

Rajasthan Itinerary

27 February- 15 March 2024

Trip Highlights

- Watch the sunset on the Aravelli Ranges over cocktails on the rooftop at Bujera Fort, our hotel outside Udaipur, with music by Sufi singers
- Take a leopard spotting safari among the beautiful granite hills of southern Marwar
- Visit the village of Bagru outside Jaipur, home to the Chipa community who still make block-printed fabrics using a centuries-old method
- Visit the Jain temple at Ranakpur, poetry in white marble
- Have your wrist knotted with a sacred thread at Om Banna, the only temple where the object of veneration is a motorcycle
- Ride bullock carts through Narlai village for dinner at an ancient stepwell lit by a thousand flickering oil lamps, serenaded by a musician playing sacred songs
- Explore Jodhpur's Mehrangarh Fort, the most sensational and best preserved of all the palace citadels of Rajasthan
- Dine at New Delhi's Indian Accent, where Chef Manish Mehrotra has breathed new life into the Indian food repertoire with his subtle and original tasting menu
- Taste street food in the bazaars of Jodhpur and Old Delhi, where we visit the spice bazaar
- Shop for exquisite fabrics in Jodhpur and quality souvenirs in Delhi's Khan Market
- Visit the Taj Mahal, one of the New Seven Wonders of the World

DAY 1: ARRIVE NEW DELHI Tuesday, 27 February

Customs and immigration will take 30-45 minutes. Tour representative will meet you at the airport, assist with baggage and transfer you to your hotel in New Delhi (30 minutes). Depending on your arrival time, meet the group over a welcome drink in the bar.

Overnight [The Imperial](#). A grand colonial hotel restored to its former glory, the Imperial is located on Janpath, within easy walking distance of Connaught Place.

DAY 2: NEW DELHI Wednesday, 28 February

After breakfast we'll take a short drive to Lodhi Gardens for a walk around, followed by a visit to Bangla Sahib Gurudwara, an important Sikh temple where communal kitchens serve free food to thousands daily. Afterwards we'll visit the Khan Market, one of Delhi's favourite upmarket shopping zones with a great bookshop with lots of Indian titles, boutiques and reliable ATMs.

Welcome dinner at our hotel.

Meals included: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 3: FLIGHT TO UDAIPUR Thursday, 29 February

Fly to Udaipur. Transfer to hotel [Bujera Fort](#) (3 nights), relax with afternoon tea at hotel.

This evening we'll watch the sunset over the village with cocktails on the roof terrace with a musical performance by Sufi singers that continues over dinner.

Meals included: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 4: UDAIPUR Friday, 1 March

We'll start the day with a yoga session in the courtyard at Bujera and after breakfast take a walking tour of the village and the fields that surround it, see Bujera's farm that produces the vegetables we're eating, have a swim and relax. In mid-afternoon we'll head into Udaipur and take a leisurely cruise on Lake Pichola followed by a cultural show at Bagore Ki Haveli and dinner at [Upre restaurant](#) overlooking the magnificent City Palace, Lake Palace, the temples, the bathing ghats and embankments.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

DAY 5: UDAIPUR Saturday, 2 March

After breakfast we'll drive to Udaipur and take a guided tour of one of the most impressive palaces in all of India, followed by lunch at the cafe in the forecourt of the palace.

After lunch we'll take a short stroll from the palace to visit Jagdish Temple, a wonderful photo opportunity, with some interesting antique shopping along the way.

Dinner at Bujera Fort

Meals included: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 6: DRIVE TO NARLAI Sunday, 3 March

Drive to Narlai (3.5hrs) with stop at Nagda Temple, set among fields on the edge of a lake and dating from the 10th century AD. Nearby Eklingji Temple is a particularly lovely marble complex begun in the 8th century and a major pilgrimage site.

We'll lunch in the courtyard at Rawla Narlai, relax in the afternoon and in late afternoon we'll board jeeps for a leopard safari. Along the way we'll come across Rabari herdsman, easily identified by their huge scarlet turbans, driving their sheep, goats, cattle and camels back to their village compounds.

Overnight: [Rawla Narlai](#) (3 nights), a charming hotel, once a hunting lodge belonging to the Jodhpur royal family.

Meals included: Breakfast

DAY 7: NARLAI AND SURROUNDS Monday, 4 March

If you're up for it, a morning walk to the top of Elephant Rock (700 gentle steps), followed by a relaxing breakfast in the courtyard. After breakfast we'll take a walk around this charming village and call in at some of its 700+ temples and shrines. After lunch we'll take a 40-minute drive to Ranakpur Temple, a 15th century Jain temple sculpted in white marble and one of the masterworks of Indian devotional architecture.

Meals included: Breakfast

DAY 8: NARLAI Tuesday, 5 March

A leisurely day to enjoy Narlai, one of the loveliest villages in Rajasthan, with plenty of time to relax and enjoy our hotel and the pool. Narlai and surrounds have a wealth of birdlife and for keen birdwatchers, the early morning jeep drive with a naturalist (optional) is highly recommended. One guest on our 2023 trip recorded more than 50 different species on this early morning trip.

In the evening, after a prayer ceremony that takes place at sunset at the little Shiva temple at our hotel, we'll board bullock carts for a short journey to a stepwell where we'll dine by the lights of thousands of flickering oil lamps, serenaded by a veena player singing sacred songs.

Meals included: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 9: DRIVE TO JODHPUR Wednesday, 6 March

Drive to [Rohet Garh](#), a heritage hotel, for lunch, and we have a chance to see the majestic Marwari horses. En route we'll stop at Om Banna, probably the only temple where the object of veneration is a motorcycle.

Overnight at [The House of Rohet](#) in Jodhpur (3 nights)

Meals included: Breakfast and Lunch.

DAY 10: EXPLORE JODHPUR Thursday, 7 March

After breakfast we'll tour the incredible [Mehrangarh Fort](#) and its palace and nearby Jaswant Thada and the surrounding cenotaphs of the royal family. Lunch at the Stepwell Café, latest addition to the city's smart food scene, followed by a shopping expedition in the boutiques in the square nearby.

Afternoon at leisure.

Dinner at RAAS Jodhpur, overshadowed by the fort.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 11, EXPLORE JODHPUR Friday, 8 March

This morning we'll take a drive through the countryside south of Jodhpur to visit a dhurrie maker. It's a traditional village craft and one that gives villagers an income, allowing them to carry on a way of life that has been laid down over the centuries.

In the afternoon we'll take a stroll through the labyrinthine passages of Jodhpur's blue city, the sector of the city inhabited by upper-caste Hindus who paint their houses indigo blue, incredible for photography. As we descend into the market area we'll sample some of the food treats for which Jodhpur is famous, such as paliwal kachori, deep-fried Indian bread stuffed with dal and served with mint chutney, masala chai, spiced tea, and sweets that have been made by the same family for centuries.

Meals included: Breakfast, food tour

DAY 12: DRIVE TO JAIPUR Saturday, 9 March

Overnight (3 nights) at [Samode Haveli](#)

We'll dine that evening at our hotel.

Meals included: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 13: EXPLORE JAIPUR Sunday, 10 March

We'll take a short drive to visit Amber Fort and Amer Village. Amer is the original settlement that was founded in a valley just outside Jaipur, and which later gave rise to the city itself. Its distinguishing feature is the vast and impressive Amber Fort which sits on the hilltop above the village, where we'll spend some time exploring. The village itself is a small delight, with a stepwell, some very fine temples and the [Anokhi Block Printing Museum](#).

In the afternoon we'll take a stroll through the streets of Jaipur, one of the most pleasant Indian cities to explore on foot thanks to the broad, shady verandas that border the streets within the city walls.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner (Johri)

DAY 14: BLOCK PRINTING Monday, 11 March

We'll drive from Jaipur to a small village devoted to the craft of block fabric printing, one of Rajasthan's traditional crafts. We'll take a tour for an in-depth look at the dyeing, the workshop where the blocks are carved and the printing process. Here you can also try your hand at block-printing a bag, a bandana, a scarf or a small rug. Lunch is included.

Jaipur is well known as a centre for the precious and semi-precious jewellery trade. In the afternoon we'll have a chance to look at Amrapali, which has a wide range of pieces at various prices. Alternatively, return to the hotel for a swim or take another stroll through the streets of Jaipur.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 15: DRIVE TO AGRA Tuesday, 12 March

Overnight at the Taj Hotel and Convention Centre www.tajhotels.com, a comfortable 4½-star hotel chosen for its relative proximity to the Taj Mahal.

Dinner at hotel

Meals included: Breakfast

DAY 16: THE TAJ, AND DRIVE TO DELHI Wednesday, 13 March

We'll make an early morning visit to the Taj Mahal and spend a couple of hours exploring this ethereal World Heritage monument before continuing to Delhi.

In the evening we have an opportunity to visit Nizamuddin, built around the shrine of a Sufi saint. This is one of the centres for Delhi's Muslim population. It's crowded but this is a chance to experience something really special that few visitors ever get to feel, the atmosphere of religious ecstasy is electrifying. Quite often there are Qawwali singers, a form of Sufi Islamic devotional music, performing at the tomb.

Overnight [The Lodhi](#) (2 nights)

Meals included: Breakfast

DAY 17: EXPLORE DELHI Thursday, 14 March

We'll visit Old Delhi and the giant Jama Masjid, the Friday Mosque built by Shah Jahan, then walk through the wedding bazaar. Lunch at the Khan Market and another chance to shop for souvenirs.

Our farewell dinner will be at [Indian Accent](#) in The Lodhi. The restaurant is the creation of Chef Manish Mehrotra, one of India's culinary superstars, who brings excitement and ingenuity to traditional Indian dishes, now with restaurants in London and New York. We'll dine on the tasting menu, with a choice of either vegetarian or non-vegetarian meals.

Meals included: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 18: A FINAL FAREWELL Friday, 15 March

Guests will be transported to the airport for their departure flights.

Meals included: Breakfast

COST

\$10,670 AUD per person on a twin-share basis. Non-refundable deposit \$500 AUD dollars when you book. Single supplement \$2900 AUD

PRICE INCLUDES:

- Airport transfers
- Flight from Delhi to Udaipur
- Safe and comfortable air-conditioned vehicle
- English speaking professional driver/guide
- 17 nights accommodation in a double/twin room with breakfast
- Leopard safari
- Block printing session in Bagru
- Admission to all monuments, palaces, museums
- Lunches on 4 days
- Dinners on 9 nights
- Breakfast daily
- Local city guides for private tours in Udaipur, Jodhpur, Jaipur and Delhi
- Gratuities (driver/guide, city guides, servers etc)
- Still water with meals
- Still water on board the bus and on day tours

IT DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- International air travel
- Travel Insurance
- Alcoholic beverages
- Soft drinks including those with meals

- Laundry, mini-bar charges, phone charges, spa treatments and other optional services at the hotel
- Lunches or dinners not included in the itinerary