

# EXPLORE!

## Tailormade Classic Rajasthan

17 days

India - Trip code TMIN2



## Tailormade Classic Rajasthan

### The Golden Triangle and much more!

Princely Rajasthan is full of lavish palaces, colourful temples and ancient forts, set to the backdrop of desert, mountains and picturesque lakes. This is a journey exploring these cultural treasures, travelling through fantastic scenery and learning a little about Indian culture with visits to markets and villages along the way.

### Enriching tailormade journeys – for you

This bespoke journey features some of our favourite spots in India. You can choose to take our destination experts' recommendations and travel just as you see the itinerary here, or contact us to add your own special touches; maybe a pampering day at an Ayurveda spa or a cookery lesson. We're here to design your perfect holiday.

Call us on **01252 883 184**

### Customer Feedback

Kathy travelled with us in February 2016, here are just some highlights that she shared with us:

"The whole holiday surpassed all our expectations! We were very pleased with all the accommodation, the staff everywhere could not have been more friendly or helpful. Highlights included: taking a cross country route seeing the very rural part of India we would have otherwise missed, seeing tigers on our first 2 game drives and the very rare and shy sloth bear on our 3rd drive. The houseboat we had was definitely one of the best, it was superb and I wouldn't hesitate to recommend it to anyone. Staying at the Palm Villa was like staying in our own 5 star hotel, with a host, chef and cleaning staff - the food was some of the best we had and very reasonably priced. It really was a perfect holiday that we will never forget. Thank you so much."

## Trip highlights

#### ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

##### Premium

Our premium accommodation is hand-picked and chosen for its character, location or local importance. These properties have excellent facilities and a higher level of comfort and service. They provide the perfect wind down after an active day.

#### TRIP PACE:

##### Full on


Full on paced trips are for travellers who like their holidays packed with activities and experiences, moving on quickly from place to place with lots of early starts and long, busy days. Some may find them tiring, but others get a buzz from packing their precious holiday-time as chock-a-block full of new experiences as possible!

## Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

### DAY 1 - Fly to Delhi

Depart the UK on your overnight flight to Delhi.

 Breakfast

### DAY 2 - Arrive Delhi, visit the Qutub Minar and Humayun's Tomb

Your journey begins in the Indian capital today, where the afternoon is spent on a city tour of the sights of New Delhi. The Indian capital has long been a phoenix rising again and again out of its own ruins. New Delhi was the creation of the British Raj of the 30's and includes the Lok Sabha (Parliament) and India Gate which you will view on your way to explore the Qutub Minar and Humayun's Tomb.



**Accommodation: Royal Plaza Hotel** (or similar)



Premium Hotel

Wi-Fi available



Swimming pool available



Breakfast

### DAY 3 - Explore Old Delhi's narrow streets, drive to Agra

This morning you explore the narrow streets of Old Delhi. You'll take a cycle rickshaw to explore the winding lanes of Chandni Chowk bazaar, a sprawling market where you can buy almost anything you need from household wares to souvenirs. You'll view the Red Fort from the outside before leaving the capital and driving to Agra.



**Accommodation: Hotel Clarks Shiraz** (or similar)



Premium Hotel



Swimming pool available



Breakfast

## DAY 4 - Taj Mahal

It's an early start this morning to one of the world's most famous buildings, the magnificent Taj Mahal. Over 300 years have elapsed since its construction, yet it stands today unscarred by age, its beauty and symmetry seemingly beyond man, time and space. Created by Shah Jahan as a funerary monument to his favourite wife, Mumtaz, it took 22 years to build (1630-52). The Great Moghul lies beside his beloved under the white marble dome. Inlaid with precious gems, the building cost a fortune and later Shah Jahan moved his capital to Delhi before being overthrown by his son, Aurangzeb. Later in the day you visit Agra Fort, built by Akbar the Great, which contains the Moti Mosque, a beautiful building decorated with pearls and the Itimad-ud-daula, more commonly known as the Baby Taj.



**Accommodation: Hotel Clarks Shiraz** (or similar)



Premium Hotel



Swimming pool available



Breakfast

## DAY 5 - Visit deserted Fatehpur Sikri en route to Jaipur

After breakfast you leave Agra and begin your drive to Jaipur. Along the way stop and visit the deserted city of Fatehpur Sikri. Founded in 1569 and abandoned just 16 years later, it is a perfectly intact example of Akbar's imperial court. Among the many noteworthy buildings is the 5-storied Panch Mahal, probably a pleasure pavilion for the ladies of the harem. In the centre of the courtyard is the Pachisi Board where the emperor played a game of chess with dancing girls as pieces. Perhaps the finest structure of all is the lotus shaped carved central pillar of the Diwan-i-Khas (Hall of Private Audience), its extraordinary capital supporting a vaulted roof. Continue on to Jaipur where you have time to relax on arrival.



**Accommodation: Shahpura House** (or similar)



Premium Hotel



Wi-Fi available



Swimming pool available



Breakfast

## DAY 6 - View the famous facade of the Palace of the Winds

Sometimes called the Pink City, Jaipur was first painted terracotta pink by Maharajab Sawai Ram Singh to celebrate the visit of Prince Albert in 1853. In the morning head to the outskirts of the city and visit the dramatic Amber Fort, perched high on a hillside

with impressive views back down to the city. You will make a stop on the journey to view the ornate facade of the Palace of the Winds, built to allow the ladies of the harem an opportunity to look out over the city. This afternoon visit the lavish and well preserved City Palace with its fine collection of textiles, costumes and armoury. Jai Singh, the great Maharajah-astronomer, built his extraordinary (and very accurate) star gazing observatory (Jantra) here. You will get an opportunity to visit the observatory and also the Old City with its fine gates set in to the pink walls.



**Accommodation: Shahpura House** (or similar)



Premium Hotel



Wi-Fi available



Swimming pool available



Breakfast

## DAY 7 - Travel to Bikaner and visit Junagarh Fort

This morning leave Jaipur and drive to the desert city of Bikaner. Situated directly on the ancient camel caravan routes that came from Africa and West Asia, Bikaner was once a great trading centre. Its colourful bazaars and buildings of reddish-pink sandstone still suggest its ancient wealth. You take a tour to the Junagarh Fort built by Raja Rai Singh (1571-1611) which is distinguished by its high defensive light red sandstone walls. The well preserved palaces within the fort area are noted for their fine stone carvings. Bikaner still remains a defensive town, and was the home of the famous Camel Corps. You will also visit the Old town and Bhandasar Jain Temple.



**Accommodation: Lalgarh Palace** (or similar)



Premium Hotel



Swimming pool available



Breakfast

## DAY 8 - Drive to the golden city of Jaisalmer

Today you'll make your way to Jaisalmer. The city is set in the vast Thar Desert and today still retains much of the medieval atmosphere as camel carts pass through the narrow streets alongside rickshaws. The fort is a lively hub of activity, with shops and restaurants, and well worth a wander through. The city is famous for handicrafts in particular stone carvings, leather ware and brass items and the bazaars are packed with stalls offering almost everything you can imagine.



**Accommodation: Gorbandh Palace** (or similar)



Premium Hotel



Swimming pool available



Breakfast

## DAY 9 - Explore Jaisalmer's Fort and Jain Temple

After breakfast you will explore Jaisalmer on foot visiting the Museum at Sonar Quila. You will also visit the fort and some of the many elaborately carved Jain Temples and havelis including the Patwon-ki Haveli considered to be the finest in Jaisalmer.



**Accommodation: Gorbandh Palace** (or similar)



Premium Hotel



Swimming pool available



Breakfast

## DAY 10 - Transfer to Jodhpur

This morning your journey continues to Jodhpur, where the impregnable fortress commands a superb panorama of the surrounding countryside (approximately 6 hours). The city itself has a unique atmosphere, with many fine old buildings and temples. Jodhpurs, the trousers-cum-riding breeches, are named after the horsemen of this city. Arriving mid-afternoon, the rest of the day is free to wander the atmospheric streets of the Old City.



**Accommodation: Bal Samand Garden Retreat** (or similar)



Premium Hotel



Swimming pool available



Breakfast

## DAY 11 - Discover the dramatic Mehrangarh Fort

The majestic Mehrangarh Fort in Jodhpur is built across the top of a steep escarpment 125m above the plains below. It has a huge, sheer drop to the south where it overlooks the city. Your visit this morning affords wonderful views, not only across Jodhpur, but also way into the distance across the surrounding desert plains. The Rajput palace buildings within the fort are typically Mughal - very ornate and flamboyant, but also very practical and as always, built with defence in mind. This afternoon there is the chance to take an optional visit to some nearby Bishnoi villages. The Bishnoi are renowned for their protection of wild animals and trees.



**Accommodation: Bal Samand Garden Retreat** (or similar)



Premium Hotel



Swimming pool available



Breakfast

## DAY 12 - Visit Ranakpur Temple on the way to Ghanerao

Your morning drive takes you on to the temple town of Ranakpur, one of Rajasthan's gems (approximately 4 hours). Little visited, it is home to some of the most beautifully sculpted Jain Temples in India. Situated in a wooded valley the temples date back to the 15th century with the carvings depicting scenes from the lives of the Jain Saints at that time. You'll visit the Adinath temple, which contains 1444 exquisitely carved pillars, with no two alike. Continuing you then drive to Ghanerao (approximately 1 hour) where you spend the night.



**Accommodation: Ghanerao Royal Castle** (or similar)



Premium Hotel



Breakfast

## DAY 13 - Explore Kumbhalgarh Fort en route to Udaipur

This morning you drive to visit Kumbhalgarh's imposing 15th century fort - one of the finest examples of defensive architecture in Rajasthan. Lying 1,100m above sea level, the fortified ramparts protected palaces, temples and even farms, ensuring that the complex was self-contained and able to withstand a long siege. Afterwards you continue to the beautiful lakeside city of Udaipur where you spend the next two nights. The city is dominated by Lake Pichola, its island palace (now a hotel) and Jag Mandir Island. Here the future Shah Jahan sought sanctuary from his father after he had been found guilty of plotting against him.



**Accommodation: The Lalit Laxmi Vilas Palace** (or similar)



Premium Hotel



Breakfast

## DAY 14 - Take a boat on peaceful Lake Pichola

Your first stop today is the City Palace, located next to the lake this huge palace offers an insight in to the opulent life of the Maharajahs. You will also visit the Jagdish Mandir, a large ornately carved Hindu Temple set in the middle of the old town. In the late afternoon you will take a sunset cruise on the lake. At some times of the year the level of the water in the lake may drop or even, after a poor monsoon, dry up completely.



**Accommodation: The Lalit Laxmi Vilas Palace** (or similar)



Premium Hotel



Breakfast

## DAY 15 - Depart Udaipur

Fly to Delhi for your flight to the UK.



Breakfast

# What's included?



## Included meals

Breakfast: 15



## Transport

Private car  
Boat



## Trip staff

Local guides  
Driver(s)



## Accommodation

13 nights premium hotel

# Trip information

## Country information

### India Holidays & Tours

#### Climate

There is considerable variation between the different regions of India but, in general, the climate is tropical. Summer temperatures on the plains are very hot, but cooled by the South-West Monsoon, which lasts from June- September. During these months it can be very wet and therefore very humid. At altitude, temperatures can become quite cool at night even in the summer and may drop below freezing between December and February so warm clothing is necessary. In the winter, northern and mid India can be very cool, with cold evenings, so warm clothing, including plenty of layers, are essential. The south of India remains warm and sunny during the winter months.

#### Time difference to GMT

+5

#### Plugs

3 Pin Round

#### Religion

Catholicism, Hindu, Islam and Sikhism

#### Language

Hindi and English.

## Budgeting and packing

### Country Information

### India Holidays & Tours

#### Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

**Lunch price**

£6

**Dinner price**

£8

**Beer price**

£1.4

**Water price**

£0.5

## Foreign Exchange

**Local currency**

Indian Rupee Recently new 500, 1000 and 2000 rupee notes have been brought in to circulation and as the old notes are no longer accepted there have been some cash flow issues. You don't need to worry about being given old notes as it's very easy to tell the difference, the new notes are pristine in comparison with most Indian money which is fairly tatty.

**Recommended Currency For Exchange**

GBP/US\$ are the best currency to change into local currency.

**Where To Exchange**

The Indian rupee is a restricted currency and it is best not to obtain in the UK as rates are very poor. You can either change money at the airport on arrival or in major towns during the tour. Your Tour Leader will advise you on the best places in each town. Both GBP and USD cash are easy to exchange at the airport and at hotels however you will be restricted to changing £60 cash at a time and it's not possible to change money at these locations using a credit or debit card.

**ATM Availability**

ATMs are available in most large cities in India but they are very limited elsewhere so please do not rely on this.

**Credit Card Acceptance**

Very rarely, only in the larger outlets.

**Travellers Cheques**

Opportunities to exchange are limited.

## Transport, Accommodation & Meals

### Accommodation notes

**Booking a Single Room**

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

**Standard**

Light on your pocket but long on authentic experiences, these tours are based in simple, sometimes local-style accommodation. If your idea of adventure travel is to experience real, everyday life then you will enjoy our Authentic style of tour. You will have the chance to stay at simple, family-run hotels and guesthouses where the lack of luxury is more than compensated for by the warm welcome and genuine insight into local life.

**Swati Deluxe**

Located in a popular area of the city, the hotel Swati Deluxe is a convenient and affordable choice for a stay in Delhi. Rooms are a good size and have air-conditioning, and facilities include a restaurant and free Wi-Fi.

**Utkarsh Vilas**

This hotel is fantastically located, just one kilometre from the awe-inspiring Taj Mahal. The hotel's facilities include a swimming pool, bar and restaurant, and a full service spa.

**Mandawa Haveli**

This small boutique hotel dates back to the 19th century and is centrally located in Jaipur. Each room has its own individual



character, featuring many original pieces of furniture. There is a dining room and an outdoor swimming pool.

#### Raj Vilas Palace

The building which is now the Raj Vilas Palace dates back to the 19th century and while being renovated and converted into a hotel, it has maintained its splendour and elegance. The interiors show the character of the original era and mix comfort with modern facilities. There is an outdoor swimming pool and a restaurant.

#### Golden Haveli

This charming hotel overlooks Jaisalmer fort on one side and the desert on the other, making it an ideal and quiet base for exploring the area. Rooms have lovely touches and character with wooden furniture, local fabrics and cosy, cushioned bay windows.

#### Lord's Inn

Conveniently situated in a central location the Lord's Inn offers comfortable accommodation. Rooms are modern in design with TVs and WiFi. The hotel has a restaurant serving Indian and international dishes, a cocktail bar, rooftop swimming pool and small fitness centre.

#### Ghanerao Royal Castle

A magnificent showcase of marble and red sandstone Rajput architecture built in 1606 that serves as the home of the royal family who still reside here. There is a nostalgic air of past glory and of the royal lifestyle that the Thakurs led. The castle has a small number of beautiful rooms, each with their own seating area or verandah. A recent developing project of the museum is under way, where you can see the old elephant hondas and palkis which were used by the rulers when elephants and horses were the only means of travel.

#### Lake Pichola Hotel

Located on an island on the shores of Lake Pichola, this small boutique hotel offers views of the city of Udaipur or the lake. Guests can dine in the grand dining room or on rooftop terraces overlooking the lake. The views from the outdoor swimming pool are stunning.

#### Premium

On premium level tailor-made tours you will stay at comfortable mid-range hotels, chosen for their location, ambiance or local character. Your rooms will be clean and well-appointed, with en suite bathrooms and air-conditioning or heating as necessary. Comfort level hotels normally have restaurants, bars and often other amenities such as a swimming pool and gardens, offering a good level of comfort at a reasonable price.

#### Royal Plaza Hotel

The Royal Plaza has a unique feel to it, with various pieces of art through the ages adorning its vast lobby and various dining areas. The spacious rooms are well-equipped with Wi-Fi access. The hotel's facilities include a gym, spa, swimming pool and a host of dining options.

#### Hotel Clarks Shiraz

Located just two kilometres from the Taj Mahal the Hotel Clarks Shiraz is a large property situated within almost eight acres of landscaped gardens. There are two restaurants, a coffee shop and a bar area offering a variety of cuisines plus an outdoor swimming pool and small spa for relaxation. A great combination of traditional and modern style this property offers a relaxed atmosphere and friendly and helpful staff.

#### Shahpura House

Set approximately four kilometres from the centre of Jaipur, the Shahpura House is a heritage hotel featuring traditional Rajput architecture. This mid-sized property offers comfortable rooms with Wi-Fi access. The hotel has three dining options including a rooftop restaurant and a pool side snack bar. As well as an outdoor swimming pool there is an on site spa to help you relax.

#### Lalgarh Palace

Lalgarh Palace is an imposing, yet graceful, red sandstone building, with rooms set around beautiful landscaped gardens. Facilities include a swimming pool and tennis courts, and rooms are tasteful with mini-bar.

#### Gorbandh Palace

A luxurious heritage hotel, built in the style of Mughal architecture, this desert retreat lies two kilometres outside the walls of the main town en route to the sand dunes. The hotel offers contemporary facilities in peaceful surroundings with many of the rooms featuring balconies overlooking the grounds. Facilities include a swimming pool, health club, restaurant and bar.

#### Bal Samand Garden Retreat

This small heritage hotel has charming rooms, each with their own terrace, set among the estate's gardens. The large garden restaurant offers international cuisine and other facilities include a pool, Ayurvedic health spa, coffee shop and bar.

#### Ghanerao Royal Castle

A magnificent showcase of marble and red sandstone Rajput architecture built in 1606 that serves as the home of the royal family who still reside here. There is a nostalgic air of past glory and of the royal lifestyle that the Thakurs led. The castle has a small number of beautiful rooms, each with their own seating area or verandah. A recent developing project of the museum is under way, where you can see the old elephant hondas and palkis which were used by the rulers when elephants and horses were the only means of travel.

#### The Lalit Laxmi Vilas Palace

The Lalit Laxmi Vilas Palace is a former guesthouse to prime ministers and princes. The hotel has been restored to reflect its history and also tell a little about Indian culture and local area. Rooms are extremely comfortable and there's a restaurant offering al fresco dining and an open kitchen.

## Essential information

### FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice click [here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, click [here](#)

#### Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

### Essential Information

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

### Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

### Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

#### Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

#### Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer click [here](#)

### Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

### Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them [here](#).

#### Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

#### Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## India Holidays & Tours

### Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against Tetanus, Infectious Hepatitis, Typhoid and Polio. Please consult your travel clinic for the latest advice on Malaria, Dengue and Zika Virus. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth> and from your local healthcare provider.

---