

TAJ, TIGERS & GANGES

For India tours online, visit: www.traveltheunknown.com/india

TOUR DETAILS		Duration
		14 days
HIGHLIGHTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rickshaw in Delhi's hidden streets • Go tiger spotting in Ranthambore • Marvel at the majestic Taj Mahal • Forts and palaces of the `Pink City` • Crocodiles on the River Chambal • Dawn ride on the River Ganges • Walking tour through Varanasi • Erotic temples of Khajuraho 		
Off The Beaten Track Rating	● ● ●	Activity Rating ★ ★ ★

ITINERARY

- DAY 1** Arrival into Delhi. Pick up by Travel The Unknown representative. Transfer to guesthouse. Free day in Delhi to relax and unwind. Meals: N/A
- DAY 2** After breakfast, full day tour of Delhi, lunch en-route. Drive by India Gate, the Presidential Palace, lunch en-route, and then on to Old Delhi – visit impressive Red Fort, a UNESCO World Heritage site - a symbol of India's Mughal past, and now of India's sovereignty. Immerse yourself in the chaos of Chandni Chowk on cycle-rickshaw. Stroll around magnificent Humayun's Tomb and its gardens, and watch it change colour as the sun starts to set. Evening to relax and enjoy sumptuous North Indian cuisine. Overnight in Delhi. Meals: B
- DAY 3** After breakfast set off for the 'Pink City' of Jaipur. Arrive mid-afternoon. Check in to hotel. Evening free to wander around the local bazaar. Overnight in Jaipur. Meals: B
- DAY 4** Breakfast followed by full-day tour: Jaipur's palaces - the Wind Palace, the Water Palace, Amer Fort (where you will arrive on elephant-back) and the City Palace. Visit Jantar Mantar (the old observatory) and late afternoon visit Galta and watch the monkeys feeding at the Monkey Temple. Overnight in Jaipur. Meals: B
- DAY 5** Leave early morning for **Ranthambore National Park**. Arrive in time for lunch at the jungle lodge. Experience an afternoon game drive by jeep, looking out for tigers and a host of other wildlife. Dinner back at the lodge. Overnight in Ranthambore. Meals: B,L,D
- DAY 6** Early morning game drive in the national park. Return to lodge for breakfast. Rest of morning free to relax or wander. After lunch, afternoon game drive. Dinner back at lodge. Overnight in Ranthambore. Meals: B,L,D
- DAY 7** After breakfast, leave for Agra, stopping at the fortified ghost city of the impressive Fatehpur Sikri. Then proceed to Agra Fort. Overnight in Agra. Meals: B
- DAY 8** Early morning marvel at the beauty of the Taj Mahal, one of the seven wonders of the world, and a testament to true love. Afterwards, leave for Chambal Lodge, 70km from Agra. Arrive in time for a lunch buffet. After lunch take a camel ride along the ravines to the abandoned Fort Ater. In the evening, visit the picturesque temples set along the river bank in Bateshwar. Naga sadhus (holymen) have made their homes in mud caves next to the temples. Return to the lodge for buffet dinner. Overnight in Chambal Lodge. Meals: B,L,D
- DAY 9** After a buffet breakfast, embark on your river safari. The Chambal Safari boatmen are exceptionally skilled at manoeuvring as close to the birds and animals as possible without disturbing them. Trained naturalists accompany you and provide expert information on the Chambal wildlife, which includes the endangered Chambal Gharial (long-nosed crocodile), marsh crocodiles, Gangetic dolphins and a host of exotic birdlife. Return for buffet lunch. After lunch, rest of the afternoon free to relax. Early evening, head to Agra train station for overnight train to Varanasi. Return to lodge for dinner. Overnight in Chambal Lodge. Meals: B,L

TAJ, TIGERS & GANGES

For India tours online, visit: www.traveltheunknown.com/india



DAY 10 Our representative will pick you up from the station and transfer you to the hotel. The morning will be free to rest and refresh. After lunch, depart for Sarnath Temple, where Lord Buddha gave his first sermon after achieving Enlightenment. The temple attracts pilgrims from all over the world. Take a walk around the serene temple gardens. Return to Varanasi for your evening boat ride on the holy River Ganges to witness the amazing Aarti ceremony on the Ghats. Float a candle in lotus flower on the river. This is an experience like no other and will leave you feeling at peace. Dinner on the roof terrace of hotel overlooking Ghats. Overnight in Varanasi. Meals: B

Sarnath is considered the most beautiful Buddhist pilgrimage, naturally preaching tranquillity and peace. Dhamekh Stupa attracts pilgrims from all over the world as it is where Lord Buddha gave his first sermon after achieving Enlightenment. It was built around 500 AD although parts are thought to be even older.

DAY 11 Early morning wake-up call for boat ride on the Ganges at sunrise. Watch the River come to life with devout Hindus bathing in the holy water, listen to the sound of prayer bells and even laughing yoga! Return to hotel for breakfast and freshen up. Set off for an intriguing walking tour of Varanasi with our expert walking guide, visiting intricate Hindu temples. Lunch locally and relax. Early evening, free evening to walk around Varanasi's labyrinth of alleys. Have dinner in one of the city's restaurants overlooking the Ganges at sunset. Overnight in Varanasi. Meals: B

Varanasi is one of the holiest places in India where people come to wash away their sins in the Ganges. The significance of the river is shown in the renaming Varanasi to incorporate the rivers Varuna and Asi. The city is viewed as the crossing place between the physical and spiritual worlds. The Ghats leading into the river are colourful, full of character and have an unrivalled spiritual atmosphere. While Varanasi is thousands of years old, most of the buildings in the old city are only a few hundred years old due to the invasion of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb who destroyed and looted the temples and other buildings.

DAY 12 After breakfast, transfer to airport for flight to Khajuraho. On arrival, transfer to hotel close to airport. Freshen up and then leave for tour of the magnificent Western and Eastern Temples. A UNESCO World Heritage site, these famous erotic temples date back hundreds of years, and are the largest group of Hindu and Jain temples in India. Marvel at the extraordinary detail of their intricate carvings. Lunch at local restaurant. Return to hotel for a rest and then return to the temples for the sound and light show where they are transformed at night. Dinner at restaurant close to the temples, then return to hotel. Overnight in Khajuraho. Meals: B

Located in Madhya Pradesh, Khajuraho is famous for its erotic carvings on its ancient temples. A UNESCO World Heritage site, these famous erotic temples are the largest group of Hindu and Jain temples in India. Khajuraho was once the religious centre of the Hindu Chandela Rajput kings who ruled the central India between the 10th and 12th centuries and they built 85 temples, although only 20 of them have survived. The legend behind the erotic sculpture carvings in the temples are that the Moon God seduced a beautiful Brahmin girl, Hemvati, resulting in the birth of Chandravarman (the founder of the Chandela dynasty). Later, Chandravarman had a dream where his mother requested him to make a temple, which would reveal all aspects of the treasure of passion and erotic fantasy to the world

DAY 13 After breakfast, leave for impressive Raneh Falls. Wander around the canyon, made of pure crystalline granite varying in colour from pink and red to grey. Waterfalls dot the cliff faces and vary in volume depending on climate. Parts of the canyon are also filled with green-coloured lagoons. Take a boat ride on the Ken River and maybe spot alligators and other wildlife. Return to hotel for lunch. Transfer to airport for flight to Delhi. Transfer to hotel in Delhi. Evening free. Overnight in Delhi. Meals: B

DAY 14 Breakfast, followed by free time. Transfer to airport at appropriate time for flight home or onward travel. Meals: B



TAJ, TIGERS & GANGES

For India tours online, visit: www.traveltheunknown.com/india

PRICE INCLUDES

Air-conditioned vehicle and driver
Two internal flights
Accommodation
English-speaking guides
Entrance fees to sites and parks

Game drives in Ranthambore National Park
River safari in Chambal
Camel ride to Fort Ater
Boat rides on River Ganges

All breakfasts and some meals
(full board in Ranthambore and Chambal)
Climate Care contribution

ABOUT OUR TRIPS

In addition to our scheduled group departures, **private and tailor-made trips** can be arranged that include some or all of the places on this itinerary. Please contact us with your requirements (e: info@traveltheunknown.com, t: +44 (0)20 8823 0705) and we will happily put together an itinerary for you and your group. No trip is too long or too short.