace, the Rashtrapati Bahaman and the secretariat buildings -
the centre of all government activity. Continue down the main avenue, the impressive
Rajpath, to the World War I memorial arch, the India Gate, the High Court Building and the
Old Fort.
Visit Humayun's Tomb built in 1565 AD by his grieving widow Haji Begum, the 72-metre high
Qutub Minar and the ruins of Quwat-ul-Eslam (Light of Islam) Mosque.

Overnight at hotel

Day 03: Delhi to Agra (approx.210 kms or 4 hrs drive) |

After breakfast drive to Agra

Agra is known for the famous monument of love -The Taj Mahal, constructed by the Mughal Emperor, Shah Jahan. It is
said he built this monument in the memory of his beloved wife Mumtaj Mahal. The Taj Mahal is ethereal at any part of
the day - blushing in the rosy glow of dawn or sunset, appearing like a pearly mirage in the moonlight or reflected in the
pools of the garden.

On arrival transfer and check in at hotel. After lunch Visit Taj Mahal (Closed on Fridays).

The Taj Mahal is everything that has been said about it and more. Taking 22
years and 20,000 men to build, the white marble was quarried 200 miles away
and was transported to the site by a fleet of 1,000 elephants. Built by the Mughal
Emperor Shah Jahan as an expression of his love for his wife Mumtaz Mahal, in
mid 17th century, it is truly one of the wonders of the world. Though the Taj
appears to be amazingly perfect from almost any angle, it is the closeup marble
inlay work, which is really astounding. You will have ample time to view and be
mesmerized by this outstanding piece of architecture.

Overnight at hotel.

Day 04: Agra to Bharatpur (approx. 100 kms or 2-3 hours drive) |

After breakfast visit Agra Fort.

Agra Fort is situated on the banks of the River Yamuna, another monumental
mission accomplished by the great Mughal visionary Emperor Akbar. His son
Jehangir and grandson Shah Jahan also added to this imposing structure during
their rule. The palaces, mosques and audience halls contained within its massive
wall of red sandstone are perfect examples of the blending of Islamic and Hindu
traditions.

Start the drive to Bharatpur, enroute visiting the deserted city of Fatehpur Sikri.

The abandoned red sandstone city built in the 16th century by the Mughal Emperor Akbar, one of India's greatest rulers. Remarkably broadminded for his time, this Muslim king married a Rajput princess in order to win over his Hindu subjects. The architecture at Fatehpur Sikri is a combination of Hindu and Muslim styles, expressing Akbar's vision of synthesizing the cultures.

Continue drive to Bharatpur.

On arrival transfer and check in at the hotel and overnight at the hotel.

Day 05: Bharatpur to Talabgaon (approx. 150 kms or 2 - 3 hours drive) |

After breakfast at the hotel, enjoy a rickshaw ride at Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary

Bharatpur's 29 sq. km piece of marshland is one of the finest bird sanctuaries in
the world with over 360 species. It used to form the hunting estate of the
Maharajas of Bharatpur, and the daily shoot was reputed to be as high as
100,000 birds. However, Maharaja Brajendra Singh converted the estate into a
bird sanctuary in 1956. It is especially good from Nov. to Feb. when it is
frequented by Northern hemisphere migratory birds. The rare Siberian Crane
failed to arrive in late 1993; it is possible that the ancient migratory system
believed to be 1,500 years old, may be lost since young cranes need to learn the
route from older birds (it is not instinctive).

Later drive to Talabgaon

Talabgaon Castle is a 200 year old Palace Hotel in Rajasthan, North India. The
palace has been recently restored as a Luxury Palace Heritage Resort.
Talabgaon Castle Heritage Resort is set on 150 acres of rustic countryside. At
Talabgaon Castle each room is different with regards to the look, interiors and
size.

As Talabgaon Castle is in middle of nature and surrounded by large farm land you
can enjoy a lot of outdoor activities.

Overnight at the hotel

Day 06: Talabgaon - Jaipur (approx. 100 kms or 2-3 hours drive) |

After breakfast take a village safari and later leave for Jaipur. On arrival check in the hotel.

Jaipur is where the enduring charisma of the past blends with the throbbing vitality of today. Where a colourful cast of characters – from printers and potters to artists and antique dealers - present a fascinating picture of a city that is alive to both tradition and change.

Raja Jai Singh, the founder of Jaipur was no ordinary man. He was a scholar and an astronomer, keenly sensitive to beauty, and a formidable general who tempered power with wisdom. In building Jaipur, Jai Singh's vision took him beyond architectural beauty. In the sprawling barren plains beneath Amber, the former capital, he gave India its first planned city which has remained unique for two and a half centuries. Jai Singh made Jaipur a haven and it became a centre of commerce and religion.

Today, Jaipur has spread far beyond the pink crenulated walls that once defined its boundaries. It presents a fascinating picture of a city where growth, evolution and change are sustained by tradition.

On arrival transfer and check in at hotel.
Overnight at hotel.

India | Private Tours

Day 07: In Jaipur |

After breakfast at the hotel visit the Amer fort with a photo stop at Hawa Mahal

Amber Fort – The day begins with a visit to the Amber Fort, the former seat of the Rajput rulers of Jaipur. Ascend the fortress seated on elephants (subject to availability) and then wander around the beautiful palaces and visit the Shiladevi Temple (which continues to be the private temple of the royal family) with its exquisite marble carvings and silver door.

Hawa Mahal - The ornamental facade of this "Palace of Winds" is a prominent landmark in Jaipur. It is a five-storey structure of sandstone plastered pink and encrusted with fine trelliswork and elaborate balconies. The palace has 953 niches and windows. Built in 1799 by Pratap Singh, the Mahal was a royal grandstand for the palace women.

City Palace - A delightful blend of Mughal and traditional Rajasthani architecture, the City Palace sprawls over one-seventh of the area in the walled city. It houses the Chandra Mahal, Shri Govind Dev Temple and the City Palace Museum.

Jantar Mantar - This is the largest and the best preserved of the five observatories built by Jai Singh II in different parts of the country. This observatory consisting of outsized astronomical instruments is still in use.

Overnight at hotel.

Day 08: Jaipur to Bikaner (approx. 330 kms & 5-6 hours) |

After breakfast at the hotel, proceed to Bikaner.

Bikaner is a medieval flavoured city set along the old caravan route which linked Central Asia & North India with the Gujarat seaports. Bikaner takes its name from Rao Bikaji, the sixth son of Rathore Rajput Prince Rao Jodha, the founder of Jodhpur. Bhika set up his independent kingdom in 1488. Charming red stone havelis (mansions) stand in the old part of this walled city and a leisurely lifestyle still prevails in this sublimely picturesque place surrounded by harsh desert.

Visit the Junagarh Fort, one of the finest of Rajput monuments. Paved courtyards, narrow staircases and terraces in this Rathor stronghold connect all thirty-seven palaces, pavilions and beautiful Jain temples built by different kings. One must take particular note of the designed ceilings of the various homes in this region - done either in wood or copper plates which are then covered with intricate painting work.

Overnight at the hotel

Day 09: Bikaner to Khimsar (approx. 170 kms & 04 hours) |

After breakfast at hotel depart for Khimsar.

On arrival transfer & check in at hotel.

In the afternoon embark on a Panchla black buck safari by open jeep. If lucky you will see herds of black buck, Chinkara and Blue Bull Antelope. After the jeep safari, enjoy the view of the sunset from the edge of the Thar Desert Sand Dunes where you will be taken by a camel. This is followed by high tea at the dunes so you can enjoy evening snacks with tea amidst the world's seventh largest desert.

Overnight at the hotel

Day 10: Khimsar to Jodhpur (approx. 100 kms & 2-3 hours) |

After breakfast drive to Jodhpur.
Jodhpur was founded in 1459 by Rao Jodha, a chief of the Rajput clan 'Rathores'. Jodhpur certainly has one of the country's most spectacular fortress and palace complexes. It was from here that the horse-riding trousers 'jodhpurs' took their name.

Visit the imposing Mehrangarh Fort, which sprawls along the top of a steep escarpment. Started in 1459 it has walls up to 36 meters high and 21 meters wide towering above the plains. It's a fine example of Rajput architecture and remained the royal residence until the Umaid Bhawan Palace was completed in 1943.

The fort museum has the Maharaja's private collection of art and artefacts. There is a wonderful display of palanquins, armoury and miniature paintings. Also stop by to see the well-preserved Hall of Public Audience and the Sheesh Mahal.
Overnight at hotel

Day 11: Jodhpur - Udaipur (approx. 280 kms & 04 -05 hours) |

After breakfast drive to Udaipur. Enroute stop at Ranakpur.

Ranakpur - Visit Ranakpur to see the Jain temples situated in the remote and peaceful Aravalli valley. The temples are open for non Jains at 12 noon. The most famous is the Adinath temple, a beautifully crafted and well-kept marble edifice, which has 29 halls supported by 1444 pillars – no two of which are alike. Among the five holy Jain sites, this is one of the best temple complexes in the country.

Later continue to Udaipur.
The city of Udaipur is also known the city of `sunrise' and combines real beauty with a picturesque association of a great and glorious past. The legendary Ranas or kings of this state traced their ancestry back to the sun! It stands in a valley amidst green hills on the banks of the wide, steel blue Lake Pichola and is regarded as the most romantic spot in India. On little islands in the lake, rise marble palaces of pure white that glisten like fairy castles. Along the shore of the lake stands the massive Palace of the Maharana.

On arrival transfer to Hotel.

Overnight at the Hotel

Day 12: In Udaipur |

In the morning visit the City Palace. Once the home of Mewar's rulers today it is a museum. It consists of several flawlessly integrated palaces which overlook the clear blue of Lake Pichola. Visit Sahelion-ki-bari (Garden of the Maids of Honour), the scene of royal parties for centuries. Drive around Fateh Sagar Lake excavated in the late 17th century by Maharaja Jai Singh and past the Kala Mandir (Puppet Museum) and the Cenotaph of Maharana Pratap. And of course last but not the last - the Jagdish Temple.

Late afternoon boat ride on Lake Pichhola wil be provided - This Lake takes its name from the small village of Picholi on its West Bank. In the lake are several islands. On two of them the maharanas of Udaipur constructed pleasure palaces, the Jag Mandir and the Jag Niwas.

Overnight at Hotel.

Day 13: Udaipur to Delhi by Flight |

Breakfast at the hotel.

Transfer to the airport for the flight to Delhi. No hotel envisaged.

On arrival transfer to the international airport to board the flight for your onward destination leaving late night of day 13 or early morning of day 14.

*********End of services**********

South India, 11 days |

Day 01: Arrive Chennai|

Arrive in Chennai by Emirates flight at 0815 hrs. You will be met by our representative and escorted until you check in at hotel. Check in at noon.

Chennai is the cultural heartland & gateway to South India. Here on the east coast ancient traditions of classical dance, music arts, handicrafts, literature, philosophy and religion have taken root and spread over India and to many parts of the world. In exchange, global influences flowed and were integrated.
Later Proceed for city tour of Chennai.

The Dravadians who have had the greatest influence on the lifestyle of the people of Chennai were originally a Mediterranean race of same stock as the people of Create, the pre Hellenic Aegeans of Greece, and even the Pharaonic race of ancient Egypt. After they had migrated to India many millennia ago they absorbed some of the folkways and love of the earlier Negroids and Austrics who had laid the foundation of Indian civilisation. When Indo -Iranians, or Aryans later percolated into Southern India, their social systems also had a significant and lasting impact on established customs and rituals.

Then when the great commercial companies of the Portuguese, British, French and Dutch set up their centres in and around Chennai in the 18th century trading families from other parts of India flocked in and added to culture of this great sea port.

Overnight at hotel.

Day 02: Chennai / Kanchipuram / Mahabalipuram by surface |

After breakfast leave Chennai for Mahabalipuram visiting Kanchipuram enroute.

The Golden City of Kanchipuram has about 125 shrines, all of them centuries old, dating back to the early Cholas of 200 B.C. The height of Kanchi's glory was when it was capital of the far-flung empire of the Pallavas from the 6th to the 8th centuries. This was when Mahabalipuram and Mylapore were its great ports, however all that is left now are its magnificent temples.

Kanchipuram's other claim to fame is its silk, renowned for more than four centuries. A unique system of weavers makes and sells Kanchi saris which are the richest saris in India and certainly the most sought after.

On arrival check in at hotel. Overnight at hotel.

Day 03: In Mahabalipuram |

After breakfast take city tour of Mahabalipuram.

Mahabalipuram is a beautiful beach resort which consists of a the tiny village by the sea in which all else is dwarfed by a dream world of awesome Tamil art, an open air museum of sculpture in living rock. The piece de resistance is Arjuna's Penance or the Descent of the Ganga, the world's largest bas-relief, 764 ft. by 288 ft. (27m by 9m). It is a beautiful composition of hundreds of celestial beings, human and animals all hurrying to a natural rock cleft that divides the giant stone. The best known landmark of Mahabalipuram, is the Shore Temple, which has stood by the sea for 12 centuries. Its twin spires are pure poetry in granite.

The other wonders of Mahablipuram are the mandapams, each a cave scooped from a hillside of solid rock and ornamented with pillars, sculptured with panels and with rathams (monolithic rock-cut shrines) that have inspired generations of South Indian temple-builders. The five rathas, named after the Pandava brothers, the heroes of the Mahabharata, and their wife Draupadi, are part of an amphitheatre of art. Each temple though incomplete, remains a gem. Also in this area are a magnificent elephant and an exquisite Nandi, the sacred bull.

Overnight at hotel.

Day 04: Mahabalipuram / Pondicherry by surface |

After breakfast depart Mahabalipuram for Pondicherry. On arrival check in at the hotel. In the afternoon take a sightseeing tour of Pondicherry.

Pondicherry was the former capital of the French territories in India. Landmarks include the Raj Nivas, the Pondicherry Museum, Aurobindo Ashram, the best known landmark of Pondicherry.

Overnight at Hotel.

Day 05: Pondicherry / Tanjore by surface |

After breakfast leave Pondicherry for Tanjore, enroute visiting the Darasuram, Gangaikonda Cholapuram and Chidambaram.

Darasuram: The temple of Airavatesvara in Darasuram (Tamil Nadu), dating from the second half of the twelfth century is one of the 4 biggest temples erected by the Cola Dynasty with those of Tanjore.

Gangaikondacholapuram: The Shiva Temple here is a very well preserved and impressive monument of the Chola period. The highlight of the temple is a natural beam of sunlight traversing the long entrance corridor and falling directly on the Shivaling situated in the sanctum sanctorum deep inside the temple with no spillover of light to any other part of the temple.

Chidambaram Temple (43kms away): This is a sprawling ancient temple renowned for its architecture encompassing the complete pose sequences of the classical South Indian Bharat Natyam dance; from which originated the revived dance in its present popular form.

On arrival check in at hotel.

Later take a city tour of Tanjore visiting the famous Brihadeeswara Temple which has exquisitely carved gopurams over 90 ft high and the Saraswati library.
Overnight at hotel.

Day 06: In Tanjore |

After breakfast take an excursion to Trichy, a historical town which as the capital of the Chola rulers. Visit the Rock Fort, 300 ft. (90 m) high, which dominates the landscape. A fine view of the city can be had from the fort.

Visit the island of Srirangam across the River Kaveri - 3 miles (5 km) away. The temple here is practically a town in itself with several residential streets within its one sq. mile together with a number of shopping streets.

Overnight at hotel.

Day 07: Tanjore / Madurai by surface |

After breakfast leave Tanjore for Madurai. On arrival check in at the hotel.

Later city tour of Madurai.

The `Temple City' was the capital of the Pandya kingdom. Visit the Palace of Thirumalai Nayak, the most famous king of the Nayak dynasty. It has a great audience hall, a three-sided pavilion and a courtyard.

The evening "Aarti" is a must see for all visitors. The Consort of Goddess Durga - Shiva, is brought to her chamber in procession. This procession goes around the temple, and has various short ceremonies at different shrines, before the final prayer at the entrance of her chamber. The entire procession takes 45 mins.

Overnight at hotel.

Day 08: Madurai - Periyar by surface |

After breakfast leave Madurai for Periyar. On arrival check in at the hotel.

Periyar park encompasses 26 sq. km. of artificial lake. Take a boat ride on the lake to view wildlife and water birds. Herds of elephants and bison sometimes come to the lake. Spotted deer and sambhar are also found here. Enjoy the views and photograph the wildlife.

Overnight at hotel..

India | Private Tours

Amazing North East, 10 days |

Day 01: Arrive Kolkata |

Meet and assist on arrival at airport transfer to hotel

Overnight

Day 02: Kolkata to Tezpur/Guwahati by flight |

Visit to surrounding sites of interest (eg. the Buddhist monastery in Bomdilla).

O/N Tezpur.

Day 03: Tezpur / Itanagar |

After breakfast drive to Itanagar (220 kms/ 5 hrs). Itanagar, the capital city of Arunachal Pradesh, and check in at the hotel. In the afternoon visit the Buddhist Monastery and local market.

Dinner and overnight at the hotel.

Day 04: Itanagar- Ziro |

After breakfast visit Jawaharlal Nehru State Museum then begin the drive to Ziro (180kms/6hrs).
Ziro, a beautiful hill station of Arunachal Pradesh, is located in the midst of the pine clad mountains. It is the headquarters of the Lower Subansiri District and is inhabited by more than 50,000 friendly Apatanis who design beautiful handicrafts and practice the famous paddy-fish cultivation. Overnight at hotel.

Day 05: Ziro |

Sightseeing in Ziro to visit the museum; emporium; local market; Hari and Hija villages; and Hong village, the second biggest and most organised of the tribal villages in Asia. The unique feature of the Appertain tribe is the tattooing of the women's faces and their nose plugs.
Overnight at hotel.

Day 06: Ziro - Along |

After breakfast drive to picturesque Along (330 kms / 11 hrs).

Along, the district headquarters of West Siang. Enroute visit Tagin and Hillimiri tribal villages at Daporijo. Overnight at hotel.

Day 07: Along |

Full day at Along.

Visit Kabu and Darak Villages inhabited by the Adi Gallong tribe and experience their rich cultural heritage. Overnight at hotel.

Day 08: Along-Dibrugarh |

After breakfast drive to the ferry ghat (180 kms / 07 hrs) and cross the mighty Brahmaputra with the other vehicles. Drive to Dibrugarh and check into to a Heritage Chang Bungalow.

Dibrugarh is the gateway to the "Hidden Land" of Eastern Arunachal Pradesh and Northern Myanmar. It is the "Camellia" town of Upper Assam, an undisturbed haven with rich tea gardens resembling a lush green carpet.

The bungalows at the Heritage Chang Bungalows are constructed on stilts and resemble the bungalows built by the when they British established the tea plantations in the mid-19th century.

Chang in the local language means "raised on stilts" and the design served multi purposes- to keep the house cool by allowing the breeze to blow underneath and to keep both water and animals out.

In the evening, enjoy a Bihu cultural programme performed by an ethnic dance troupe on the bungalow lawn. Bihu is the most popular folk dance of Assam and is performed by all- irrespective of caste, creed and religion.

Overnight at the Chang Bungalow.

Day 09: Dibrugarh - Delhi |

After breakfast visit a Tea Plantation to learn all about tea - its origin, how it is grown, tea tasting and quality. (There is no tea plucking between December and mid-March, so at this time the manufacturing process of tea cannot be demonstrated. The Factory also closes very Monday).

Then drive to Dibrugarh airport for the flight to Delhi.

Day 10: Leave Delhi |

To airport to connect flight for onwards destinations.

******** End of our services**********

Delhi |

Delhi is India's main point of arrival for overseas visitors and the major transport hub for destinations in the states of Rajasthan, the Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh as well as central north India. Delhi city, the showcase of India, has been the centre of political activity from time immemorial. History meats modern life and all that is India is mixed up in this melting pot of traditions and lifestyles.

Around the city there are various attractions to discover and experiences of the local life, cultural heritage or natural beauty awaiting the traveller. Please refer to our separate section of Excursions for more details.

Mumbai |

Three hundred years ago, the area occupied by this great metropolis was 7 islands inhabited by Koli fisherman and their families. With land reclamation the islands were connected, so that now Mumbai occupies a thin isthmus. From mid 17th century onwards, the city was the major gateway port for Britain's expanding Indian empire. Nowadays, it is one of India's dominant urban centres and, indeed, is one of the largest and most densely populated cities in the world. Around the city there are various attractions to discover and experiences of the local life, cultural heritage or natural beauty awaiting the traveller. Please refer to our separate section of Excursions for more details.

Goa |

Known as the "Pearl of the Orient" India's smallest state is situated on the West coast. It is not only famous for its beaches, but has a unique history, rich culture and some of the prettiest natural scenery that India has to offer. Goa has a multi-hued and distinctive lifestyle quite different from the rest of India. Hindu and Catholic communities make up almost the entire population with minority representation of Muslims and other religions.

Excursions |

DELHI |

Old Delhi | the 300-year-old walled city built by Emperor Shah Jehan in 1648 as his capital and named after him. The magnificent RED FORT built of red sandstone dates from the very peak of the Mughal power. Within its walls are marble palaces and a grand audience chamber, the Diwan-i-Khas. Opposite the fort are the black and white onion dome and minarets of the JAMA MASJID, the most elegant mosque in India. Drive past KOTLA FIROZE SHAH, ruins of an old fort of the 14th century with the 13 metre high Ashoka Pillar of 3rd B.C. Visit RAJ GHAT, where Mahatma Gandhi was cremated in 1948. Drive through the old city subject to traffic restrictions.

New Delhi | the new capital designed by Sir Edward Lutyens. Drive past the PRESIDENTIAL PALACE, THE RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN and the secretariat buildings - the centre of all government activity and down the main avenue, the impressive RAJPATH to the World War I memorial arch, the India Gate, the HIGH COURT BUILDING and the OLD FORT. Visit HUMAYUN'S TOMB built in 1565 AD by his grieving widow Haji Begum, the QUTUB MINAR, 72 metres high and the ruins of Quwat-ul-Eslam (Light of Islam) Mosque. See Delhi's most curious antique, the uncorroded IRON PILLAR, which dates back to the 4th century AD. Visit the Birla (Laxmi Narayan) Temple, with its many idols.

Lotus Temple | This is a very recent architectural marvel of the "Bahai" faith and is visible from several areas in south Delhi. Built between 1980 and 1986, it is set amongst pools and extremely well landscaped gardens. Adherents of all faiths are free to visit the temple and pray or meditate. It looks particularly spectacular at dusk.

Museums and Galleries |
The NATIONAL MUSEUM gives an excellent overview of the cultural development of South Asia. It has a good collection of Indian bronzes, terracotta and wood sculptures dating back to the Mauryan period (2nd -3rd century B.C.), miniature and mural paintings and costumes of various tribes in India. RAIL TRANSPORT MUSEUM at Chanakyapuri is very interesting. The museum preserves an exotic collection of railway engines. The exhibits include an 1855 steam engine, still in working order. The other exhibits included are 26 vintage locomotives, 17 carriages and salons including the four wheeled saloon used by the Prince of Wales (Edward VII) in 1876 and Maharaja of Mysore's saloon made of seasoned teak and laced with gold and ivory.

MUMBAI |

Half day city tour- 4 hrs | Start with a stop at the GATEWAY OF INDIA that is modelled in honey colour basalt on 16th century Gujarati work. Drive past the Venetian gothic style OLD SECRETARIAT 143 m long with a façade of arcade verandas and porticos faced in buff colour. The High Court in early English Gothic Style has a 57 m high central tower flanked by lower octagonal towers topped by the figures of Justice and Mercy. Continue your drive, past the VICTORIA TERMINUS the most remarkable example of Victorian Gothic architecture in India. Then continue on to MARINE DRIVE AND CHOWPATTY. Drive past the TOWERS OF SILENCE and visit the HANGING GARDENS, named due to their location on top of a series of tanks that supply water to Bombay. Visit the JAIN TEMPLE built of marble and dedicated to the first Jain Tirthankara. Visit MANI BHAVAN, the former private house of Mahatma Gandhi and now a memorial museum and research library with 2,000 volumes. And last but not the least; make a brief photo stop at "Dhobi Ghat" the Indian laundry system!

Prince of Wales Museum | designed by George Wittett to commemorate the visit of the Prince of Wales to India in 1905. A bronze statue of the king stands outside and an equestrian statue of Edward VII on the other, all set in a landscaped garden.

Banganga | a water tank around which a very rural life exists – while still in the muddle of the most advanced city of India! Walk around the surrounding lanes and observe life - local boys selling door to door ready made - snacks like "samosas and idlis", the "pan shop", the local vegetable shop, the local " atta ki chakki", the local "ironing man's shop"; and also a visit to the local temple - the Walkeshwar temple- for the beauty of the interiors.

Elephanta | An hour's boat ride from the Gateway, the tranquil forested island of Elephanta is one of the most atmospheric places in Bombay. Populated only by a small fishing community it makes a wonderful contrast to the seething claustrophobia of the city, even when crowded with day trippers at weekends.

CHENNAI |

Half day city tour - 4 hrs | Visits today include FORT ST. GEORGE, completed in 1653 and today filled with reminders of the past, such as St. Mary's, the first church consecrated on Indian soil. The National Art Gallery has many excellent bronzes. The GOVERNMENT MUSEUM, which contains sculpture and architecture produced by the Dravidian dynasties. Drive along the MARINA, an elegant promenade and proceed to the old Indian section of Mylapore. Visit SAN THOME BASILICA - St Thomas, the Apostle, is said to be buried here. Visit MYLAPORE TEMPLE of Dravidien architecture and time permitting the Victoria Technical Institute.

Mahabalipuram | This beautiful beach resort consists of the tiny village by the sea in which all else is dwarfed by a dream world of awesome Tamil art, an open air museum of sculpture in living rock. The best known landmark of Mahabalipuram, is the SHORE TEMPLE, which has stood by the sea for 12 centuries. The other wonders of Mahablipuram are the MANDAPAMS, each a cave scooped from a hillside of solid rock and ornamented with pillars, sculptured with panels and with rathams (monolithic rock- cut shrines) that have inspired generations of South Indian temple builders.

Kanchipuram | "The Golden City" has about 125 shrines, all of them century's old, dating back to the early Cholas of 200 B.C. It was successively capital of the Cholas, the Pallavas and the Rayas of Vijayanagara, leaving behind magnificent temples of each era. Kanchipuram's is also famous for its silk, renowned for more than four centuries. A unique system of weavers makes and sells Kanchi saris which are the richest saris in India and certainly the most sought after.

Gangaikondacholapuram | The SHIVA TEMPLE here is a very well preserved and is an impressive monument of the Chola period. The highlight of the temple – a natural beam of sunlight traversing the long entrance corridor and falling directly on the Shivaling situated in the sanctum sanctorum deep inside the temple with no spill over of light to any other part of the temple.

Chidambaram Temple | The temple is a sprawling ancient temple renowned for its architecture encompassing the complete pose sequences of the classical South Indian Bharat Natyam dance; from which originated the revived dance in its present popular form.

Pondicherry | This was the former capital of the French territories in India. Landmarks include the RAJ NIVAS, the residence of the Lt. Governor of Pondicherry - a handsome 200-year-old building with its well laid out paths and lawns, a few fountains and a number of sculptures. The PONDICHERRY MUSEUM has an outstanding collection of artefacts relating to all aspects of the French Indian past. And then also visit AUROBINDO ASHRAM, the best known landmark of Pondicherry. The Ashram, in addition to practicing yoga, also provides scope for practical activity for its followers who come from all over the world.

BANGALORE |

Half day city tour 3 hrs | During the tour, visit the BULL TEMPLE, the monolithic deity being the Nandi or celestial bull, a marvellous work on granite. The MYSORE ARTS & CRAFTS CENTRE, and drive through Commercial Street past the magnificent Neo-Dravidian structure, Vidhana Soudha, the government secretariat. Time & interest permitting, visit the LAL BAGH GARDENS developed with lavish care since the Muslim era and which now offer a variety of century-old trees, fountains, lotus pools, terraces and an assortment of herbs and plants spread out over several acres. In the centre of the park is the GLASS HOUSE where thousands of colourful fragrant flowers go on show ever year in January and August.

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