



11 Days

India

Tigers Trains and the Taj

India is a kaleidoscope of culture, heritage, adventure and religion - a destination so diverse and intricately woven in its customs and colours that even a lifetime is not long enough to explore this magical country in its entirety. In this short, but great adventure to this amazing country, we will gain an insight into the reality of rural India in its multitude of guises - from how the people farm, to what and how they cook and the huge role that the textile industry in India plays in clothing the world. We will be white water rafting on the sacred river Ganges and camping on its banks, as well as experiencing the thrill of a tiger safari in Jim Corbett reserve. Add in to the mix some of the country's holiest sites and India is bound to cast a spell of magic on you. Get ready!



Recommended tour itinerary

Day
1-2

Depart UK / Arrive Delhi

Depart UK on overnight flight. Upon arrival in Delhi, we will be met and transferred by coach to our hotel in the city. After a short rest, we will head out on a rickshaw ride to explore the old city. Sights include Chandni Chowk, the oldest spice bazaar in the city and Raj Ghat, the cremation place of Mahatma Gandhi, the father of modern India.

Day
3

Delhi and coach to Agra

Today after breakfast, we visit Gandhi Nagar, known to most as the Asia's biggest readymade garments/textile market. We will see a large number of shops and factories in its lanes and market places manufacturing and selling readymade garments at a frantic pace. Later we ride the metro and get a feel for Delhi's efficient and clean train services – that's despite millions travelling each day! Later, we will transfer to Agra and check in to our hotel.

Day
4

Agra to Delhi to Kathgodam (4 hrs bus, overnight train)

An early morning start today sees us hopefully beat the crowds to witness one of the world's most extraordinary sights – the Taj Mahal at sunrise. After, we start our journey back to Delhi, visiting en-route the Agra Fort, which lies across the river Yamuna. It was here that Aurangzeb, the third son of Shah Jahan, kept his father under house arrest. One can get a fantastic view of the Taj from the little octagonal tower at the fort. We then continue in to Delhi, reaching the city in time for dinner before heading to the railway station for our overnight train journey to Kathgodam.

Day
5,6

Silent Valley Farm

On arrival at Kathgodam, we are transported to the Silent Valley farm in the Himalayan region. A fabulous drive cutting across mountain cliffs on a zig zag highway, hair pin bends and culverts with overcast misty skies greeting us all along. Our coach will drop us 1.5 kms shy of the Farm on the roadside. From here a short 30 minute walk downhill will take us to the beautiful farm.

Silent Valley is aptly named for its peace and beauty. Built on a stepped hillock overlooking the vast valley and the open blue skies, Silent Valet Farm is 'ensconced amidst the natures bountiful'. It has a 100-year old heritage bungalow at its northern most point at the entry that can house 20 people at one time, but more space can be made with camping. At the Southernmost end, there is a pretty river Kalsa flowing down offering an opportunity to swim in its deep pockets. It is a perfect hill retreat that offers panoramic views of mountains, trees, flower orchards and vegetable fields.

At the Farm, we will split into smaller groups and learn the basics of farming, ploughing, irrigation, cultivation and harvesting. Being a well-maintained farm with equipment and all the facilities required for agricultural practices, we receive tips on traditional farming, organic farming, modern techniques and greenhouse farming. We'll also get to observe the sophisticated structure of bee civilization. From the guards at the hive entry, to the nurses tending the little, to the "energetic females" and "lazy males," to the glaring elusive queen, each bee has a place inside this complex community. Another opportunity shall be getting close to holy cows at the farm. Being friendly animals, we can learn how animals are looked after, how they are fed and how they are milked for a very engaging and inspiring experience. Our days here will be spent getting active on the farm and undertaking a variety of other projects locally - both community and conservation related. There are lots of options to choose from, depending on the time of year of your visit.





Day
7

Tiger Safari, Corbett National Park, travel to Rishikesh

On the morning of day 7 we leave our Himalayan hideout and head for the plains of northern India and a tiger safari at Jim Corbett national park. On arrival, we have an afternoon safari, hoping to spot the elusive tiger! Fingers crossed we catch a glimpse! We head back to the lodge for dinner. The next morning, we head out again for more time in the jeeps to look for tigers and other wildlife of the park which includes deer, monkeys, peacocks, leopards, elephants and numerous other species. We return to our hotel for Breakfast and after a final head count / checking of luggage before we drive to Rishikesh, arriving late afternoon. We stay here for the next two nights.

Day
8,9

Rishikesh Ashrams, White water rafting, Yoga & Nature walks

We spend the next few days exploring the amazing city of Rishikesh with walks, meditation sessions, visits to Ashrams and more. A nature walk takes us along the river, amidst orchards and herb gardens to the Swarag Ashram, to witness the spectacular sunset 'Aarti', a daily prayer ceremony on the river bank, where scores of yellow-clad pupils of the ashram pray together. The chanting of mantras and the setting sun make for a moving experience. Priests then place leaf boats loaded with flowers and candles into the river. If we don't arrive in time for this on day 8 then we'll certainly include it on day 9.

While in Rishikesh we will visit various other Ashrams including the Parmarth Niketan, Ram Jhulla and the Beatles Ashram. It is here that the legendary George Harrison and John Lennon had composed some of their best music for their hit albums in the sixties & seventies. Run by the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi trust for Transcendental Meditation, this place became very famous with foreigners following the Beatles visit. It is now a dilapidated assortment of caves, huts and large structures with the Forest Department having taken over the premises.

We also hope to take a fascinating excursion to Brahmapuri Ashram, a community of sadhus (holy men) who live and meditate along the banks of the Ganges River. You'll have the chance to interact with some of the sadhus as you visit the cave temples they meditate in. We will also get to cross the Ganges via the famous pedestrian suspension bridge to the left bank. The scene is surreal, with scampering monkeys, multi-storey temples, and Hindu pilgrims. We'll stop for a cup of tea and cake in a small café to revel in the atmosphere.

On the morning of day 9 we undertake some easy white water rafting on the Ganges to Shivpuri or a little beyond depending on how comfortable and confident we are on the rapids (under expert guidance and following a safety briefing). In the afternoon we continue to visit the sites and sounds of Rishikesh, with options for more visits to Ashrams, short walking tours, yoga and mediation sessions and such like, depending on your groups requirements.

Day
10

Rishikesh to Haridwar to Delhi (40 mins road; 4-5 hrs train)

We leave the holy town in the morning and head for Delhi. En-route we will stop in Haridwar (another important Hindu religious place) to see the Ganges in its full might, with hundreds of devotees flocking to the Ghats either taking a holy dip or performing rituals. Later we will board out train and reach Delhi by night time.

Day
11

Return to UK

We transfer to the airport in time for our flight back to the UK.

Further information

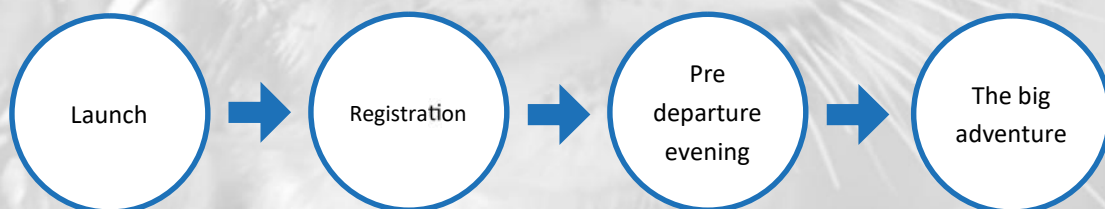
Look what's included!

- ✓ International flights
- ✓ All accommodation
- ✓ All food
- ✓ All transportation and activities
- ✓ Bi-lingual, first-aid qualified local tour leader
- ✓ Parent and student trip launch evening
- ✓ Pre-departure preparation evening
- ✓ 1-day offsite safety INSET day for staff
- ✓ ATOL financial protection
- ✓ Medical Emergency / Repatriation Travel Insurance
- ✓ Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- ✓ BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- ✓ Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- ✓ Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- ✓ Permanent operations team in your destination
- ✓ 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- ✓ Carbon offsetting of all flights
- ✓ Free t-shirt for every participant and teacher

What's excluded?

- ✓ Transport to airport in UK
- ✓ Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- ✓ Visas or tourist cards if required
- ✓ Any required inoculations
- ✓ Personal spending money
- ✓ Tips for guides, drivers and porters
- ✓ Airport departure taxes paid locally
- ✓ Cancellation and personal effects insurance

Your educational journey timeline



Physical journey rating:



Moderate physical activities are included in Grade 3 trips. Good health and reasonable fitness are important to get the most out of the trip. Trips of this grading are likely to include some walking at moderate altitude (up to 2,500m) and occasional longer/harder days may be involved, with between five and seven hours of walking on certain days. The trip may contain other activities such as cycling or rafting which also require physical effort and a reasonable level of fitness. Some steady preparation and an increase if your underlying fitness levels would help you get the most from this grade trip.

Culture shock rating:



Students should expect some culture shock. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty. The food will be quite different to home and English, whilst still spoken, will be less prevalent. Respecting the local culture will make it easier to fit in and get the most out of your trip. We're likely to visit remoter locations on this tour where access to western style services may be sporadic. Often on trips of this grading there are parts of the itinerary which are more remote, interspersed with sections which are more 'comfortable'.



A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your educational journey.

1 Get your tailor-made proposal and further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your educational travel itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an itinerary just for you. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk assessments and destination threat assessments to help you with your expedition approval process. Ask for posters and your pre-booking information pack too.

3 Arrange a trip launch evening at your school

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the planned adventure with a comprehensive information evening and an opportunity for questions.



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