



## Golden Triangle Tour Dossier

### Classic Tour | 9 Days | Comfortable

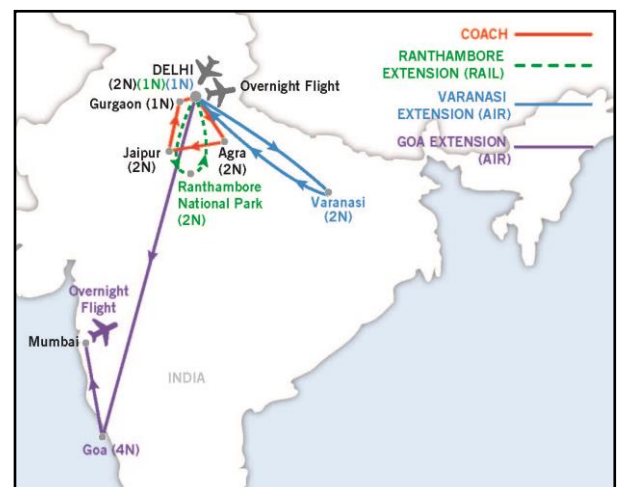
The best way for a first-time visitor to experience India's must see destinations. Discover the contrasts of Old and New Delhi. Travel to the historic city of Agra to see the Taj Mahal. Explore the beautiful palaces and architecture of Jaipur.

#### Tour Highlights:

**Delhi** - India's capital consisting of a lively mix of historical monuments, modern day sky scrapers and colourful local bazaars

**Agra** - Home to the magnificent Taj Mahal, the famous monument to love

**Jaipur** - Capital of the Rajasthan State and often referred to as the 'pink city' due to the pink sandstone that is used in the old quarter



## Golden Triangle 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 Escort (if your group is 10 or more passengers)
- Visa fees for Australian passport holders

*Personal expenditures e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, tipping, early check in or late checkout and other items not specified on the itinerary are at your own expense.*

## 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 Escort or Local Guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

## Comfortable

'Golden Triangle' is a **comfortable** tour. Although this is the easiest pace of tour Wendy Wu Tours offers, it still requires a reasonable level of fitness. Accessible to most people with an average level of fitness and average mobility. Tours may involve sightseeing on foot, some climbing of stairs and getting on and off boats.

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.

## Country Profile: India

India evokes images of colourful religious festivals, deserts lined with historic forts, tented camps nestled in sand dunes, delicious food and royal palaces. Abundant wildlife such as the Asian Elephant and the Royal Bengal Tiger are found in the numerous national parks and wildlife sanctuaries. All of these images of India may be experienced on our tours, but the most lasting memories that you will take away with you is of the happy, smiling people.

## Extension Options

To complement your group tour, extensions to Ranthambore National Park, the sacred city of Varanasi and a beach extension to Goa can be added at an additional cost. Information for these extensions can be found below or included in our India brochure. If you have any questions regarding the extensions, please contact our reservations department.

## Joining Your Tour

The tour is 9 days in duration including international flights. Travellers booked on 'Land Only' arrangements should make their own way to the starting point. Join the tour on Day 1 in Delhi and end the tour on Day 8 in Gurgaon. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

## Itinerary Changes

1. It is 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 will make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.
2. The domestic airlines in this region have frequent schedule changes. For this reason, we have indicated morning, afternoon or evening flights only in the following section. Your Local Guide or National Escort will inform you of any schedule.
3. The Taj Mahal is currently undergoing renovations to its exterior. The work is estimated to be completed by March 2018 and will be done in phases so that visitors to the Taj will still be able to experience the beauty of this architectural wonder.

## Important Information Regarding Flight Delays

Due to unforeseen circumstances, flights can be delayed, and therefore connecting flights may be missed. If you find yourself in this situation, please contact our India office on **+91 98 1899 0222/+91 98 1048 8398** (outside India) or **98 1899 0222/98 1048 8398** (within India) to urgently advise your arrival details have changed. Please ensure you have your trip number, tour name (both included in your final documentation) and new arrival details (flight number and arrival time) handy to pass on to our local office in India. This will ensure your National Escort/Local Guide can be informed of your most up to date information and ensure someone is at the airport to meet you on arrival. There is also a dedicated duty officer available 24 hours a day at the international airport, who can be contacted on **+91 81 3039 1236** if required upon arrival in Delhi.

If we are not advised of late changes and missed connections, Wendy Wu Tours cannot guarantee someone will be able to meet you upon arrival in India as our local office will have no way of knowing which flight you will be arriving on. Wendy Wu Tours will not be responsible for providing reimbursement of transportation costs from the airport to your hotel in the event that our local office was not advised of changes to arrival time.

## Golden Triangle Itinerary

### DAY 1: AUSTRALIA TO DELHI

Fly with Singapore Airlines to Delhi for a two-night stay. Your National Escort/Local Guide from Wendy Wu Tours will meet you at the Delhi International Airport in the Arrivals Hall tonight. Together with other group members who may be arriving at a similar time, you will transfer (45 minute drive) to your hotel and check-in. In the event of flight delays or changes to arrival times, please see the details above as to what to do in this circumstance.

### **Destination Information**

**Delhi** - As the capital of India, Delhi is the third largest city with a population of approximately 18 million. 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

This morning a tour introduction will either be held in the hotel or on the coach. Food and drinks will not be served at this meeting. It is simply an opportunity for your group to

today is a full day of sightseeing around Old and New Delhi, involving approximately four hours on foot. Your exploration of Delhi begins with a drive past the Red Fort, before strolling through the fascinating Chandni Chowk Bazaar to Jama Masjid. Stop briefly at India Gate to take some photos before visiting the Lakshmi Narayan Hindu Temple, Humayun's Tomb and Connaught Place Markets. This evening transfer to a nearby restaurant and enjoy a welcome dinner tonight.

Sightseeing includes visits to a mosque and Hindu temple – refer to the **Appropriate Dress** section below. Please note that women are only allowed to enter the mosque outside prayer session times.

### **Destination Information**

**Delhi** - Delhi is split into two main sections; Old Delhi and New Delhi. Old Delhi is the area defined by the old city wall and is a maze of small alleyways and side streets. Old Delhi's bazaars are legendary; today the great wholesale bazaars of Chandni Chowk still retain a souk-like quality. Their narrow streets are lined with shops, whose goods spill out onto the pavements. New Delhi grew under the British

colonial rule and is characterized the grandeur of 19th-century buildings and wide, tree-lined boulevards.

**Red Fort** - Home of the Mughal emperor for many years, the fort is located in the centre of Delhi and houses a number of museums. View the fort as you drive past.

**Chandni Chowk Bazaar** - Built in the 17th century, Chandni Chowk is the oldest and most lively bazaar in Old Delhi. Built by the Mughal Emperor of India Shah Jahan and designed by his daughter, you can find stores selling everything from saris, Nehru suits, souvenirs to spices.

**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.

**Connaught Place Markets** - As the coach is not allowed to enter this area, the group will be dropped off on Janpath, one of the main roads in Delhi. From here, it will be a 10-15 minute walk to the main section of Connaught Market where tourist shops sell traditional home wares, jewellery, books, clothing, saris and beads.

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

**Lakshmi Narayan Hindu Temple** - One of Delhi's major temples, the temple was built in 1939 and is dedicated to Lord Vishnu and his consort Lakshmi.

**Humayun's Tomb** - A landmark of Mughal architecture, the tomb was built in 1570 for the Mughal Emperor Humayun. Commissioned by his wife, it was the first garden tomb in India.

#### **DAY 3: DELHI TO AGRA**

Depart Delhi this morning and commence the 3.5-hour drive to the historic city of Agra. Stop at Sikandra en route to see the marble Tomb of Emperor Akbar.

#### **Destination Information**

**Sikandra** - Sikandra lies on the outskirts of Sikandra town in a peaceful garden 4km northwest of Agra. It is believed that Akbar designed and started the construction of his own mausoleum, which was later modified and completed by his son Jahangir. The result is this impressive, perfectly symmetrical complex, with the tomb located in the centre of a vast walled garden.

**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.

#### **DAY 4: AGRA**

Begin the day by viewing the Taj Mahal in all its glory as the sun is rising. Firstly, board your group coach and drive through the awakening streets of Agra (an early start means that we can avoid the heat and crowds at the Taj Mahal later in the day). No polluting vehicles are allowed within a 500m radius of the Taj Mahal complex. At a designated point the group will disembark the coach and board smaller electric carts to continue to the entrance gate. After clearing security and baggage checks you will be admitted to the complex. You will spend approximately two hours here; sightseeing is easy with almost no steps. For admission to the main mausoleum area, you are required to wear shoe covers (this may be provided on site – be prepared to bring an additional pair of socks).

Return to your hotel to freshen up and have breakfast. Later, visit a marble inlay workshop and explore Agra Fort. Sightseeing at the fort involves approximately 1 hour on foot and there are some stairs to walk up.

**Please note:** The Taj Mahal is currently undergoing renovations to its exterior. The work is estimated to be completed by March 2018 and will be done in phases so that visitors to the Taj will still be able to experience the beauty of this architectural wonder.

#### **Destination Information**

**Taj Mahal** - One of the most recognizable 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.

**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.

### **DAY 5: AGRA TO JAIPUR**

Depart Agra and travel 5 hours (240km) to Rajasthan's capital Jaipur. On route stop to explore the ancient capital city Fatehpur Sikri which involves up to one hour of easy walking. Continue to Abhaneri village to see the Chand Baori Stepwell and marvel at this ancient construction. Sightseeing here will be under 30 minutes and may include walking on uneven ground or climbing steps.

Upon arrival in Jaipur, check into your hotel. There is no sightseeing scheduled for this evening. Jaipur is a larger city where it would be unwise to wander around without your National Escort/Local Guide at night as there have been reports of pickpockets, etc. Always speak to your National Escort/Local Guide before making own arrangements in Jaipur

#### **Destination Information**

**Fatehpur Sikri** - Located 34km from Agra, Fatehpur Sikri was built by Emperor Akbar in 1569 after it was prophesised that the then childless Akbar would have sons if he moved his capital to the site. At great expense to the empire, the capital was moved here but sadly only occupied for 14 years before slowly being deserted and ruined after Akbar left the city due to a scarcity of water. While here, you will visit the remarkably well-preserved and graceful buildings within the Ghost City including the Jama Masjid, tomb of Salim Chisti, Panch Mahal Palace and other palaces that speak of the grandeur and splendour of the Mughal Empire at the height of its power.

**Abhaneri Village** - Make a stop here to see the Chand Baori Stepwell and marvel at this ancient construction. Over 1,000 years old, the visually outstanding stepwell was originally dedicated to Harshat Mata, the 'Goddess of Joy and Happiness'

**Jaipur** - Some parts of the road are very rough so the journey takes most of the afternoon. Jaipur was founded in 1727 as Mughal power within India was declining. The then Maharaja Jai Singh moved his capital from Amer 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 6: JAIPUR**

Sightseeing today begins with a photo stop at the Hawa Mahal (Palace of the Winds) in downtown Jaipur. Tourists

are unable to enter, so you will view it from the busy road opposite. Tour members are asked to be careful when crossing the road for a closer photo. Continue to the impressive Amer Fort, where you will ride jeeps to and from the bus park and palace entrance. Elephant rides up to the palace have not been included your itinerary because of the concerns to the animals and the unreliability of this service; visitors usually need to queue for 2-3 hours and the service is often shut down without notice by local tourism authorities due to safety concerns. Sightseeing this morning involves 2-3 hours on foot and there are a number of steps within the fort.

Afterwards, tour the City Palace in Jaipur and Jantar Mantar, the UNESCO World Heritage listed ancient observatory. Later, enjoy some time to shop in the local bazaar in Choti Choper. Sightseeing this afternoon involves approximately 2-3 hours on foot and tour members are asked to be mindful of their belongings in the Choti Choper Bazaar

#### **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.

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

**Choti Choper** - A market located inside the walled city, where villagers from around Jaipur come to sell and trade their produce.

**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 7: JAIPUR TO GURGAON**

Depart Jaipur and travel approximately 5 hours to Gurgaon, only 30 km from Delhi, for an overnight stay. Later, experience the 'Kingdom of Dreams', a live entertainment

venue where you will watch a magical Bollywood performance.

For dinner tonight, you may be provided with a voucher to be used in the many food outlets at the venue, or arrangements will be made at a local restaurant beforehand.

#### **Destination Information**

**Gurgaon** - An emerging city located 30km from Delhi.

**Kingdom of Dreams** - The ultimate entertainment and leisure destination in India, Kingdom of Dreams combines India's art, culture and heritage into a live theatre performance.

#### **DAY 8: GURGAON – DEPART DELHI**

After breakfast, you will be transferred to Delhi Haat, an open-air market, where you can enjoy some last minute shopping. Return to your hotel where you will have a late check out until 18:00 before being met and transferred to Delhi airport to board your overnight flight to Australia. *Due to flight schedules, Adelaide, Darwin and Cairns passengers will depart on a morning flight.*

#### **DAY 9: ARRIVE AUSTRALIA**

Arrive home today.

#### **RANTHAMBORE EXTENSION (Optional At Additional Cost)**

##### **DAY 8: GURGAON - DELHI TO RANTHAMBORE**

This morning you will be transferred from your Gurgaon hotel to Delhi railway station for your train to the town of Sawai Madhopur (journey takes approximately 5 hours). Upon arrival, you will be transferred 10km to nearby Ranthambore. Enjoy the afternoon free at leisure.

*Meals included: Breakfast, lunch and dinner*

#### **Destination Information**

**Ranthambore National Park** - 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 9: RANTHAMBORE NATIONAL PARK**

You will have both an early morning and afternoon safari into the park, involving 2-3 hours of driving through the park in canters (jeep-like vehicles), on uneven and unsealed

tracks, returning to the hotel for lunch. During the canter safari there are no bathrooms, please keep this in mind.

*Meals included: Breakfast, lunch and dinner*

##### **DAY 10: RANTHAMBORE NATIONAL PARK TO DELHI**

Enjoy an early morning canter ride. After breakfast return to Sawai Madhopur to catch the train back to Delhi. Upon arrival in Delhi, transfer to your hotel and enjoy the afternoon at leisure.

*Meals included: Breakfast only*

##### **DAY 11: DEPART DELHI**

Enjoy the day free at leisure. After a late check-out you will be transferred to the airport for your international flight.

*Meals included: Breakfast only*

##### **DAY 12: ARRIVE AUSTRALIA**

Arrive home today.

#### **VARANASI EXTENSION (Optional At Additional Cost)**

##### **DAY 8: GURGAON - DELHI TO VARANASI (BY FLIGHT)**

This morning you will be transferred to the airport for your flight to Varanasi (flight duration 1 hour and 20 minutes). Upon arrival, transfer to your hotel. While in Varanasi, you will be visiting Buddhist sacred sites - refer to **Appropriate Dress** section below.

Enjoy the afternoon at leisure before taking a rickshaw ride to the ghats of the River Ganges to witness the Puja ceremony of Ganga Aarti (a prayer ceremony) this evening.

*Meals included: Breakfast only*

**Please note:** The Ganga Aarti takes place most evenings, so please be prepared for a lot of crowds through the streets, especially leading up to the ghats. Please remember to wear closed in shoes and to always be careful and mindful of your belongings. It is also important to watch where you step, as devotees, crowds of tourists, animals and rickshaws all head in same direction of the ghats.

#### **Destination Information**

**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.

##### **DAY 9: VARANASI**

Rise early this morning to take a boat ride on the River Ganges (approximately 2-3 hours). Please note that it is

inappropriate to take photos of any burning ghats, as this is a funeral ceremony.

Return to the hotel for breakfast. Enjoy a brief tour of the city before driving to Sarnath, where you will visit the Buddhist sites - refer to the **Appropriate Dress** section below.

*Meals included: Breakfast and lunch*

#### **Destination Information**

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

#### **DAY 10: VARANASI TO DELHI**

This morning say goodbye to Varanasi as you transferred to the airport to board your return flight to Delhi (flight duration 1 hour and 20 minutes). Upon arrival in Delhi, you will be met and transferred to your hotel. Enjoy the evening at leisure.

*Meals included: Breakfast only*

#### **DAY 11: DEPART DELHI**

Enjoy the day free at leisure. After a late check-out you will be transferred to the airport for your international flight

*Meals included: Breakfast only*

#### **DAY 12: ARRIVE AUSTRALIA**

Arrive home today.

#### **GOA EXTENSION (Optional, At An Additional Cost)**

##### **DAY 8: DELHI TO GOA (BY FLIGHT)**

This morning you will be transferred to the airport for your flight to Goa (flight duration 2 hours and 30 minutes). Upon arrival, transfer to your hotel. Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure.

##### **DAY 9: GOA**

Today enjoy a full day of sightseeing in Goa, which involves approximately 1-2 hours on foot. Begin your exploration of Goa visiting Altinho Hill and Dona Paula. Continue to Old Goa and visit the Professed House and Basilica of Bom Jesus, the ancient Se Cathedral, Church of St. Cajetan, the Church of Our Lady of the Rosary and St. Monica.

*Meals included: Breakfast and lunch*

#### **Destination Information**

**Altinho Hill and Dona Paula** - Two suburbs located in Goa, each offering a unique look into the local lifestyle.

**Old Goa** - A historical city located in North Goa built in the 15th century. Abandoned in the 18th century, the former capital is now home to many beautifully preserved UNESCO World Heritage listed churches and convents.

##### **DAY 10: GOA**

Enjoy the day at leisure to relax by the beach.

*Meals included: Breakfast only*

##### **DAY 11: GOA**

Enjoy another day to relax by the beach or further explore Goa.

*Meals included: Breakfast only*

##### **DAY 12: GOA – DEPART MUMBAI**

This morning you will be transferred to Goa airport for your flight to Mumbai, where you will connect with your onward flight home.

*Meals included: Breakfast only*

##### **DAY 13: ARRIVE AUSTRALIA**

Arrive home today.

## **GOLDEN TRIANGLE 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 6 months validity left on it when you arrive back into Australia.

Please be advised that all Visa Applications for India MUST be completed on-line at the VFS website: [www.vfsglobal.com/india/australia](http://www.vfsglobal.com/india/australia). Wendy Wu Tours will assist you with instructions. Once the form is completed, the application and passport must be sent to Wendy Wu Tours. Visas are valid for 6 months from the date of issue and allow you to stay in the country for up to 6 months. Visa application forms and all relevant documentation are due in our office 70 days prior to departure. Applications will not be accepted within 50 days of departure. Passports will be returned with your final

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Call 1300 727 998 to speak to a Reservations Consultant

documentation 2-3 weeks prior to your group tour's scheduled departure. If you require your passport to be returned earlier, a \$15 courier fee will apply.

## Insurance

We strongly 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 originals.

## Eating in India

Indian cuisine is one of the most influential, diverse and flavorsome culinary styles in the world. Indian dishes incorporate many spices and seasoning to create an explosion of flavors. 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 fully inclusive Golden Triangle group tour, from the groups' arrival until the groups' 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 be seated around a circular 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 top. 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!

## Accommodation

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/Local Guide.

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. Please note double bed requests can be made at time of booking but cannot be guaranteed.

## Early Check-In/Late Check-Out

Early check-in is not included in our Indian group tours. If you wish to add early check-in to your booking, please contact our reservations department who can confirm additional pricing and make this arrangement for you, subject to availability at the hotel. Late check-out until 1800hrs is included in this group tour for passengers travelling on our fully inclusive package in the last hotel of stay.

## 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.

Please note that seatbelts are not compulsory by law in India and therefore people largely choose not to wear them. For this reason some vehicles may not be fitted with seatbelts or they may be hidden underneath protective seat covers. It is recommended that where seatbelts are available customers must use them and remain seated at all times while the vehicle is moving. If you have any concerns, please notify your National Escort/Local Guides.

**Planes:** Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines.

## Development in India

Although India is developing quickly, it still lacks the international standards of civil infrastructure and tourist facilities. Concepts of personal responsibility are also different to those in Australia. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in Australia; for example, you may see a hole in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade. All of our suppliers meet local safety standards as a minimum. We want you to have an enjoyable holiday so we ask that you take extra care, use your common sense, refer to notices and follow advice from your National Escort/Local Guides.

## Souvenirs

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions which 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 which hold local interest; for example, in Agra you will be able to see local artists creating stunning marble pieces, similar to what is used on the Taj Mahal. We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance.

## Group Size

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by a National Escort. There will usually be no more than 29 travellers in each group although you may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 8 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). 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. For groups with fewer than 10 travellers, departures will operate with local guides only.

## Tipping Policy

Tipping while on holiday is a firm and expected element in the tourism industry and India is no exception. To remove the uncertainty and stress of not knowing how much is appropriate to tip or to whom, Wendy Wu Tours operates a tipping policy for our group tours where a nominated tipping amount is paid upon commencement of the programme by each tour member. This amount is stated in all group pricing, however it is not collected in your final payment received by Wendy Wu Tours.

This nominated tipping amount is to be given to your National Escort at the beginning of your tour, who will then distribute it amongst your main service providers – guides, drivers and coach attendants – on your behalf during the tour. Any other tipping, such as tips for camera and video fees, bathroom attendants or hotel porters that are taking luggage to your room, is at your discretion as are gratuities for additional requested special services. We encourage passengers to have a supply of small denominations of local currency to distribute for personal tipping.

The tipping amount is determined based on the total number of passengers travelling in the group. 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. The final tipping amount will be outlined in your final documentation, which is distributed 2 weeks prior to your tours departure.

### **Packing List and Climate**

You will find a complete packing list and a helpful climate chart in the 'Suggested Packing List', which will be included in the pre-departure information link sent within your deposit documentation. Seasonal weather patterns can be quite unpredictable. Up to the minute information on worldwide weather can be found on [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com).

### **Luggage**

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each; a suitcase with a maximum weight of 15kgs and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of 7kgs. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. Please note that Indian authorities will only allow bottles onto the aircraft if they have been checked in as main baggage. Bottles in hand luggage may be confiscated.

### **Exchanging Cash**

It is highly recommended that when travelling to cities outside of Delhi and other main cities that extra care and attention is paid when exchanging money. US Dollars are easily exchanged throughout India however, other currencies such as Australian Dollars can generally be exchanged in hotels and airports provided notes are new and undamaged. We suggest exchanging your money before travelling to remote areas and smaller towns, as exchange facilities can be limited. Your National Escort/Local Guide will remind you to do this before departure.

### **Safari Bookings in Ranthambore National Park**

If you have added a Ranthambore extension to your group tour, a scanned copy or photocopy of the bio page in your passport along with a deposit is required to ensure your safari booking at Ranthambore National Park. Wendy Wu Tours cannot confirm your safari arrangements without this information.

### **Personal Expenses & Optional Tours**

You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of AU\$ 250 per week should be sufficient; however for those that cannot resist a bargain, consider allocating a higher amount.

Optional tours may be offered in each city you visit during your tour at an additional cost. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide.

### **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.

## Cultural Differences

India has many religions, cultures and histories. Foreign tourists, particularly female travellers, may be stared at as Indian women in some areas generally do not go out without their father or husband. Please be considerate of this, the local beliefs and customs and dress with consideration and modesty.

## 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 pants 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. The following itinerary will indicate when you need to consider this.

## 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](http://www.travelvax.com.au).

## Before You Leave

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://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 with deposit documentation via email. This includes important information and links to access the visa application form and instructions sheet online (if applicable). Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2 weeks prior to departure.

**Updated: 17 March 2017**