

TOUR CODE

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PC
premier collection

MAHARAJA'S INDIA

A 'Premier Collection' Tour

17 days

Updated 06/11/2009

Day 1 *Arrival in Delhi*

Upon arrival at Delhi you will be met by our representative and transferred to our hotel.

The name Delhi, Dehali or Dilli is derived from Dhillika, the name of the first medieval township of Delhi, located on the southwestern border of the present Union Territory of Delhi, in Mehrauli. This was the first in the series of seven medieval cities, also known as Yoginipura, the fortress of the yoginis (female divinities).

Overnight in Delhi. Hotel Imperial. Meal plan: Dinner, if required.

Day 2 *Delhi: City Tour*

We have a full day city tour of New and Old Delhi visiting India Gate (War Memorial) at one end, and Rashtrapati Bhawan (from outside), and the President's house at the other. This part of the city most clearly reflects European influence. We drive past the impressive Parliament House (view from outside), Sansad Bhawan, the seat of government. We continue to the towering Qutub Minar, built in 1199 AD either as a victory tower or as a minaret to the adjacent mosque. It is still the highest and the finest stone tower in India. We visit Old Delhi covering the Red Fort--one of the most magnificent palaces in the world for a quick photo stop; Jama Masjid--the largest mosque in India also a stunning example of Mughal architecture. We conclude the tour at the Memorial of Mahatma Gandhi at Raj Ghat, situated on the banks of the legendary Yamuna River.

Overnight in Delhi. Hotel Imperial. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 3 *Delhi - Varanasi*

This morning, after breakfast, we transfer to airport to connect the flight to Varanasi. Upon arrival at Varanasi airport our representative will meet and assist in our transfer to our hotel.

This afternoon we have an excursion to Sarnath. This evening we visit the Ghats for Aarti.

Overnight in Varanasi. Taj Ganges Hotel. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 4 *Varanasi: River Ganges & Bharat Mata Temple*

We have an early morning boat ride on the holy River Ganges where you can watch the people performing morning rituals on the ghats. We return to the hotel for breakfast before heading our again to visit Bharat Mata Temple,

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featuring one of the most perfect relief maps of India in marble.

Overnight in Varanasi. Taj Ganges Hotel. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 5 *Varanasi - Delhi - Agra*

This morning, after breakfast, we transfer to the airport for our flight to Delhi. On arrival we depart by road for Agra (203 km / 3 hrs).

On arrival we check in to our hotel and enjoy the balance of the day at leisure. This evening we enjoy an exclusive Tonga (horse drawn carriage) ride through Agra.

Overnight in Agra. Oberoi Amarvilas. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 6 *Agra: The Taj Mahal & Agra Fort*

Early this morning witness the world famous Taj Mahal at sunrise, built by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in 1560 AD in memory of his beloved Queen, Mumtaz Mahal, to enshrine her mortal remains after she died while giving birth to his 14th child. This architectural marvel, which took 17 years to complete, is a perfectly proportioned masterpiece fashioned from raw white marble by 20,000 craftsmen brought from Persia, Turkey, France and Italy.

This evening we visit Agra Fort, situated on the banks of the River Yamuna. This crescent-like fort was designed and built by Mughal Emperor Akbar in 1565 AD. It houses the beautiful Pearl Mosque and numerous palaces including the Jahangiri Mahal, Khas Mahal, Diwan-e-khas, Diwan-e-aam, Machhi Bhawan and Moti Masjid.

Overnight in Agra. Oberoi Amarvilas. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 7 *Agra - Jaipur*

This morning, after breakfast, we depart by road for Jaipur (232 kms / 4 hrs). En route we visit Fatehpur Sikri and Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary, built by Emperor Akbar in AD 1569 as the old capital of the Mughal rulers. After 15 years the citadel was abandoned due to acute scarcity of water. This graceful fortress with tall entrance houses several buildings, including the Jama Masjid, Tomb of Salim Chisti, Panch Mahal and other palaces still preserved in their original glory. Much of the credit for the buildings' excellent condition goes to Lord Curzon.

Later we stop for lunch at Hotel Laxmi Vilas Palace at Bharatpur. Set amidst the sprawling 50 acres and surrounded by undulating, yellow mustard fields, the Laxmi Vilas Palace is an eclectic and lively fusion of Rajput and Mughal architecture. During lunch we witness Kathputli, the colorful string puppets of Rajasthan. The puppets' heads are carved out of wood and coloured according to characters they depict in the episodes. Strings are attached to the head for manipulation. The hands have no joint unlike the other string puppets of India. The absence of legs are not noticed due to long trailing skirts made of colourful cloth.

On arrival in Jaipur we check in to our hotel.

Overnight in Jaipur. Taj Rambagh Palace. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 8 *Jaipur: City Tour*

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This morning we have a half day city tour of Jaipur including: the City Palace--the former Royal Residence now converted into a Museum; Hawa Mahal--The Palace of the Winds, a five storey building with semi octagonal and delicately honey combed sandstone windows. Built to allow the queens and the palace maids to watch the royal processions passing through the roads without being seen, and finally visit the Jantar Mantar--built in the 18th century and one of the largest stone and marble crafted astronomical observatory in the world. Located near the gate of the City Palace, the observatory has 17 large instruments including an accurate 90 ft sundial. The afternoon is free for shopping and exploring the city.

Those who are interested can experience a carpet weaving and block printing demonstration.

Our dinner will be at the Samode Palace at Samode.

Overnight in Jaipur. Taj Rambagh Palace. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 9 Jaipur: Amber Fort

After breakfast we depart for a half-day excursion at the Amber Fort. At Amber we enjoy an elephant ride to the Fort, a classic Rajasthani palace located on a hillock, with huge ramparts and watchtowers. Our trip back is via Jeep. Amber was the seat of power before the city of Jaipur came into existence. You will visit the Sheesh Mahal, Ganesh Pol, Shila Devi Temple, all of which are excellent examples of ancient Rajput architecture.

We enjoy a picnic Lunch at Elephant Camp, nestled in the hills of Amer.

We return back to Jaipur. Thereafter, those who are interested can witness a demonstration of gem cutting and polishing. Jaipur is India's major gem centre and one of the world's most important gem producers.

Overnight in Jaipur. Taj Rambagh Palace. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 10 Jaipur - Udaipur: City Tour

Early this morning we transfer to the airport to board our flight for Udaipur.

Our afternoon city tour of Udaipur visits Jagdish Mandir, built by Maharana Jagat Singh I in 1651. The temple enshrines a black stone image of Lord Vishnu. We also visit the City Palace. Maharana Uday Singh initiated the construction of the palace but succeeding Maharanas added several palaces and structures to the complex. The entry to the Palace is from the Hati Pol, the Elephant Gate. The Bari Pol, or Big Gate, brings you to the Tripolia, the Triple gate. Followed by Sahelion Ki Bari--the 'garden of the maidens' brings to mind the lifestyle of the ladies of the court.

This evening we enjoy a buffet style dining at Fatehprakash Palace, part of the City Palace Complex, built in the early 20th century during the reign of Maharana Fateh Singhji. It is situated on the shore of Lake Pichola.

Overnight in Udaipur. Oberoi Udaivilas. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 11 Udaipur: Crystal Gallery & Lake Pichola

This morning, after breakfast, we visit the renowned Crystal Gallery, probably the single largest private collection of crystal in the world. Since photography has been strictly prohibited, visitors are privy to one of the most exclusive and

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exquisite crystal collections. It is acknowledged as an example of European heritage preserved and displayed in India.

Thereafter we visit the Rajasthan Art School where you will have a demonstration of miniatures painting, where colours derived from minerals, vegetables, precious stones, pure gold and silver.

This evening we enjoy a boat ride on Lake Pichola where we visit Jag Mandir Island. Our boat ride will cover all the major and minor attractions around the lake.

Overnight in Udaipur. Oberoi Udaivilas. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 12 <i>Udaipur - Mumbai</i>
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This morning we transfer to the airport to board flight for Mumbai.

This afternoon we have a city tour visiting the Bombay City Museum, one of the city's landmarks of cultural heritage. Visitors are struck by the life-like clay models on display, the artifact galleries with pottery, brass work, ivory, textiles and art miniatures. There is an exhaustive section on the city's historic growth and, the people who contributed to its development, including representations of the different communities who shaped the city. Later we visit Marine Drive which runs along the shoreline starting at Nariman Point and up to Malabar Hill.

This evening's dinner is hosted by the Intercontinental The Grand. Dome is the al fresco rooftop venue which serves an international variety of international grills and a prime selection of North Indian food from recipes handed down through generations of family chefs.

Overnight in Mumbai. Taj Majal (Palace Wing). Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 13 <i>Mumbai - Kochi (Cochin)</i>

This morning we transfer to the airport and our flight to Kochi (Cochin).

The history of European involvement in Kochi, from the early sixteenth century onwards, is dominated by the aggression of, successively, the Portuguese, Dutch and British, competing in their desire to control the port and its lucrative spice trade. From 1800, the state of Cochin was part of the British Madras Presidency; from 1812 until Independence in 1947, its administration was made the responsibility of a series of diwans, or financial ministers. In the 1920s, the British expanded the port to make it suitable for modern ocean-going ships; extensive dredging created Willingdon Island, between Ernakulam and Fort Cochin.

Upon arrival we check in to our rooms with views of the Arabian Sea. During lunch we meet up with Ayurveda Doctor who will give a small presentation on Ayurveda and followed by a full body massage for the entire group.

This evening we attend a special presentation by kathakali dancers will perform with a detailed explanation by a renowned professor on Performance Art and music. Dinner featuring Kerala cuisine to follow.

Overnight in Kochi. Taj Malabar. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 14 <i>Kochi: House Boat Cruise</i>
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The morning starts with yoga and meditation session. A renowned yoga teacher will be available to show/participate in

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a basic yoga session and a short briefing on yoga. This is followed by twenty minutes of mediation.

After breakfast we drive to the land of the backwater and Allepey. En-route our special guest speaker will share his insights on this part of India and its way of life. Upon arrival we board our houseboats and lunch on board. Afterwards we travel by bus to Kochi. On arrival a team of beauticians will be available to cloth all participants with traditional Indian attire complete with hair style and jewelry. Men will be clad with dhotis / kurthas and the women sarees. Dinner to follow.

Overnight in Kochi. Taj Malabar. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 15 Kochi: City Tour - Goa

Today we have a tour of Kochi, including: Chinese fishing Nets--A legacy of one of the earliest visitor to the Malabar coast, these nets are unmistakable as one enters the harbour. Records show that they were first erected between AD 1350 and 1450. Constructed out of teak wood and bamboo poles, they work on the principle of balance. The best place to watch is from Vasco Da Gama square, a narrow promenade that parallels the beach with little stalls that serve fresh seafood, tender coconuts and so on. During the tour a specialist on Indian spices will be available to show us around the spice market and instruct on how these spices become masalas.

Santa Cruz Basilica: Built by the Portuguese, the church was elevated to a Cathedral by the Pope Paul IV in 1558. Spared by the Dutch conqueror of Cochin who destroyed many Catholic buildings in 1663, it later fell into the hands of the British who demolished it when they took over Cochin in 1795. For almost a 100 years there was no church on the site, until the Bishop Dom Gomez Vereira commissioned a new building in 1887.

Also at Mattancherry is the Jewish Synagogue built in 1568 AD by the prosperous Jewish trading community whose links with Kerala begin in Kodungallor (Cranganore) in the north of the state. This is the oldest synagogue in India. It was partially destroyed in the war of 1662 and was rebuilt by the Dutch. In the mid-18th century the clock tower was added and the floors paved with exquisite hand-painted blue willow tiles from China.

Later we transfer to the airport to connect to our flight to the former Portuguese enclave of Goa. Upon arrival met with and transfer to the hotel with the balance of the day at leisure.

Overnight in Goa. Taj Exotica Hotel. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 16 Goa: Panjim & Old Goa

Goa achieved fame when Portuguese navigator Vasco da Gama sailed down the Malabar Coast in 1498 in search of "Christians and spices." Although he found neither, Goa became a Portuguese colony separated from the rest of India by the jungle covered hills of the Western Ghats. Goa's heartland and population is located in the alluvial strip inland from the beaches, a lush patchwork of paddy fields, coconut plantations, whitewashed churches and gently meandering rivers.

This morning we include a sightseeing tour of Panjim. Proceeding onward to old Goa, we visit the Basilica of Bom Jesus, built in 1605 by the Jesuit fathers and still the most important church in Goa. Enshrined in a silver casket in one of its chapels, is the body of Saint Francis Xavier. Across the street is the Se Cathedral with an imposing vaulted roof, massive pillars and fourteen magnificent altars. Later we visit the Convent of St. Francis D'Assissi and the Chapel of St. Catherine.

This afternoon is free to enjoy this laid-back town.

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Overnight in Goa. Taj Exotica Hotel. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 17 Goa - Mumbai - Depart

Either this morning or around midday we fly to Mumbai and connect with our homeward flights this evening.

PLEASE NOTE: Many flights from Indian cities depart after midnight, ie just into TOMORROW. If this is the case re your departure, you may consider booking an extra hotel night so that you will have a place to rest prior to your flight tonight. LAND ONLY participants with earlier flights from Mumbai need to ensure that their homeward flight connects with the afternoon arrival of our flight from Goa.

BON VOYAGE!! Meal plan: Breakfast.

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LAND ONLY DATES

Our itineraries are based on **Land Only** dates and do not include flying time. Please contact our office for arrival / departure information.

EARLY BOOKINGS

We restrict our group size to 12-16 participants and many of our tours fill early. A deposit will confirm your space on tour.

DEPOSIT

Please contact us to check availability before you book. A non-refundable \$500 deposit is required to hold your place on a tour. Optional trip cancellation and interruption insurance must be purchased at the time of booking and is non-refundable.

FINAL PAYMENT

Final payment is due 60 days prior to departure and should be made by cheque or via online banking. Final balance payments by credit card attract an additional \$150 convenience fee per transaction.

What's included on *Premium* tours?

- *Shared accommodation in deluxe hotel properties*
- *Most domestic / intra-tour air taxes & locally paid departure taxes*
- *Airport transfers*
- *Breakfast daily, most dinners, some lunches*
- *Transportation while on tour*
- *"Special Features" outlined on each itinerary*
- *Sightseeing and entrance fees as specified in each itinerary*
- *Gratuities for drivers, local guides, restaurant staff, porters*
- *Services of a Adventures Abroad Tour Leader*

FLIGHT ARRANGEMENTS

We offer flights from all gateways. Please contact us for prices and details.

FLIGHT PRICES

We maintain contracts with several different air carriers. We do not hold blocked seats on our flights. Our published airfares are based upon availability and are subject to change without notice. Certain seasons are more likely to have limited space and may result in surcharges if you book late. We recommend that you book early for these departures.

What's not included on our tours?

- *Long-haul air taxes and fuel surcharges*
- *Visa and related fees & charges (if applicable)*
- *Trip cancellation / interruption / medical insurance*
- *Single supplement charges (if single room requested)*
- *Tour Leader gratuity*



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destination
MAHARAJA'S INDIA

duration
17 Days

Prices in US Dollars

Effective Apr 09, 2010

Land Portion		Land Only	From New York	From Los Angeles
Start	End			
30 Oct 10	15 Nov 10	\$9,062	\$10,362	\$10,362
15 Jan 11	31 Jan 11	\$9,062	\$10,362	\$10,362
29 Oct 11	14 Nov 11	\$9,062	\$10,362	\$10,362

LAND ONLY PARTICIPANTS	
Tour Begins	Tour Ends
Delhi	Mumbai

special features

- Small groups.
- Experienced Tour Leaders.
- All meals (mostly a la carte), including special local cuisines and events.
- 5-star accommodation throughout.
- Exclusive air-conditioned coaches with separate luggage van.
- Full staff support and portorage at airports and hotels.
- 'Behind the scenes' visits and local cultural experiences.
- All internal air tickets included in land price (including taxes).

payment information

Initial deposit can be made by check, Visa, or Mastercard. Final balance is payable by cheque at 60 days before departure.

flight information

Flight prices are subject to availability and may change. For prices from other cities, please contact us.

contact us

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Optional Single Supplement: \$951.00

Maximum group size 16