

Rajasthan – India's Golden Triangle

Tour Code RA

Following a tour of Delhi, this journey travels into the heart of Rajasthan and explores many of the region's magnificent forts and palaces, atmospheric cities and stunning desert scenery. We also hope to see tiger at one of India's finest wildlife reserves. Wherever possible we stay in colonial or heritage properties, giving an added feel to the ambience and tradition of the region. The climax of the tour is Udaipur, where no city is quite as romantic and so you have the opportunity to extend your stay to enjoy this 'city of lakes'



Amber Palace, Jaipur

ITINERARY

Fly from UK regional airport to Delhi, India

Day 1 Arrive in Delhi

Arrive Delhi today. On arrival you will be received and escorted to your hotel (your room is available from 12 noon onwards). Two nights at the Claridges hotel

Day 2 In Delhi

Visit the medieval Jama Mosque followed by a walking tour through the spice and crafts market of Old Delhi. In the afternoon you will be taken to explore New Delhi – including Humayun's Tomb, Qutab Minar and drive past Lutyens' Delhi. Welcome dinner at a city restaurant (B,D)

Day 3 Drive to Agra. Visit Agra Fort and the Taj Mahal

We drive to Agra this morning. Built in the early 16th century and the capital of mighty Mughals for a long time, Agra is famous for its beautiful monuments of the medieval times. This afternoon we have a tour of the Taj Mahal and Agra Fort. Begun in 1565, the Forts' magnificent palaces, towers, bastions, ramparts and gateways symbolise the power of the mighty Mughals. Made mostly of red sandstone it is strikingly similar to the Red Fort in Delhi. The Taj Mahal was built by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in the memory of his beloved queen Mumtaz Mahal, the complex took 22 years to be completed and is today counted among the Seven Wonders of the World. It is particularly stunning at the time of sunrise and sunset. Overnight at the Wyndham hotel (B)

Day 4 Drive to Ranthambore NP. Visit Fatehpur Sikri

The deserted Mughal city of Fatehpur Sikri was built by great Mughal Emperor Akbar in the 16th century to serve as the capital of his vast empire. A citadel of grand courts, palaces, mosques and gardens that rivalled the splendours of Delhi and Agra. Today, even after the passage of 400 years, the magnificence of this royal city has not faded and remains immaculately preserved. Lunch at the beautiful Bhanwar Vilas Palace, we arrive in Ranthambore early in the evening. Two nights at the Devi Vilas with dinner (B,L,D)

Day 5 Visit Ranthambore National Park

We explore Ranthambore National Park with morning and afternoon game drives with a break for lunch and some leisure time. Earlier the private hunting preserve of the Maharajas of Jaipur, Ranthambore was once the scene of royal hunting parties. Today, it is famous for its tigers and is one of the best places in the country to see these majestic predators in the wild. Besides tiger, Ranthambore has large number of sambhar, chital and nilgai. Sounders of boar and an occasional gazelle can be seen, as also the Indian hare, mongoose and monitor lizards. Among the other local fauna are the leopard, hyena, jackal, jungle cats, sloth bear and marsh crocodile. The lakes and pools at the park are where the deer congregate and where it is easiest to see the animal (B,L,D)

Day 6 Drive to Jaipur. Visit Amber Fort

We drive to Jaipur today. The capital of Rajasthan, Jaipur is known as the 'pink city' because of the pink paint applied to the buildings in its old walled city. Jaipur is steeped in history and culture and the past comes alive here in magnificent forts and palaces, where once lived the maharajas. This afternoon we visit the Amber Fort. Its construction began in 16th century and was subsequently added on to by successive rulers. Inside the fort, we see the Palace of Mirrors, inlaid with millions of tiny glistening mirrors, the hall of Public Audience and the beautiful manicured gardens. Two nights at the Narain Niwas Palace with dinner in a Rajput village near the Fort (B,D)

Day 7 In Jaipur. City Tour

Jaipur has been widely regarded as the first modern planned city in the world. Even though the city was founded and built in the 18th century, the city amazes any modern town planner and architect for its brilliance of planning and beauty of architecture. We visit the City Palace, home of the present Maharaja, wonderfully laid out with large courtyards,

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balconies, cupolas, arched entrances and gardens, which are a combination of Rajput and Mughal architecture. Built in 1799 the Hawa Mahal or the Palace of Winds is one of the landmarks of Jaipur city, although it is little more than a façade. It is a five-storey building in pink, built to enable the women of the harem to see the activities of the outside world without being seen. This afternoon we have a walking tour of Old Jaipur where artisans make local handicrafts in the shadows of the great havelis (mansions) above (B)

Day 8 Drive to Jodhpur

We drive to Jodhpur this morning. Founded in 1459, Jodhpur was once the capital of the Marwar State and a major trade centre in the 16th century due to its location on the ancient silk route. Today, Jodhpur has grown to become the second largest city of Rajasthan without shedding its medieval splendour. The afternoon is left free to relax or venture into this enchanting city. Two nights at the Ratan Vilas heritage property with dinner (B,D)

Day 9 In Jodhpur

We visit the imposing Mehrangarh Fort with its sprawling courtyards and intricately carved balconies. Close to the fort is the 19th century royal cenotaph, Jaswant Thada, a creation in white marble which displays some rare portraits of Jodhpur's rulers. We have lunch in the city and the afternoon is left free perhaps to colourful Sardar market with its narrow alleys leading to the bazaars featuring textiles, silver and handicrafts (B,L)

Day 10 Drive to Deogarh

We drive to Deogarh and check in at the Deogarh Mahal, a 300-year-old stunning fort-palace that has been beautifully restored by the Deogarh family. The family is closely associated with the hotel and personally supervises and monitors the running of the property which has made Deogarh one of the most sought after heritage hotels in Rajasthan. The afternoon is left free to explore the town and enjoy the facilities of this fabulous hotel. Two nights at the Deogarh Mahal. Dinner tonight has been arranged in a small fort nearby (B,D)

Day 11 In Deogarh

Today you may undertake one of the many activities and excursions Deogarh has to offer. Jeep drive into the countryside, ride a local train through a wooded hill section or trek in the hills, ride horses around the villages, go boating and bird-watching on one of the numerous lakes dotting the area. Visit the nearby Gokul Garh Fort and Anjana Fort. Or simply spend the day in leisure and sample sumptuous Mewari cuisine (B)

Day 12 Drive to Udaipur. Visit Ranakpur Temples

This morning we drive to Udaipur and visit the stunning Ranakpur Temples. Built in the 15th century, the Ranakpur temples are very well preserved and one of the most holy places for Jain pilgrimage. These temples lie in a remote and peaceful valley of the Aravali range. The main temple, dating back to 1439, is called the Chaumukha Temple or the "Four-faced temple" and is dedicated to Adinath; the first of Jain teachers. We have lunch after our visit and continue to Udaipur arriving in the early evening. Two nights at the Devra hotel (B,L)

Day 13 In Udaipur

The entire state of Rajasthan is replete with fantastic hilltop fortresses, exotic fairytale palaces and gripping legends of medieval chivalry and heroism. Our city tour today includes the huge City Palace, towering over one of the three great lakes, is the largest palace complex in Rajasthan and nearby Jagdish temple in Indo-Aryan style. It enshrines a black stone image of Lord Vishnu as Jagannath, the creator of the universe. Also the beautiful gardens of Sahelion-ki-bari have beautiful lawns, lotus pools, marble pavilions and marble elephant-shaped fountains. This evening we enjoy a relaxing boat ride on Lake Pichola before our farewell dinner (B,D)

Day 14 Fly to Delhi

After a leisurely morning in Udaipur we transfer to the airport at lunchtime for our flight to Delhi where our tour ends at the international airport for our various flights home or overnight hotel (B)

Land Tour Cost £1995.00 per person in a twin room (excl. international flights) Single supplement £550.00

OPTIONAL extension to the available to the magical city of Udaipur, please email us for further details



Blue City of Jaipur

Price includes –

- ▶ Tour accompanied from London by Patrick Syder FRGS
- ▶ Specialist local guide for the duration of the tour
- ▶ Domestic return flight Udaipur/Delhi with Jet Airways
- ▶ All transportation by a/c bus
- ▶ Full sightseeing programme including all entrance fees
- ▶ Game drives with naturalists in Ranthambore National Park
- ▶ Stays in quality hotels and heritage (former palace) properties
- ▶ Four lunches and seven dinners at local restaurants
- ▶ Airport transfers
- ▶ Porter, hotel and restaurant staff gratuities

PLEASE NOTE – personal travel insurance, visa fees, alcoholic drinks, guide and driver gratuities, international flights to and from Delhi are not included in the land tour cost (from £390.00 through Flight Centre UK) (Included meals denoted by B Breakfast, L Lunch, D Dinner)