

EXPLORE!



Delhi to Mumbai

Travelling between two of India's most iconic cities, Delhi and Mumbai, we search for tigers at Ranthambore National Park, discover India's largest fort at Chittorgarh, and visit the spectacular 'City of Lakes' at Udaipur. In Gujarat we explore the ancient Polo Forest with its jungle ruins and indigenous people, and take a heritage walk in Ahmedabad, where we also visit the ashram of the 'Father of India', Mahatma Gandhi.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Delhi** - Ride a rickshaw through the winding streets of Old Delhi
- ★ **Ranthambore** - Search for the elusive Bengal tiger and other wildlife
- ★ **Udaipur** - Discover the beautiful 'City of Lakes' and its splendid palaces
- ★ **Polo Forest** - Explore ruins of an ancient city and its temples, and meet the tribal people of jungle villages
- ★ **Ahmedabad** - Walk around the city's old neighbourhoods and visit Gandhi's ashram
- ★ **Mumbai** - Wander through Dharavi, the 'Slumdog Millionaire' quarter and visit the Dhobi Ghats, Mumbai's huge open air laundry

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

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!

GROUP SIZE:

10 - 16

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

Itinerary

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

DAY 1 - Join trip in Delhi. Visit the Qutub Minar and Humayun's Tomb

Our journey begins in the Indian capital and we start by exploring the area known as New Delhi. The city of Delhi has long been a phoenix rising from its own ashes and New Delhi was created by the British Raj in the 1930's. It's an area of wide boulevards and imposing buildings such as the Lok Sabha (Parliament) and India Gate. There are also vestiges of Delhi's past such as the Qutub Minar, a UNESCO World Heritage Site dating from 1192, and Humayun's Tomb, another UNESCO site set amongst lovely gardens and considered to be the architectural forerunner of the Taj Mahal.



Accommodation: Hotel Good Times (or similar)



Simple Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Explore Old Delhi's winding streets on foot and by cycle rickshaw

Compared to New Delhi, the old city is much closer to the image conjured up by Rudyard Kipling. We explore by metro and on foot, culminating in a jamboree of deafening barter at the Chandni Chowk bazaar where tiny stores sell everything from jewellery to saris to refreshing cups of chai. A short cycle rickshaw ride then takes us to the Jama Masjid mosque which was built in the 17th century and remains one of the largest mosques in the country.

In the afternoon we take the Kota Jan Shatabdi express train to Sawai Madhopur and Ranthambore National Park, a journey of just under 5 hours.



Accommodation: Raj Palace Resort (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Dinner

DAY 3 - Search for tigers and other wildlife in Ranthambore National Park

One of India's best 'Project Tiger' conservation areas, Ranthambore was once the private reserve of the Maharajahs of Jaipur. It encompasses nearly 400 square kilometres of lush jungle, turquoise lakes and ancient temples, and provides a rich haven for crocodiles, leopards, monkeys, deer, tigers and around 300 species of birds. This is probably one of the best parks in the country for spotting tigers, and during the dry season from September to May, when water is scarce, the animals stay close to the lakes and rivers, providing ideal opportunities to seek out these most elusive and magnificent of animals. We take an early morning game drive in six-seater jeeps with the option to return for a second one in the early afternoon (booked locally). The park is split in to zones so that there are never too many vehicles in the same area, and all zones include known territories of tigers.



Accommodation: Raj Palace Resort (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 4 - Drive to Udaipur via India's largest fort at Chittorgarh

We leave early this morning as we drive for around six to seven hours to reach India's largest fort at Chittorgarh. This spectacular and imposing fort is perched on top of a 180 metre tall hill and originally dates from the seventh century. The fort has a bloody history with its inhabitants choosing death before dishonour at least three times while facing superior enemies. Each time the men donned the saffron robes of martyrdom and rode out to certain death while the women and children immolated themselves on massive funeral pyres.

Leaving the fort, we drive to the beautiful lakeside city of Udaipur where we spend the next two nights. The city is dominated by Lake Pichola, its island palace (now a hotel), and Jag Mandir Island. Here, Shah Jahan, the builder of the Taj Mahal, sought sanctuary from his father after he was found guilty of plotting against him.



Accommodation: The Tiger (or similar)



Simple Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 5 - Explore Udaipur and take a boat ride on peaceful Lake Pichola

This morning we discover the huge City Palace which is next to Lake Pichola and provides an excellent insight in to the opulent life of the Maharajahs. The largest palace in Rajasthan, it was built over a period of 400 years from 1553, and mixes an eclectic blend of architectural styles. We will also visit the 400-year-old Jagdish Mandir, a large ornately-carved Hindu temple set in the middle of the old town which houses a black stone image of Vishnu as Jagannath, Lord of the Universe. In the late afternoon we take a gentle cruise around the lake, passing the palaces and mansions of the city as the sun sets and the city begins to light up for the evening.



Accommodation: The Tiger (or similar)



Simple Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 6 - Discover the ancient Polo Forest and drive to Ahmedabad

After a three-hour drive this morning we reach the Polo Forest. The name is derived from the local word for 'gate' and reflects its location as a gateway between Rajasthan and Gujarat. The ancient city of Polo was established in the 10th century by the Parihar kings, and later mysteriously abandoned. Today the area is a nature reserve that is home to bear, panther, leopard and hyena, as well as around 275 species of birds, and some Adivasi, or 'first people' tribal communities. After home-cooked Indian food of soup, rice, dal and seasonal vegetables at a nearby homestay, we spend several hours exploring by jeep. There are several Jain and Shiv temples and a small 500 year old step-well to explore. These structures have steps that form elaborate symmetrical patterns and enable people to reach fresh water. Some of the monuments have been partly reclaimed by the jungle, giving them an eerie, abandoned feel. We will also visit a village in the forest which is inhabited by the Adivasi people indigenous to the area. Here we can see how they live and learn about their life in the forest.

On leaving the Polo Forest we continue to Ahmedabad, a drive of around three to four hours.



Accommodation: Hotel Treebo Ambassador (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 7 - Take a heritage walk of Ahmedabad and visit Gandhi's ashram

The walled city of Ahmedabad is home to impressive Indian-Islamic monuments, exquisite Hindu and Jain temples, and old carved wooden houses that are unique to the city. Wandering through the streets before it gets too hot is a great way to see all the sights while soaking up the atmosphere. Highlights of the walk include the 19th century Swaminarayan Temple, which is the first and most important temple of the Swaminarayan Sampraday Hindu sect, and the famous Jama Masjid Mosque which dates from 1423. We also stop for a traditional Gujarati breakfast of Fafda - a type of cracker made of chickpea flour, Gathiya - a savoury snack made

from spiced besan paste, and Jalebi - an Indian sweet made of coiled batter that is fried and steeped in syrup.

In the afternoon we'll learn more about the 'Father of India' as we visit Gandhi's ashram. Although close to the centre of the city, the location on the banks of the Sabarmati River is surprisingly peaceful. We'll see the small room in which he slept, his famous spinning wheel and round glasses, and we'll learn about his spiritual teachings and non-violent opposition movement which was largely orchestrated from here.

In the late evening we'll board the Aravali Express overnight train to Mumbai. The journey takes around eight hours and offers a great way to meet people as we travel. We make our bookings in second class air-conditioned sleepers, which have four beds in each compartment and all bedding provided.



Accommodation: Overnight Train from Ahemdabad to Mumbai



Simple Overnight Train



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 8 - Explore Mumbai's Dharavi slum area and the museums and monuments of the city

Today we have a full day exploring Mumbai. We spend some time at the Mahatma Gandhi Museum, learning a little more about the great man's life through an impressive collection of books, photographs and letters. On Malabar Hill we drive past the Towers of Silence. Built by the Parsis fleeing persecution in Persia during the 17th century, the towers are a mortuary for the dead and, in line with the Zoroastrian faith, the deceased are deposited in the towers to allow sunlight to purify their bodies and birds of prey to dispose of them. We also visit the municipal Dhobi Ghats, a huge, chaotic and colourful open air laundry.

In the afternoon we walk around the area where the film 'Slumdog Millionaire' was set, a thriving and industrious quarter called Dharavi. We'll see the commercial areas where food, clothes, soap and pottery is produced, and visit the residential area where the people live.



Accommodation: The Sahil Hotel Mumbai (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

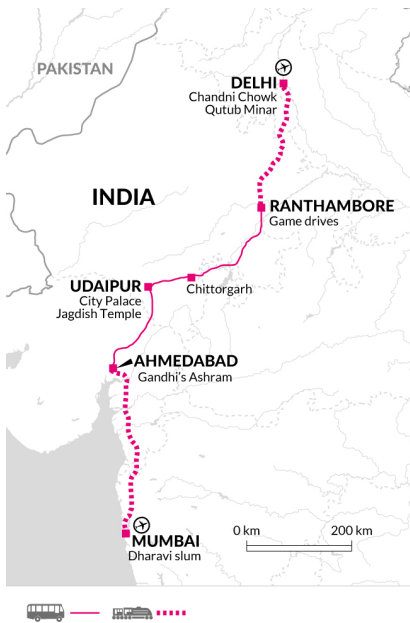
DAY 9 - Trip ends in Mumbai

Our trip ends in Mumbai after breakfast.



Meals Provided: Breakfast

Transport Information



Travelling on an Indian train is a fantastic experience, with millions using the rail network every day it is the perfect opportunity to meet local families.

For all the train journeys on our trips, we will reserve your seats/berths in advance in 2nd class with air conditioning. Whilst we'll try to ensure the group is all together, due to overwhelming demand and the system for booking train tickets in India, it may not always be possible to have everyone in the same carriage and some reservations may be in 3rd class. In such cases our Tour Leaders will help everyone to find their seats and ensure you get the most out of your journey. For overnight trains, each berth is separated by curtains and has 4/6 bunk beds. Bedding (sheet, blanket and pillow) is provided but you may wish to bring your own sleeping liner for added comfort. Train travel in India is safe and civilised but for added security whilst you sleep it may be a good idea to bring a bike lock for your bags. If you do not wish to carry one with you, your tour leader can help you to purchase one locally before your train journey.

Please note that in January train journeys can sometimes be affected by fog. This may result in some last minute changes to the itinerary. In this eventuality we will endeavour to stick to the itinerary as closely as possible and will cover any extra costs incurred.

In order to make reservations on Indian trains and guarantee the smooth operation of your trip, we require your full passport details. It is important that we receive these details as soon as possible so we are ready to make the arrangements as soon as train tickets are available to buy.

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 8
Lunch: 2
Dinner: 2



Transport

Bus
4WD
Train
Tuk Tuk



Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader
Driver(s)
Safari Guide(s)



Accommodation

3 nights simple hotel
4 nights standard hotel
1 nights simple overnight train

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

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.

Tipping

Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

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, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour. Accordingly you should allow approx. £15 for gratuities for local staff.

Country Information

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

£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 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, 4WD, Train, Tuk Tuk

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.

Accommodation in India is as varied as the country itself. On this trip we generally stay in 3 star hotels, but please note that standards may not equate to those 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 but extra blankets are available on request. 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

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.

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: Holders of passports endorsed 'British citizen' may be eligible for the e-Tourist Visa to enter India.

The visa can be applied for through the official Indian government visa website only -

<https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/visa/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 24 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. The visa application will take approximately 4 days to process.

It is valid for 60 days from the date of arrival in to India, and double entry is permitted on the e-Tourist visa. You can only obtain 2 e-visas for India in a calendar year.

The visa costs \$75. Biometric data will be collected on arrival in India.

Whilst the online form offers a relatively quick way to apply for a visa, a number of applicants have reported difficulty in completing the form. Travcour will complete the on-line visa on your behalf for a fee of £30 + the visa cost. Please contact them directly if you wish to take up this service.

If you are not eligible for the e-Tourist Visa, please refer to VFS Global to apply for your Indian visa -

http://in.vfsglobal.co.uk/how_to_apply.html.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying 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.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying 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 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, 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.
