

**RAJ****and Desert Safari****14 days**

Created on: 2 Jul 2025

**Day 1**      *Arrival in Delhi*

Today we arrive in Delhi.

Overnight in Delhi.

**Day 2**      *Delhi: City Tour*

Today we have a full-day tour of Delhi. We start with a drive north into Old Delhi, passing along the Rajpath (King's Way) and stopping for photos at the India Gate. The 42m high India Gate, an "Arc de Triomphe"-like archway in the middle of a crossroad, commemorates the Indian soldiers who lost their lives fighting for the British Army during WWI. This landmark also bears the names of British and Indian soldiers killed in the Northwestern frontier in the Afghan War of 1919.

Next we will make a visit to the Jamma Mosque. Located in the heart of Old Delhi, the largest mosque in India can accommodate as many as twenty-thousand worshippers. This imposing architectural monument, with its three gateways and two minarets, took fourteen years to complete (1644-58). Time permitting we will enter to have a brief look inside.

From here we board our cycle rickshaws for a tour of Chandni Chowk (Silver Street). Here we are given a glimpse into an old world lifestyle slowly fading from Delhi. The hustle and bustle of everyday life can be felt in the Chandi Chowk's narrow lanes. We will reboard our bus after the rickshaw ride, going past the Red Fort (photo stop), and we disembark at the Raj Ghat, set within a beautiful park. This national monument is where the father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi, was cremated.

After a stop for lunch we continue our sightseeing with a visit to Humayan's Tomb, an excellent example of Mughal architecture, predating the Taj Mahal by almost 100 years. Persian in style, this is a beautiful red sandstone building inlaid with black and white marble.

We will finish our day with a visit to the Qutub Minar. Few other monuments are as closely identified with Delhi as the Qutub Minar, this first monument of Muslim rule in India. It heralded the beginning of a new style of art and architecture which came to be known as the Indo-Islamic.

Overnight in Delhi.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

**Day 3**      *Delhi - Mandawa*

Drive to Mandawa (240 kms/5 hour 30 min approx) in the Shekhawati region of Rajasthan. Here every home is adorned with gaily painted murals that illuminate the arid landscape. On arrival, check-in to your hotel. Remainder of the afternoon will be at leisure.

Overnight in Mandawa.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

**Day 4**      *Mandawa*

Today we visit Nawalgarh, founded in the 18th Century by Nawal Singh, it has some of the finest frescoes in the Shekhawati region. A huge fort with colourful bazaar and numerous havelis with elaborate architecture makes it an interesting destination.

Overnight in Mandawa.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

#### **Day 5**      ***Mandawa - Bikaner***

Today we drive to Bikaner and have a tour upon arrival.

Bikaner's history dates back to AD 1488 when a Rathore Prince, Rao Bikaji-a descendant of the founder of Jodhpur(AD 1459), Rao Jodhaji, established his kingdom here. Rao Jodhaji had five sons but Rao Bikaji was the most enterprising of them. Bikaji chose a barren wilderness called 'Jangladesh' and transformed it to an impressive city, called Bikaner after the founder's name.

More popularly called the camel country, the city is renowned for the best riding camels in the world. The ship of the desert is an inseparable part of life here. Be it pulling heavy carts, transporting grains or working on wells, camels are the prime helpers. The wells of Bikaner: an important source of water are other attractions of the city. These are built on high plinths with slender minareted towers on each of the four corners and can be noticed even from a distance.

Overnight in Bikaner.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

#### **Day 6**      ***Bikaner - Jaisalmer***

Today we drive through the desert and proceed for Jaisalmer. Very often one can see along the road to Jaisalmer some of the antelopes of this region. Blackbuck and fast running Chinkara are the most common among them. We have a stop enroute at a village to observe the traditional life of the villages in Rajasthan.

We arrive in Jaisalmer in the late evening.

Overnight in Jaisalmer.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

#### **Day 7**      ***Jaisalmer: City Tour***

Today we have sightseeing of the medieval city of Jaisalmer. Jaisalmer's crenellated golden sandstone walls and its narrow streets lined with exquisitely carved buildings makes this city unique. Jaisalmer is famous for its carved havelis (grand mansions). In medieval times, its prosperity was due to its location on the main trade route linking India to Egypt, Arabia, Africa and the West. Jaisalmer is a marvel of beautiful culture and this city remains one of the most exotic city not only in Rajasthan but in the whole of India. Some of the visitors called this city "a living museum". We have a walk through the old city and visit the Fort and the Jain temple.

Overnight in Jaisalmer.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

#### **Day 8**      ***Jaisalmer - Desert Safari***

The adventure starts this morning with an excursion to the Sam Sand Dunes. It is said that no visit to Jaisalmer is complete without a trip to the most picturesque dunes of Sam. The ship of the desert, the camel, was domesticated thousands of years ago primarily for the purpose of making tedious journeys through the unrelenting Thar Desert. There is barren land for as far as the eyes can see; the sea of yellow shimmering sand looks extraordinary. Closer to the villages you can see herds of cattle and sheep roaming around purposelessly. Watch the children trotting off to school, while their mothers prepare their afternoon meal on a dung-fire.

Overnight desert camp.

Meal Plan: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

### **Day 9**      ***Desert Safari - Jodhpur***

We continue our safari through the desert.

Camel safaris are certainly the ideal way to spend time exploring the rustic and royal Rajasthan. One can ride or walk along leisurely with the safari and enjoy the desertscape. Our camel safari route takes us to the remote villages, ancient temples, magnificent palaces, abandoned fortresses and exotic wildlife of the sandy wilderness.

Later today we say farewell to our camels, camp staff and guides and drive via Osian to Jodhpur. Osian is a great centre of Hindu and Jain religions. The oldest Temple here was constructed in 1178 AD. We arrive in Jodhpur this evening. Jodhpur is a place of wonderful bazaars where you can seek out puppeteers and dyers and get a real taste of rural Rajasthan.

Overnight in Jodhpur.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

### **Day 10**      ***Jodhpur: City Tour***

Our sightseeing in Jodhpur includes a visit to the massive fort that stands upon a rocky hill and engulfs the city with its 10 km (6 miles) of wall and eight gates. A fairly steep climb leads up through seven gateways. The palaces within are carved from a hard sandstone which the sculptors' chisels have carved as if it were soap. An extensive museum displays howdahs, paintings, thrones, banners, doors, weapons and a spectacular 17th century tent.

Overnight in Jodhpur.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

### **Day 11**      ***Jodhpur - Ranakpur***

Today we travel to the Ranakpur Temples, the most magnificent 15th century Jain temples situated in the deep secluded valley of the Aravalli Hills. Though over 500 years old, the temples here are superbly preserved in a near-perfect condition. In the centre is the main "Chaumukha temple" dedicated to Adinath. The most distinctive features are the 29 halls supported by 1444 pillars, of which no two are exactly alike. Every conceivable surface is carved and every corner and angle is engraved with Jain images. Also visit the other Jain temples and the Temple of the Sun God with its erotic sculptures. We may also visit a few Bishnoi tribal villages en route.

Overnight in Ranakpur.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

---

**Day 12      *Ranakpur - Udaipur***

We drive a relatively short distance to Udaipur today and do a serene late afternoon drive around nearby Fateh Sagar Lake concludes an inspiring day.

Overnight in Udaipur.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

**Day 13      *Udaipur***

Today we see the well known lakeside City Palace, made up of eleven constituent mahals (palaces) constructed by successive Maharajahs over 300 years. Together they comprise the largest royal complex in Rajasthan. The palace, iridescent with tile and mirror inlays, includes the impressively carved Jagdish Temple dedicated to Lord Vishnu.

The afternoon is free to browse in this beautiful city of temples, fairy-tale palaces and vast city gardens surrounding several lakes. This is only one of the seven major Rajput states to uphold its Hindu allegiance in the face of Muslim invasions and political compromises. The present nobility are perhaps the longest surviving dynasty in the world, being the seventy-sixth in the unbroken line of Mewar suzerains.

Overnight in Udaipur.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

**Day 14      *Udaipur - Delhi - Depart***

We have the morning free in Udaipur. Later we fly from Udaipur to Delhi. International departure from Delhi.

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.

BON VOYAGE!!

Meal Plan: Breakfast