



HIGHLIGHTS OF INDIA

Classic Tour | 18 Days | Physical Level 1

Delhi – Agra – Khajuraho – Varanasi – Jaipur – Jodhpur –
Udaipur – Bundi – Ranthambore - Delhi

From the desert forts of Rajasthan, past the magnificent Taj Mahal and on to holy Varanasi – this tour covers many of India's incredible highlights

- Discover the colourful bazaars of Delhi
- Marvel at the magnificent Taj Mahal
- Visit the Imposing Mehrangarh Fort
- Soak up the romance of the city of Udaipur
- Cruise the river Ganges

TOUR MAP



HIGHLIGHTS OF INDIA TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All Meals
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escorts (if your group is 10 or more passengers) and Local Guides
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Visa fees for Australian passport holders

The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, customary tipping, early check in or late check out and other items not specified on the itinerary.

CLASSIC TOURS:

These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of India on an excellent value group tour whilst travelling with like-minded people. The tours are on a fully-inclusive basis so you'll travel with the assurance that all your arrangements are taken care of. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escorts and local guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

PHYSICAL LEVEL 1:

All our tours feature a physical rating to help you select the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights. Highlights of India is rated as a physical level 1 tour. A reasonable level of fitness is required but it's more about spending time on your feet rather than covering large distances. You'll be getting on and off coaches and boats, walking around the sights and climbing some steps.

- There will be sightseeing on foot for both short and extended periods of time

Of course, our National Escort and local guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

JOINING YOUR TOUR:

The tour is 18 days in duration including an overnight international flight in one direction as this is the most likely flight option from Australia.

Travellers booked on 'Land Only', the price includes your arrival/departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour, or when booking pre and post night accommodation with Wendy Wu Tours. Please email your international flight times to info@wendywutours.com.au so we can arrange your transfers accordingly.

Join the tour on Day 1 in Delhi and end the tour on Day 17 also in Delhi. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

ITINERARY CHANGES:

It's our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate. In these circumstances we'll make the best possible arrangements maintaining the integrity of your trip.

DETAILED ITINERARY**Day 1: Arrive Delhi**

Meals: D

Fly to Delhi for a two-night stay. Your National Escort or Local Guide from Wendy Wu Tours will meet you at the Delhi International Airport, in the Arrivals Hall. Together with other group members who may be arriving at a similar time, you will transfer 45 minutes to your hotel and check-in.

**Destination Information**

Delhi - As the capital of India, Delhi is the third largest city with a population of approximately 18million people. Its strategic location along the north-south, east-west route has given it a focal position in Indian history and many great empires have been ruled from here. The monuments and ruins of these are scattered throughout the city, often side by side with modern structures and high-rise towers.

Day 2: Delhi

Meals: B, L,D

This morning the tour introduction will either be held in the hotel or on the coach.

After your breakfast we will embark on a full-day of sightseeing around Old and New Delhi, involving approximately 3 - 3.5 hours on foot. Travel approximately 30 – 40 minutes to Khari Baoli Spice Market and enjoy a rickshaw ride before visiting Jama Masjid. Next, head to Lakshmi Marayan Hindu Temple, followed by a brief photo stop at India Gate.

Continue to Gandhi Smriti (closed on Mondays) and drive past Rashtrapati Bhavan and Parliament House. End your day with a visit to the grand Qutab Minar and the Iron Pillar.

**Destination Information**

Jama Masjid – Jama Masjid is the largest mosque in India, with a courtyard capable of holding 25,000 devotees. Built between 1644 and 1658, the mosque was Shah Jahan's final architectural achievement.

India Gate - Located at the end of the Rajpath, India Gate is a moving memorial to the 90,000 Indian servicemen who dies in World War 1.

Ghandi Smriti – A museum dedicated to Mahatma Ghandi. It is the location where Mahatma Ghandi lived the last 144 days and was assassinated on January 30, 1948.

Rashtrapati Bhavan – The official residence of the President of India.

Qutab Minar – Built in the 12th Century, this tower of victory is gracefully hand-carved along its entire height of 73m.

Day 3: Delhi - Agra

Meals: B, L, D

Drive approximately 4 Hrs to Agra and discover the magnificent Agra Fort. Sightseeing here involves approximately 45-60 Minutes on foot with some steps. Afterwards, pay a visit to the grand Taj Mahal, where you will board small electric carts to take you to the entrance. You will have approximately 90 – 120 Minutes here to explore. For admission to the main mausoleum area, you are required to wear shoe covers (these may be provided on site, but be prepared to bring an additional pair of socks).



Destination Information

Agra - Home to the world-famous Taj Mahal. Agra rose to fame in the medieval period as the capital of the Mughal Empire and was beautified with gardens, waterfalls, bathhouses and canals. In modern times, the city of Agra houses a thriving carpet industry.

Agra Fort - Situated on the west bank of the Yamuna River and built by Emperor Akbar between 1565 and 1573. Its imposing red sandstone ramparts form a crescent along the riverfront and encompass an enormous complex of courtly buildings, ranging in style from the early eclecticism of Akbar to the sublime elegance of Shah Jahan. The barracks to the north are British additions from the 19th century. A deep moat, once filled with water from the Yamuna River, surrounds the fort.

Taj Mahal - One of the most recognisable monuments in the world, the Taj Mahal is a white marble monument found on the southern bank of the Yamuna River. The Taj Mahal was built by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan between the years 1631 -1648 in memory of his favorite wife, Mumtaz Mahal, who died in 1631.

Day 4: Agra to Khajuraho

Meals: B, L, D

Transfer to the train station to board the Shatabdi Express train to Jhansi station. Your train journey will take approximately 3 hrs. From here, drive approximately 3.5 hrs to Khajuraho and visit the medieval city of Orchha en-route, where sightseeing will take up to 2 hours. This evening, you will enjoy a cultural dance performance.



Please note: As your train is a day train, your seats will be in an AC Chair Car. More than likely you will not be able to purchase any food or drink on the train, so if you need snacks make sure to pre-purchase them before boarding. The train carriages are shared, so please be aware of your belongings at all times.

Destination Information

Orchha - A medieval city famous for its palaces and temples built by the Bundela rulers in the 16th century. Jehangir Mahal, a tiered palace, is crowned by graceful cenotaphs, and commands a spectacular view of soaring temple spires.

Khajuraho - A small village well known for its UNESCO World Heritage listed sculptured temples dedicated to Shiva, Vishnu, and Jain religions.

Day 5: Khajuraho to Varanasi

Meals: B, L, D

This morning, drive approximately 20 minutes to the Khajuraho temples. You will spend 02 – 03 Hrs here exploring the Vamana Temple and the Javari Temple before boarding your flight to Varanasi.

Upon arrival in Varanasi, transfer to your hotel for check-in. This evening, enjoy rickshaw ride through the streets of Varanasi to the ghats of the River Ganges, where you will witness the Puja Ceremony of Ganga Aarti.

Please be prepared for many crowds through the streets, especially leading up to the ghats, and remember to wear closed toe shoes.



Please note it would be unwise to wander around Varanasi without your National Escort or Local Guide at night as there have been reports of pickpockets operating in the area. Always speak to your National Escort or Local Guide before making your own arrangements in Varanasi.

Destination Information

Western Group of Temples - The Khajuraho temples were built by the Chandella rulers between AD 900 and 1300 and are scattered over 23km sq. Originally a group of 85, they are the largest group of Hindu and Jain temples in the world, although only about 25 of them remain today. Tour the Western Groups of temples, the most important is the Kandariya Mahadevo Temple, dedicated to Lord Shiva.

Eastern Group of Temples - The Eastern group represent some of the finest Jain temples including Parsvanatha which is known for its carvings of celestial beauties (sura-sundaris), along with the Adinath and Ghantai temples. We also see the Hindu temples including the Vamana Temple, dedicated to Lord Vamana, the dwarf incarnation of Lord Vishnu, as well as the Javari Temple.

Varanasi - The religious capital of Hinduism, Varanasi is the oldest living city in India as well as one of the world's most ancient cities. Colourful and chaotic, Varanasi is a fascinating city to discover. Located along the western banks of the Ganges, devotees travel to the city to pray and wash away their sins in the holy river.

Puja Ceremony of Ganga Aarti - An evening ceremony conducted on the banks of the river Ganges. Aarti means divine light, and this ceremony is filled with song, prayer and ritual

Day 6: Varanasi

Meals: B, L, D

Rise early and board your 45 min cruise on the River Ganges to view the ghats at sunrise. Afterwards, return to your hotel for breakfast then spend the remainder of the day with some leisurely sightseeing around Varanasi.

Visit the Bharat Mata Mandir, Durga Temple and Vishwanath Temple before driving past Banaras Hindu University, the largest residential university in Asia.

This afternoon, travel approximately 45 mins to Sarnath to visit the Buddhist sacred sites.

**Destination Information**

Ghats of Varanasi - The ghats are the long stretch of steps leading down to the water on the western banks of the River Ganges. Most are used for bathing, but there are some 'burning ghats' where public cremations are held. Please note that it is inappropriate to take photos of any burning ghats, as this is a funeral ceremony.

Bharat Mata Mandir - A unique temple dedicated to Bharat Mata (Mother India) which houses a relief map of India, carved out of marble.

Durga Temple - Also known as the monkey temple due to the large number of monkeys that have made the temple their home, the Durga Temple is one of the most important temples in Varanasi. Dedicated to the Goddess Durga, the temple was built in the 18th century and is stained red with ochre.

Sarnath - Sarnath is the fabled place where Lord Buddha delivered his first sermon to his disciples expounding the principles of Buddhism. The ruins here date back as far as the 3rd century BC.

Day 7: Varanasi to Jaipur

Meals: B, L, D

Transfer to the airport today for your flight to Jaipur. Upon arrival, transfer approximately 1 hr to your hotel for check-in.

Dinner will be served at a local restaurant this evening along with a traditional dance performance. (Depending on the flight timing for Varanasi – Jaipur sector this dinner in Jaipur might get shifted to next day and on this day dinner would be arranged at the hotel).



Destination Information

Jaipur - Known as the 'Pink City' for the colour of the buildings in the old town. Jaipur was founded in 1727 as Mughal power within India was declining. The then Maharaja Jai Singh moved his capital from Amber Fort down onto the plain below. The city is now the capital of Rajasthan State and commonly called the 'Pink City' because of the pink paint on all the buildings in the old city area. This was apparently done to imitate the magnificent, red sandstone buildings of the Mughals and in an attempt to impress the Prince of Wales when he visited Jaipur in 1876.

Day 8: Jaipur

Meals: B, L, D

After breakfast, make a brief photo stop at the Hawa Mahal (Palace of the Winds) from the outside. Tourists are unable to enter so you will view it from the busy road opposite.

Next, take a jeep ride from the bus park to the entrance of the impressive Amber Fort. Please note that sightseeing here will be approximately 1.5 – 2 hours and there are a number of steps inside the fort.

Later you will visit the Maharaja's City Palace and Jantar Mantar. Finally, you will pay a visit to a nearby craft centre for the opportunity to try your hand at block printing and carpet weaving.



Destination Information

Hawa Mahal (Palace of the Winds) - A five-story palace erected in 1799 by the Sawai Pratap Singh so that the veiled ladies of his harem could observe, unnoticed, the lively street scenes below.

Amber Fort - Built from yellow and pink sandstone and white marble, Amber Fort was built in the 16th century by Raja Man Singh. Inside the fort we visit the Hall of Victory, which houses the famed Sheesh Mahal.

Maharaja's City Palace - A former Royal residence located in the heart of the Old City. Part of the building has been converted into a museum, while the royal family of Jaipur still uses the remaining sections of the palace as a private residence.

Jantar Mantar Observatory - The largest stone and marble crafted observatory in the world is located just outside the City Palace. The observatory has 17 large instruments, many of them still in working condition.

Day 9: Jaipur to Jodhpur

Meals: B, L, D

Drive approximately 6.5 hrs to Jodhpur this morning and check-in to your hotel on arrival.

The afternoon will be at leisure, followed by an early evening walking tour of Subzi Mandi spice market.



Destination Information

Jodhpur - The second largest city in Rajasthan is located at the entrance to the Thar Desert in a region called Marwar. The old city, founded in 1459, is surrounded by a 10km-long wall and situated on a 125m-high hill. The massive Mehrangarh Fort overlooks the city and the red sandstone palaces within the fort form one of the most impressive complexes in Rajasthan.

Day 10: Jodhpur

Meals: B, L, D

Visit the imposing Mehrangarh Fort this morning, which involves approximately 2 hrs on foot and some steps of varying difficulty. The coach will drop off and collect passengers at the same point, so anyone unable to complete this portion of the tour may return and wait for the rest of group.

Afterwards, continue to Jaswant Thada before strolling through the museum located in the Umaid Bhawan Palace. Sightseeing here involves approximately 45 mins of easy walking.

Finally, enjoy an auto-rickshaw ride to a local restaurant in time for lunch. The rest of the afternoon will be at leisure.



Destination Information

Mehrangarh Fort - Raised 120m above the city's skyline, Mehrangarh Fort is one of the most magnificent and best-preserved forts in India. Within the fort are some magnificent palaces with meticulously carved panels, latticed windows known as Jarokhas. The chambers of Moti Mahal, Phool Mahal, Sheesh Mahal, the Sileh Khana and the Daulat Khana are noteworthy for the splendour and glamour of a bygone era.

Jaswant Thada - A 19th century royal cenotaph built in honor of Maharaja Jaswant Singh II, the 33rd ruler of Jodhpur.

Umaid Bhawan Palace - One of the last great palaces in India, Umaid Bhawan Palace now houses a remarkable museum.

Day 11: Jodhpur to Udaipur

Meals: B, L, D

Drive approximately 6.5 hrs to Udaipur and embark on a relaxing cruise along Lake Pichola, admiring the city's palaces from the water (**). Afterwards, proceed to your hotel for check-in and spend the remainder of the day at leisure.

(**) The boat ride may need to be shifted to Day 12 as it would be dependent on the arrival time in Udaipur on day 11. The last boat cruise departs at 4pm in winter due to shorter days and early nightfall.



Destination Information

Lake Pichola - The 4km long Lake Pichola is fringed with hills, palaces, havelis, ghats and temples. The Lake Palace, formally known as Jag Niwas, was built between 1734 and 1751. It was once a royal summer retreat and is now one of the world's greatest hotels. It is also a popular location for film shoots, including James Bond's Octopussy.

Day 12: Udaipur

Meals: B, L, D

After breakfast, take a drive around the Fateh Sagar Lake and visit the Sahelion Ki Bari Gardens, the Folk Museum and Mewar Art Gallery.

Afterwards, spend approximately 2 hours exploring the City Palace on foot. Please note that some steps at this location are without handrails, so please be cautious.



Destination Information

Udaipur - The origins of Udaipur are based on a legend, which tells of a holy sage that Maharaja Udai Singh encountered while hunting in the foothills of the Aravalli Range in Mewar. The sage told the King to build a palace in that exact spot and it would be well protected and so with this advice, Maharaja Udai Singh built his residence there. Today, the City Palace of Udaipur is still home to Maharaja Udai Singh's descendants who remain rulers of this independent state.

Fateh Sagar Lake - An artificial lake built in 1678 embellished with 3 islands, one which houses a garden café.

Sahelion Ki Bari Gardens - A delightful 18th-century garden retreat in the north of the city built for the Queen of Udaipur, whose dowry included 48 maids.

City Palace - The spectacular City Palace was built in 1725 by Maharana Udai Singh and overlooks Lake Pichola. The Palace comprises of 11 palaces including the Dilkhush Mahal, Sheesh Mahal, Moti Mahal and the Palace of Lord Krishna, all of which are ornately decorated. The City Palace also houses the world's largest private collections of crystals.

Day 13: Udaipur to Bundi

Meals: B, L, D

Drive approximately 6.5 Hrs to Bundi, stopping en-route to explore Chittor Fort and Vijay Stambh. One of the largest forts in India, Chittor sprawls across a hilltop overlooking the town of Chittorgarh.

On arrival in Bundi, take a leisurely stroll through the town and discover the unique stepwells before checking-in to your hotel for an overnight stay.



Destination Information

Chittor Fort - A world heritage site, whose origin has many theories and legends surrounding it.

Bundi - A town that is dominated by its immense fort. Within the fort walls is a beautiful palace, Badal Mahal, famous for its painted murals.

Day 14: Bundi to Ranthambore National Park

Meals: B, L, D

Commence the 3 hrs drive to Ranthambore National Park. On arrival, check-in to your hotel and spend the rest of the afternoon at leisure.



Destination Information

Ranthambore National Park - Is one of the prime examples of Project Tiger's conservation efforts in Rajasthan. The forest around Ranthambore was once the private hunting grounds of the Maharajas of Jaipur and is one of the largest national parks in Northern India. Ranthambore National Park is renowned for its tiger population, however you may also come across other wild animals such as leopard, nilgai, wild boar, sambar, hyena and sloth bear.

Day 15: Ranthambore National Park

Meals: B, L, D

Enjoy morning and afternoon canter safaris in the national park for the chance to spot the local wildlife. Each safari involves 2 – 3 hours driving on uneven and unsealed tracks. Please bear in mind that there will be no bathroom breaks during the canter safaris.

Please note: You will need to bring your passport each day to allow entry into the park.



Day 16: Ranthambore National Park to Delhi

Meals: B, L, D

Catch the 7.20am train to Delhi, with the journey taking approximately 5 hours. On arrival, transfer to your hotel for an overnight stay and spend the rest of the day at leisure.

Day 17-18:

Meals: B

This morning, transfer to the airport for your overnight flight back to Australia.

Late check-out is not included in our India group tours. If you wish to book a late check-out for your final day in India, please contact our reservations department who can confirm additional pricing and make this arrangement for you, subject to availability at the hotel.

HIGHLIGHTS OF INDIA TRAVEL INFORMATION

VISAS:

Entry visas are required by all visitors to India and Wendy Wu Tours Visa Department can assist you with the process of obtaining a visa. Please be advised that your passport must have at least six months validity left on it when you arrive back into Australia.

For the latest information on visa procedures, processing times and requirements, please kindly refer to our website <https://www.wendywutours.com.au/help-and-advice/passports-and-visas/>

Please note, the visa procedures and requirements may change at any time. These changes are often made by the relevant embassy or consulate, Wendy Wu Tours acts as a third party and has no influence on the process of a visa.

Wendy Wu Tours does not accept responsibility for lost or undelivered items.

INSURANCE:

We strongly recommend that you take out a policy as soon as you pay your deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot in any way be made liable for any additional cost incurred by the customer on any tour due to the customer not having adequate travel insurance.

We also encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents (especially relevant international contact numbers) with them while on tour. We advise that you check the inclusions and procedures for lodging claims prior to your departure. These documents should be stored separately from the original.

GROUP SIZE:

The group size on our Classic Tours is on average 21 passengers, with a maximum group size of 28. You may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling. On our group tours we operate a seat-and-a-half policy, allowing you to travel in greater comfort.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 8 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). A national escort will accompany each group of 10 or more. However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so.

EATING IN INDIA:

Indian cuisine is one of the most influential, diverse and flavoursome culinary styles in the world. Indian dishes incorporate many spices and seasoning to create an explosion of flavours. Though Indian cuisine can vary greatly from the Indian food we get in Australia, it is important to keep an open mind and be adventurous. All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our classic group tours, from dinner on the arrival day until breakfast on the day of departure. Please be aware that dishes selected for your meals reflect the cooking styles and signature dishes of the local area you are in.

Dishes served in restaurants on our group tours are varied. Some will be vegetable-based with meat mixed in, and a few will be meat-based. Our restaurants are well aware of the western palate – there are plenty of non-spiced options. When eating meals on group tours, you will usually be seated around a large table with other tour members. Dishes will be served in the traditional ‘family style’; meaning that various dishes will be laid out in the centre of the table. These dishes are intended to be shared amongst the group – there is always more than enough to feed everybody.

Please read your travel guide, which you will receive with your final documents for more information about eating in India. We recommend that when it comes to Indian food, you stay open minded and try to be adventurous!

RANTHAMBORE NATIONAL PARK SAFARI:

To ensure your safari booking at Ranthambore National Park we will require a scanned copy or photocopy of the bio page in your passport along with your deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot confirm your safari arrangements without this information.

ACCOMMODATION:

Your accommodation has been selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family-run guesthouse in a smaller town or a heritage-type hotel. In remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have western amenities. Hotels are generally rated as local three to four-star standard, but do please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between Australia and India. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards are met.

All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and a telephone. Plumbing and electricity supplies can be erratic and quite often the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort or Local Guide.

SOUVENIRS:

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions that demonstrates a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone so we aim to take you to places that hold local interest. We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance.

LUGGAGE:

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each: a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of five kilograms. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. Please note that authorities will only allow bottles onto the aircraft if they have been checked in as main baggage. Bottles in hand luggage may be confiscated.

PORTERAGE:

Please be aware that portorage is not included on our tours in India. You will therefore need to be able to handle your own luggage within the hotel and when using transportation like trains and coaches.

TIPPING POLICY:

Tipping while on holiday is common in most parts of the world and India is no exception. However, it is not always clear who it is appropriate to tip and how much. Furthermore, travellers may not have the right amounts of cash available at the right time. In order to avoid any inconvenience Wendy Wu Tours operates a tipping policy where a stated amount is given to your national escort at the beginning of your tour and tips are disbursed amongst your main service providers (for example local guides and drivers) throughout your tour. The amount is designed to be at a reasonable level for travellers while being fair to the local people and includes a gratuity for the national escort. Any other tipping, such as tips for bathroom attendants or hotel porters that are taking luggage to your room, is at your discretion based on satisfaction of services received, as are gratuities for additional requested special services.

We generally find that most customers appreciate the convenience of our tipping policy but we do recognize that it may not suit everyone. However, as this is a group tour we ask that everyone follows the same protocol to be fair to other group members and to ensure smooth operation of your tour

TRANSPORT:

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. Main and inner city roads in India have a reputation for being very congested. For this reason, it may not always be possible to return to your hotel after sightseeing to freshen up before going to the restaurant for dinner. Roads in India have generally been improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of road - not just one or two kilometres as you may be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in the sections above are approximations only.

Planes: Internal flights are based on economy class with reputable airlines. Pre-flight seat allocation is not available on international and internal flight sectors.

Trains: This trip involves a train journey in AC class cars. Getting on and off the trains in India can be quite disordered as passengers will start boarding well before people have finished getting off! If your group is disembarking at a stop that is not the end of the line, the train will only stop for 10 minutes and you must have your luggage ready and by your side a few minutes before the train pulls into the station.

APPROPRIATE DRESS:

When visiting temples or mosques, both men and women should dress in conservative, non-revealing clothing. Full-length trousers with a shirt or t-shirt for men; and trousers or skirts well below the knee with a top that covers the shoulders and upper arms for women. Women might also consider carrying a 'modesty shawl' in their daypack – this could be a sarong or light scarf – which they can wear over their shoulders and heads to feel more comfortable while sightseeing at mosques. When visiting Jain temples, you must not wear or take in any leather items such as belts, watches, camera straps, purses and shoes.

Religious sites and homes throughout India – for Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, Muslims or Buddhists to name a few – require all visitors to remove their shoes to enter. Even if you then need to walk outdoors, over hot or rough ground, you will not be allowed to wear shoes. You will often find shoe storage rooms near the entrance of a site where it is customary to leave your shoes near the entrance. Occasionally there are 'shoe minders' who will offer to keep your shoes safe for a 'tip' – this is not compulsory so each customer can choose to tip for this service or not. If you do not want to remove your shoes, you will have to remain outside.

We recommend shoes that easily slip on and off, and carry a pair of thick, old socks in your daypack, which you can wear to protect your feet from any rough or hot surfaces.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:

Public Holidays please note that celebrations can last a couple of days and during these times some businesses will be closed, and coach, air and train travel may be affected. Tourist attractions will be open but may be crowded. India Republic Day is on 26th January, the Holi Festival on the 14th of March 2025 & 4th March 2026 (The Hindu 'Festival of Colours' can include locals smearing coloured powder on one another. Every effort will be made to minimise the effect on passengers whilst touring). Diwali Festival (festival of light) is on October 20th 2025 & November 8th 2026.

CLIMBING STEPS:

Sightseeing at nearly all of the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves climbing quite a number of steps. These palaces were built to provide defense against potential invaders so nearly all of them stand on top of a hill, while the interiors have layers of narrow hallways and steps to slow down the advance of enemies once they were inside. The steps tend to be quite large, not level and sometimes without handrails. Hindu and Buddhist temples or pagodas also tend to be built at an elevation, as this is the most auspicious position according to ancient beliefs. This means you sometimes need to walk from the bus park to the entrance, and/or need to climb some steps inside.

People with knee or hip injuries, who have poor balance or are otherwise unable to complete these activities independently should consider the suitability of this itinerary carefully.

VACCINATIONS AND YOUR HEALTH:

We recommend that you contact either your GP or Travelvax (1300 360 164) for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Travelvax has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful www.travelvax.com.au

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with www.smartraveller.gov.au as in the event of an emergency, Australian Consular assistance will be more readily available. You can also access the Australian Government's travel advisory service for up to date information about your destination on the same website.

AFTER YOUR BOOKING:

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice including a visa application form (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

Updated: October 2024