



RAJASTHAN

BOOK BY AUG 30
SAVE \$200 PP



DESERTS, CASTLES AND PALACES
FEB 5-24, 2025 | 20 DAYS | 52 MEALS
JOURNEY LEADER: JOAN PITMAN

The Romantic and Iconic Taj Mahal

India has long fascinated world travellers for its immense diversity. All of the world's great religions - Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity - coexist in relative harmony. Untold personal wealth shares the land with abject poverty. Modern industry and commerce contrast with traditional lifestyles that are unchanged from centuries past. Modern transportation contrasts with ox carts and camel trains. This very special journey has been designed to showcase this diversity, stretching from the capital, Delhi, across the plains of Rajasthan to one of the world's most forbidding deserts. A definite highlight will be experiencing the Desert Festival in Jaisalmer.

This journey features a wonderful blend of modern and ancient, deluxe hotels and heritage properties that display the long traditions of Indian hospitality. Stay in a desert camp, sample home-cooked meals and the cuisine served to Rajasthani royalty. Delve into a remarkable exploration of the lifestyles of rural and urban India and appreciate the diverse religious cultures that make up the nation.

Designed for adventurous travellers, this journey is for individuals open to accepting and appreciating the cultural differences they will encounter.



Tour Highlights

- Explore the rich history and vibrant markets of Old and New Delhi.
- Stay in deluxe hotels and heritage properties.
- Wander through Rajasthan's markets on guided walks.
- Experience the Golden City of Jaisalmer.
- Overnight in a camp in the enchanting Thar Desert and immerse in the vibrant Desert Festival.
- Embark on a Jeep Safari to tribal villages and enjoy a camel ride among the dunes.
- Indulge in a Royal Dinner at Khas Bagh in Jodhpur.
- Visit the Temple of Ranakpur with its 1,444 carved marble pillars.
- Cruise to the Lake Palace on Lake Pichola, Udaipur.
- Share a dinner with a local family in Jaipur and enjoy a visit to the Amber Palace.
- Explore the ghost city of Fatehpur Sikri.
- Visit Agra, the city of love, to marvel at the magnificent Taj Mahal and Agra Fort.

Journey Leader

Joan was in the airline industry for 25 years and remains in the travel industry today. As a Tour Director she has travelled extensively to Alaska, Asia, across Canada and the US, and Europe. Personal travel has also taken her to South America, Australia, Asia, New Zealand, Africa, Central America, and Bali. A Whistler weekender since the mid 70's, and a full time resident from 2000, Joan and her husband George also maintain a home in Vancouver. Joan and George have 6 children between them and 9 grandchildren. They are looking forward to sharing this exciting journey to Rajasthan with all those who will join them.



Inclusive Features

- Return economy group airfare between Canada and New Delhi
- Accommodations in carefully selected first-class resorts plus heritage hotels as indicated or similar
- 52 meals included as shown in the itinerary (B - 17 breakfasts, L - 17 lunches, D - 18 dinners)
- Services of your Canadian journey leader plus a professional English speaking tour guide in India
- All gratuities, surcharges, taxes and fees for included services
- India visa fee for Canadian passport holders
- Airport transfer in Canada or equivalent value with purchase of group airfare

FEB 5, Wednesday

Members gather in Toronto for the overnight flight to Delhi.

DEPART CANADA

FEB 6, Thursday

Upon arrival in Delhi, we transfer to our hotel for dinner.

ARRIVE DELHI, INDIA

Le Meridien Hotel (3 nights)

D

FEB 7, Friday

We start our tour of Delhi with a visit to Akshardham Temple, a sprawling 100-acre complex featuring well-maintained gardens, water fountains, and 234 ornate pillars. After lunch, we'll visit the bustling shops of Chandni Chowk Bazaar, followed by the Jama Masjid, India's largest mosque designed by Shah Jahan. In complete contrast to Old Delhi, we will head to Raj Ghat, a serene memorial dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi. We will end the day with a photo opportunity at the 17th-century Red Fort. BLD

DELHI

FEB 8, Saturday

Drive past iconic landmarks such as the India Gate, the Presidential Palace, and the Old Secretariat en route to Humayun's Tomb, a UNESCO site showcasing exquisite Mughal architecture. After lunch, explore another UNESCO gem, Qutab Minar, featuring India's tallest masonry tower at 72.5 meters, and projecting balconies for the Muadhhdhin's call to prayer. BLD

DELHI

FEB 9, Sunday **DELHI / JAISALMER**
Fly to Jaisalmer, a historic fortress city nestled in the Thar Desert. The majestic Golden Fort, built in the 12th century, has towering yellow sandstone walls that have stood as a bastion against invaders for centuries. Discover Lodurva village, once the vibrant capital of the Bhatti Rajputs, renowned for its Jain temples intricately carved from golden sandstone. **Rang Mahal** (3 nights) BLD



The impressive Golden Fort of Jaisalmer

FEB 10, Monday **JAISALMER**
Our captivating tour starts with the iconic Jaisalmer Fort, boasting 99 bastions and steeped in history from battles between the Bhattis, Mughals, and Rathores of Jodhpur. It's considered the oldest inhabited fort globally, housing over 5000 residents and adorned with Jain and Laxminath Temples. Discover nearby Havelis, beautiful merchant homes, and visit the revered Gadi Sagar Tank, a former lifeline for the city, enveloped by sacred shrines and temples. Enjoy free time this afternoon. BLD

FEB 11, Tuesday **DESERT FESTIVAL**
Experience the rustic allure of Rajasthan's villages with visits to Kuldhara and Khaba. An unforgettable evening at the colourful Desert Festival awaits. Cheer on camels as they race to victory and witness the thrilling Dhora Dhor (Ox Cart) races. End the night with an electrifying showcase of folk music, dance, and fireworks. BLD



Experience the way of life of the Thar Desert

FEB 12, Wednesday **JAISALMER / THAR DESERT**
Onward to the Thar Desert, we arrive at Samsara, a serene camp amidst dunes. Immerse in desert life, nomadic culture, and beautiful vistas. In the late afternoon, an exhilarating jeep safari leads us to a tribal village for sunset views and artisan encounters. Dine under the starlit sky, serenaded by local folk music and mesmerizing Kalbelia dances. **Samsara Desert Camp** (1 night) BLD

FEB 13, Thursday **JODHPUR**
Rising early, we will view the sunrise on a scenic camel ride. En route to Jodhpur, indulge in a delightful lunch. In the Blue City, join a walking tour through vibrant bazaars teeming with textiles, jewelry, leather goods, lacquerware, and delectable treats. **Novotel Jodhpur** (2 nights) BLD

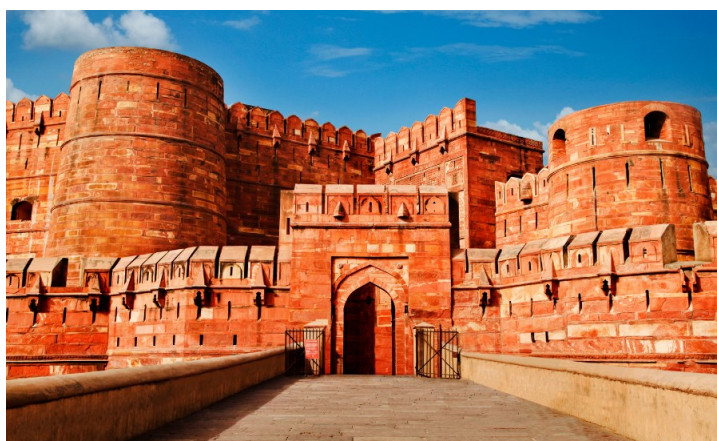
FEB 14, Friday **JODHPUR**
Marvel at Mehrangarh Fort's grandeur, adorned with intricate lattice balconies and mirrored walls, offering panoramic views of Jodhpur. Explore the Jodhpur Museum and Jaswant Thada. Drive past the Clock Tower and Sardar Market, famous for spices. Indulge in Rajasthani cuisine at Khas Bagh, a Victorian-style hotel showcasing Raj Period memorabilia and vintage cars. BLD



The intricately hand-carved marble pillars of Ranakpur Temple

FEB 15, Saturday **RANAKPUR / UDAIPUR**
Today, we head to the sacred Jain Temple of Ranakpur, one of Jainism's holiest sites. Admire its 15th-century architecture, featuring 1,444 intricately hand-carved marble pillars, including a remarkable pillar with 108 snakeheads and bodies sculpted from a single stone. Later, we arrive in the picturesque City of Lakes, Udaipur, nestled amidst the Aravalli Range hills. **Radisson Udaipur** (2 nights) BLD

FEB 16, Sunday **UDAIPUR**
Explore the majestic City Palace, dominating the lakefront, with a museum showcasing a diverse collection of glass, porcelain, and miniature paintings. Next, discover the intricately crafted Jagdish Temple and Saheliyon Ki Bari, a serene garden adorned with fountains, stone elephants,



Agra Fort, a testament to Emperor Akbar's architectural prowess

and a lotus pool. After lunch, embark on a scenic cruise on Lake Pichola, passing by the enchanting Jag Niwas and Jag Mandir, both iconic island palaces. BLD

FEB 17, Monday **UDAIPUR / DEOGARH**
We journey to Deogarh's rural heartland for the exhilarating Rural Ramble; an off-road adventure through the countryside. Marvel at panoramic vistas as locals tend to their fields and cattle. Take a serene break by a lake for refreshments and birdwatching. Tonight, experience the splendour of Rajasthan by staying in one of its magnificent castles. **Rawla Jojawaar** (1 night) BLD

FEB 18, Tuesday **DEOGARH / JAIPUR**
The Pink City of Jaipur, India's first planned city, captivates with its forts, splendid palaces and gardens, all built from pink plastered stone. **Radisson City Center** (3 nights) BLD

FEB 19, Wednesday **JAIPUR**
We begin our exploration at the Amber Fort, showcasing exquisite Rajput architecture. Next, we delve into Jaipur's regal history at the City Palace and Museum, residence of former Jaipur royalty. Later, we visit the Jantar Mantar observatory, revealing ancient instruments that measure the positions of stars and planets, and calculate eclipses. Tonight, savour a home-hosted vegetarian dinner with a local family, exchanging tales of modern Indian life. BLD

FEB 20, Thursday **JAIPUR**
Enjoy a relaxed morning before setting off on a brief drive to the countryside. Arrive in Sanganer village, celebrated for its traditional textile block printing and handmade paper. Marvel at the vibrant colours against white backgrounds. Return to Jaipur for leisure time to explore. Cap off the day with a visit to Raj Mandir, a renowned Indian theatre, for a Bollywood movie screening. BLD

FEB 21, Friday **JAIPUR / AGRA**
En route to Agra, we pause at the legendary Fatehpur Sikri, constructed in 1569 by Emperor Akbar. Abandoned after just 14 years due to water scarcity, its architecture showcases a fusion of Hindu and Islamic styles. **Grand Mercure** (2 nights) BLD

FEB 22, Saturday **AGRA**
Explore Agra Fort, a testament to Emperor Akbar's architectural prowess, blending exquisite design with defensive structures. Admire the Taj Mahal, a masterpiece crafted by Shah Jahan in 1630 to honour his beloved wife, Mumtaz Mahal. Sculpted from pristine white marble, it stands as a symbol of enduring love, crafted over 17 years by 20,000 artisans from Persia, Turkey, France, and Italy. Experience another perspective of the Taj from Itimad-ud Daulah, across the River Yamuna. Conclude the day with a visit to Sikandra Fort, the final resting place of Akbar the Great. This well-preserved monument, surrounded by lush gardens, houses the tomb of the revered emperor, reflecting his enduring legacy in Indian history. BLD

FEB 23, Sunday **AGRA / DELHI**
We will proceed to a Delhi airport hotel for refreshment (four people per room). Later tonight, we transfer to the airport to commence our journey back to Canada. **Pride Plaza Aerocity** (rooms for refreshment) BLD

FEB 24, Monday **DELHI / CANADA**
We arrive in Toronto in the morning, and continue to our homes across Canada.

CT Rating 3.5/5 - Challenging: India offers diverse cultural experiences but requires travellers to have an open mind to enjoy this unique environment. Travel conditions will be more challenging and sometimes facilities will be limited. Standards will also differ from those in Canada. Road traffic and conditions can be relatively chaotic and we will have a number of long travel (coach) days. Air quality, especially in the areas around Delhi, Agra and Jaipur can be poor. Accommodations range from deluxe to rustic heritage properties. Food should satisfy Canadian travellers (mostly buffets), but some dishes will be spicy. Due to the physical and cultural demands, members should be in good physical health and capable of handling their luggage, if needed.

 **Book by August 30, 2024**
and save \$200 per person 

Tour Cost in Canadian Dollars Per Person

Land Only (Join / Leave Delhi hotel).....	\$5,115
Toronto.....	\$7,495
Ottawa / Montreal.....	\$7,665
Halifax / Winnipeg	\$7,765
St. John's	\$7,795
Calgary / Edmonton / Vancouver.....	\$7,865
Regina / Saskatoon / Victoria	\$7,895
Single Supplement.....	\$2,215

Airfares from other gateways are available on request. Refer to inclusive features for details. Land only clients join and leave the group at the hotels in Delhi. Tour price is based on sharing a twin-bedded room. Prices are based on a minimum of 15 members and on rates, taxes and fees effective March 2024. Airfare, air carrier, and prices are estimated and subject to change due to factors beyond our control.

Note: Visas are required to visit India. The estimated cost of an e-visa is **included** for Canadian passport holders. In some instances, individuals may be required to obtain their own visa, however, assistance will be provided.

Insurance is NOT INCLUDED but is highly recommended. Premiums are calculated based on the individual's age, destination (country), trip length, and trip booking window – please contact our staff to receive a quote. Your coverage starts on the effective date of your confirmation of coverage. Please discuss your insurance coverage prior to booking. Check our website for the most current information. Refer to the enrollment form for terms and conditions.

Final payment is due October 31, 2024
Deposit is \$800 per person

To reserve your spot on this tour, you can either book online through our website or submit an enrollment form along with your deposit to:



Experiencing Our World
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