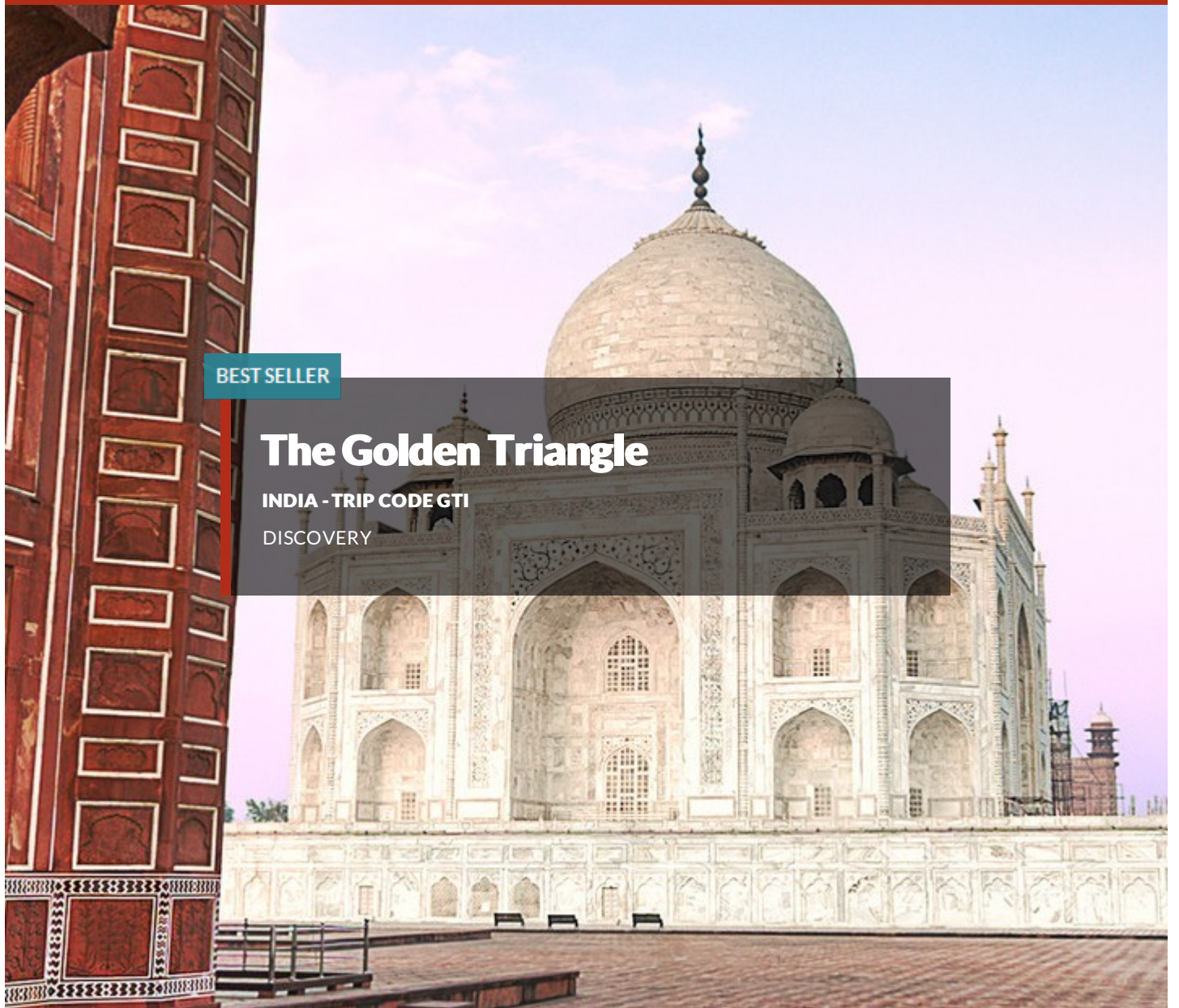


EXPLORE!

Book with confidence



BEST SELLER

The Golden Triangle

INDIA - TRIP CODE GTI

DISCOVERY

Why book this trip?

This week long trip through the cultural heart of Northern India features all of the essentials of the famous three cities which make up the 'Golden Triangle'. Starting and ending in Delhi's chaotic lanes and markets, we travel to Agra to witness the incredible Taj Mahal, stay overnight in the more rural setting of Karauli and see some of Jaipur's magnificent historical splendour.

- **Agra** - Witness the Taj Mahal up close and watch as the sun rises over the iconic building
- **Karauli** - Visit the imposing royal palace and sleep like a Maharaja in heritage accommodation
- **Jaipur** - Explore the sprawling Amber Fort, the incredibly accurate Observatory and the majestic Palace of the Winds



INCLUDED MEALS
Breakfast: 7
Lunch: 1
Dinner: 1



TRIP STAFF
Explore Tour
Leader
Driver(s)



TRANSPORT
Bus
Rickshaw



ACCOMMODATION
2 nights premium
hotel
5 nights
comfortable hotel



TRIP PACE:
Full on



GROUP SIZE:
10 - 16

Itinerary

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

DAY 1 - Join tour in Delhi. Visit Jama Masjid and explore Old Delhi by rickshaw and metro

Arrive in New Delhi, India's bustling capital which successfully combines the ancient with the modern. Amidst the tall and modern skyscrapers, there are still the remnants of a bygone time with numerous monuments and temples.

For those arriving on time today our Leader plans to meet you in the hotel reception at 2pm for the welcome meeting and to take us on our afternoon city tour we take cycle rickshaws 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. We view the Red Fort from the outside and Jami Masjid Mosque, built by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan and one of the biggest in India.

If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to arrive into New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International airport (airport code DEL), which is 12km, around 45 minutes from our hotel.

Please note that if you wish to join the city tour today, you must arrive at the hotel by 2pm. If you are booking your own flights, we recommend giving yourself at least one hour to clear the airport. From the airport to the hotel is around 45 minutes drive, so therefore the latest your flight can arrive is 12.15pm. Should you miss the welcome meeting, your Leader will inform you of any essential information as soon as you catch up.



ACCOMMODATION:
Piccadily Hotel New Delhi (or similar)

Grade: Premium Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Morning sightseeing of New Delhi and afternoon transfer to Agra

This morning we will visit the more modern part of the city, 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 1930s. On our tour, we will view the Lok Sabha (Parliament), India Gate, and the Rajpath buildings. We will also explore the Qutub Minar and Humayun's Tomb, set in peaceful gardens away from the often chaotic Delhi traffic.

In the afternoon we will drive to Agra, which will take about four hours.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel The Taj Vilas (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 3 - Visit the Taj Mahal for sunrise followed by Agra Fort and Baby Taj

This morning's early start is rewarded with the spectacular sight of the sun rising over the Taj Mahal during our visit. Over 300 years have elapsed since the construction of what is arguably the world's most perfect and poetic building, yet its beauty and symmetry seem unscarred by age. Created by Shah Jahan as a funerary monument to his favourite wife, Mumtaz, it took 22 years to build. The Great Moghul lies beside his beloved under the white marble dome. After our visit, we will return to the hotel for breakfast and some down time.

Later in the morning we will visit the imposing Agra Fort and the Itimad-ud-Daulah or 'Baby Taj'. Either side of the river, the grandeur of these two impressive sites either side of the Yamuna river explain why Agra was the first capital of the Mughal Empire. In-between both visits we will have some time to stop for lunch and potentially try some local delicacies such as petha (a dry dessert) or paan (a betel leaf which you chew). To finish our sightseeing in Agra we will head over to the Mehtab Bagh, a park offering a different perspective of the gleaming Taj Mahal with the Yamuna river in the foreground. In the evening you may wish to take part in an optional cookery class and meal during which we will visit a local house and prepare some of the dishes for which Indian cuisine is well renowned.



ACCOMMODATION:

Hotel The Taj Vilas (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 4 - Explore Fatehpur Sikri and drive to Karauli for the arti ceremony

Early this morning, we continue our journey west and soon reach the deserted city of Fatehpur Sikri. Founded in 1569 and abandoned scarcely 16 years later, it is a perfectly intact example of Akbar's imperial court. Among the many noteworthy buildings is the five-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 like chess, with dancing slave girls as pieces. Perhaps the finest structure of all though is the lotus-shaped carved central pillar of the Diwan-i-Khas (Hall of Private Audience).

Leaving Fatehpur Sikri we continue towards Karauli, a smaller town with more of a rural feel. Our drive will take approximately three to four hours and we will arrive at our accommodation in time for lunch. Founded in 1348, Karauli is a holy town which has been strongly fortified by its rulers throughout history and is famous for the pale red sandstone wall which surrounds it. Legend has it that the ruling family were descendants of Lord Krishna, one of the most loved gods of Hindu mythology. Our family-run heritage hotel is an accommodation highlight here, encouraging us to feel like we have stepped back in time to the days of the Raj. After lunch we hope to be able to ride on camel-drawn carts from our hotel to the 600-year-old palace which forms the imposing highlight of this town. Used as a residence by the royal family until 1950, the palace has now been abandoned by them. These days it is mostly occupied by monkeys and geese. It is said that geese have been here since the days when they were used as a warning system against any intruders. After visiting the palace, we will explore other points of interest in the town, such as the Madan Mohanji Temple in time for the arti ceremony.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Bhanwar Vilas Palace (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 5 - Visit Chand Baori stepwell and drive to Jaipur to see the phenomenal observatory and City Palace

This morning, after breakfast we will drive towards the city Jaipur stopping en route at the Chand Baori stepwell. Built over a thousand years ago, the stepwell is the equivalent of a modern day water storage unit built to provide water to the area all year round. The stepwell is today not used for these purposes but our stop here will allow us to marvel at the structure and its perfect symmetry with hundreds of slanted steps leading to the water on each side.

Leaving the stepwell we drive to Jaipur, a drive of approximately 3 hours. Often known as the 'Pink City', Jaipur was first painted terracotta pink by Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh to celebrate the visit of Prince Albert in 1853. On arrival we will visit the extraordinary Jantar Mantar - a star-gazing observatory built by Jai Singh, the great Maharaja-astronomer. Before checking in to our hotel we will also visit the nearby lavish and well-preserved city palace. Here, we will find a fine collection of textiles, costumes and armoury.



ACCOMMODATION:
Traditional Haveli (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 6 - Visit Jaipur's Palace of the Wind's and Amber Fort

Today we will visit the Palace of the Winds, a five-storied facade built around 1760, which features on many an India postcard. Afterwards, we will drive to the Amber Fort. This impressive hilltop fortress possesses what must be the world's finest Chamber of Mirrors and affords glorious views of the surrounding plains. As we return back to our hotel for a free afternoon in Jaipur, we will get the opportunity to stop and view the Jal Mahal palace. Meaning 'water palace', as its name indicates the sandstone palace sits in the middle of the Man Sagar Lake and is a great photographic opportunity.

This afternoon has been left free to explore more of Jaipur in your own time. You may choose to visit one of the famous bazaars which are bursting with delights, from marble statues to antique textiles; traditional print blocks to local musical instruments. In the evening you may be able to take in a famous Bollywood movie at the Raj Mandir cinema, an art deco style cinema where the locals cheer on their favourite movie stars.



ACCOMMODATION:
Traditional Haveli (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 7 - Drive back to Delhi via the Heritage transport museum

After breakfast we start our return journey to the capital from Jaipur, a journey of approximately six to seven hours without stops. A couple of hours outside of Delhi we will stop at India's Heritage transport museum. This building offers a fascinating journey through the country's many transport methods from the pre mechanised era including wooden carriages and bullock carts to a classic selection of over 75 vintage cars and motorbikes. The museum also has several interactive screens with videos on the different transport methods on display. We will also get the chance to view documentary movie 'living in the age of airplanes'.

After visiting the museum we will drive to Delhi for our final night.



ACCOMMODATION:
Piccadily Hotel New Delhi (or similar)

Grade: Premium Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 8 - Trip ends in Delhi

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Delhi.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart from Delhi at any time. If your flight is departing later in the day luggage storage facilities are available at our hotel. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you need to depart from New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International airport (airport code DEL), which is around 45 minutes from the hotel.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information

Country information

India

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

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Agra

Cookery lesson - 1800 INR (includes transport, dinner and drinks)

Jaipur

Bollywood movie at Raj Mandir cinema- 300-400 INR (subject to availability)

Clothing

In general only lightweight clothing is needed during the day, but bring a warm sweater for early mornings and during winter evenings Nov/mid March (esp. Dec/Jan, when a windproof jacket, warm layers, gloves and hat are also recommended). Hotel heating arrangements are not on a par with UK standards and from December to February thermals are also recommended. Casual clothes are the most practical: tight fitting garments, brief shorts and skirts should be avoided, since they attract unwelcome attention. Waterproofs and or and umbrella may be useful for early season.

Footwear

Comfortable shoes or trainers and sandals.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece of baggage and a daypack. We recommend a holdall or rucksack for ease of getting on and off buses and please remember, you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

Equipment

A torch, good quality sunglasses, insect repellent and high factor sunscreen are all useful to have with you during this trip. We advise taking a water bottle for day to day use.

Tipping

Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. However, you might want to recognise a leader that's done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It's a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we'd recommend between £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, your leader may organise a group's tips kitty for included activities and meals and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Accordingly, you should allow GBP20, approx. 1'700 Indian Rupees for group tipping.

For all non-included services and meals on your trip please tip independently at your discretion.

India

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	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£8	£10	£3	£0.5

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Indian Rupee Recently new 500 and 2000 rupee notes have been bought 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

Transport Information

Bus, Rickshaw

Accommodation notes

Accommodation in India is as varied as the country itself. On our tours we stay in a mix of hotels, heritage properties, camp sites and homestays. Standards do not equate to standards in the UK and it's best to approach each type of accommodation with an open mind. Service can be slow in places especially when travelling with a group. For the most part hotels do not have heating so in the winter months it can be chilly and if you feel the cold you may wish to ask for extra blankets. Hot water is not always available 24 hours a day in some of the smaller properties, and with a group staying you might find if you are showering last you may miss out on the hottest water.

Essential Information

Government Travel Safety 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.

Price Guarantee

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](#)

Visa and Passport Information

India: Visas are required for citizens of the UK, Australia, New Zealand, US and Canada and can be obtained in the form of an e-visa. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

The e-visa can be applied for through the official Indian government visa website only - <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html> . Please check all eligibility criteria that can be found on the website but important points are listed below -

You must be arriving into one of 28 selected entry points which can be found via the official Indian Government website link above. However, you can exit from any of the authorised immigration check posts in India.

Passports must have at least 6 months validity from the date of arrival in India and at least two blank pages for stamping. Visa applications will take approximately 4 days to process.

There are different validity visas and the costs are as follows:

- 30-day validity (travelling between April and June) - \$10
- 30-day validity (travelling between July and March) - \$25
- 1-year validity - \$40
- 5-year validity- \$80

Those applying for a 30 day electronic visa can only apply within 30 days of arrival for your visa to be valid. Furthermore double entry is permitted and you can only obtain two 30-day visas in a calendar year.

Please note these costs are subject to frequent change so you should check on the official Indian government visa website mentioned above. Biometric data will be collected on arrival in India.

If you are not eligible for the e-Tourist Visa, please refer to VFS Global to apply for your Indian visa - https://www.vfsglobal.com/india/uk/how_to_apply.html

Whilst the online form offers a relatively quick way to apply for a visa, some applicants have reported difficulty in completing the form. If you do require assistance, then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. They can complete the online visa on your behalf for a fee of £30 + the visa cost. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's

recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

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 receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

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, Polar, 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. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will

exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. 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

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. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. 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 Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Additional Information



GTI 2020 map

Reviews



AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS



PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE



AIRPORT
TRANSFERS