

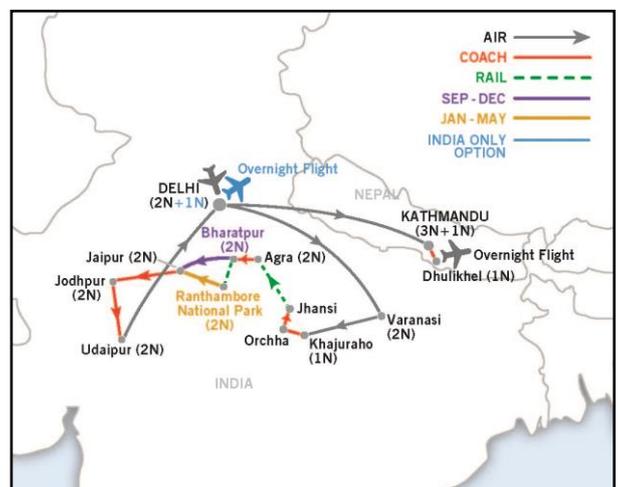
Highlights of India & Nepal Tour Dossier

Classic Tour | 22 Days | Moderate

India sparkles with life, evidenced by its bustling bazaars and ancient ruins. Complementing this is the mystical mountain nation of Nepal, nestled in the Himalaya.

Tour Highlights:

- **Delhi** - India's capital is a lively mix of historical monuments, modern day skyscrapers and colourful local bazaars
- **Varanasi** - Religious capital of India and home to the holy Ganges River
- **Khajuraho** - Home to the erotic Western and Eastern group of Khajuraho Temples
- **Agra** - Home to the magnificent Taj Mahal, the famous monument to love
- **Ranthambore National Park** - 1334 sq. km of national park that is a prime example of Project Tiger's conservation efforts **OR Bharatpur** - Visit a well-known bird sanctuary, where 364 species of birds, including the rare Siberian crane, have been recorded
- **Jaipur** - Capital of the Rajasthan State and often referred to as the 'pink city' due to pink sandstone used in the old quarter
- **Jodhpur** - Majestic Mehrangarh Fort dominates this busy city
- **Udaipur** - Lake Pichola with its floating Lake Palace is the centrepiece among many treasures
- **Kathmandu** - Capital and largest city of Nepal; it is also the urban core of the Kathmandu Valley in the Himalaya
- **Patan** - Home of UNESCO World Heritage listed Royal Palace, located on the southern banks of the Bagmati River
- **Dhulikhel** - Town popular for its stunning landscape and ancient traditions



Highlights of India & Nepal 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 and Nepal 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.

Moderate Tour

'Highlights of India & Nepal' is a **moderate** tour. Tours that require a higher level of fitness and may include standard activities and longer periods of sightseeing. Easy walking, high altitude and overnight train journeys may feature. Anyone with a good level of fitness should be able to complete this itinerary.

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.

Country Profile: Nepal

Nepal is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of biodiversity and has an incredible variety of ecosystems. Here you will witness the greatest mountain range on Earth, which has eight of the world's 14 highest mountains, including Mt. Everest (8,848m). See thick tropical jungles teeming with a wealth of wildlife, thundering rivers and forested hills. Within this spectacular geography is a rich cultural landscape. The majority of the population is found in the Kathmandu Valley, located in the centre of Nepal and home to three major towns, Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur.

Joining Your Tour

The tour is 22 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 21 in Kathmandu. 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. Your Local Guide or National Escort will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them.
3. Sections of road in Nepal may be undergoing repair or construction. For this reason many of the expected travel times will increase.
4. 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 Itinerary Changes and 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

Highlights of India & Nepal 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. 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 meet and learn more about travelling in India.

Your exploration of Delhi begins with a drive past the Red Fort before enjoying a stroll through the fascinating Chandni Chowk Bazaar to Jama Masjid. Visit the Lakshmi Narayan Hindu Temple before stopping briefly for a photo opportunity at India Gate. Continue to Gandhi Smriti, drive by Rashtrapati Bhavan and end the day at Qutab Minar. This is a full day of sightseeing around Old and New Delhi, involving approximately 4 hours on foot. 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.

The day concludes with a welcome dinner.

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 characterised the grandeur of 19th-century buildings and wide, tree-lined boulevards.

Red Fort - Home of the Mughal emperor for nearly years, the fort is located in the centre of Delhi and houses a number of museums.

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 Shan 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.

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.

Gandhi Smriti - A museum dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi. It is the location where Mahatma Gandhi 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. We also visit the Iron Pillar, which has withstood the ravages of time and has not rusted after 1,500 years.

DAY 3: DELHI TO VARANASI

In the morning, transfer to the airport (45 minute drive) to board your onward flight to Varanasi (flight duration 2 hours). On arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel, approximately 45 minutes (26km) drive. This evening,

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take a rickshaw ride through the streets of Varanasi to the ghats of the River Ganges where you will witness the Puja ceremony of Ganga Aarti this evening.

Please note: The Ganga Aarti takes place most evenings, so please be prepared for many 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 the same direction of the ghats.

In Varanasi, it would be unwise to wander around without your National Escort/Local Guide at night as there have been several reports of pickpockets, etc. Always speak to your National Escort/Local Guide before making your own arrangements in the city.

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.

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 4: VARANASI

Rise early this morning to commence a 1-2 hour cruise on the River Ganges to view the ghats at sunrise, where you will have a vantage spot to watch the devotees perform their ablutions. 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. The rest of the day's sightseeing is leisurely, involving approximately 1 hour of walking. Enjoy a brief tour of Varanasi, visiting such sites as the Bharat Mata Mandir and Durga Temple. Drive through the largest residential university in Asiam Banaras Hindu University. This afternoon travel to Sarnath to visit the Buddhist sacred sites – refer to the **Appropriate Dress** section below.

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.

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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 5: VARANASI TO KHAJURAHO

Transfer to the airport to board your onward flight to Khajuraho (40 minutes). After checking into your hotel, drive 15 minutes to the Khajuraho temples. Spend approximately 2 hours exploring the Western group of temples. Sightseeing here involves walking with little shade, so make sure you bring sun protection. Later in the evening, enjoy a cultural dance performance.

Destination Information

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

Khajuraho 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. We also see the Vamana Temple, dedicated to the 'Vamana' or dwarf incarnation of Lord Vishnu as well as the Javari Temple.

DAY 6: KHAJURAHO TO AGRA VIA ORCCHA

Depart Khajuraho and drive approximately 4-5 hours (178km) to Jhansi, visiting Orchha en route. Sightseeing in Orchha is easy with a few steps and may take up to an hour. Continue to the railway station to board the Shatabdi Express train 220km to Agra (approximately 2.5 hours), where upon arrival you will transfer to your hotel and check-in.

[N.B: As our train is a day train, our 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 at all times please be aware of your belongings.]

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.

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 7:

AGRA (January to May)

Rise early and begin the day by viewing the Taj Mahal in all its glory as the sun is rising. To reach the Taj Mahal, you will 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. Usually 2 hours is spent 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 before visiting a marble inlay workshop. In the afternoon explore the impressive Agra Fort. Sightseeing here involves approximately 1.5 hours on foot and climbing of stairs. Later, stroll Sadar Bazaar to see Tirupati Temple.

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 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 favourite 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.

Sadar Bazaar - One of the most popular tourist shopping areas in Agra, where you can find stores selling leather products and handicrafts.

OR

AGRA (September to December)

In the morning, explore the impressive Agra Fort. Sightseeing here involves approximately 1.5 hours on foot and there are some stairs to walk up. Later, stroll Sadar Bazaar to the see Tirupati Temple.

Destination Information

Agra Fort - The magnificent fort is located 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.

Sadar Bazaar - One of the most popular tourist shopping areas in Agra, where you can find stores selling leather products and handicrafts.

DAY 8:

AGRA TO RANTHAMBORE (January to May)

After breakfast drive to Ranthambore, stopping en route at Fatehpur Sikri to visit the ancient capital city. Sightseeing here involves up to one hour of easy walking. Continue the drive to Ranthambore National Park and check into your hotel upon arrival.

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.

OR

AGRA TO BHARATPUR (September to December)

Rise early and begin the day by viewing the Taj Mahal in all its glory as the sun is rising. To reach the Taj Mahal, you will 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. Usually 2 hours is spent 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 for breakfast and to freshen up before visiting a marble inlay workshop. Drive approximately 45 minutes (40km) to Fatehpur Sikri and visit the ancient capital city. Sightseeing involves up to 1 hour of easy walking. Continue driving approximately 45 minutes (25km) to Bharatpur and check into your hotel.

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 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 favourite wife, Mumtaz Mahal, who died in 1631.

Fatehpur Sikri - Located 40km 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, we 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.

Bharatpur - Located 184km east of Jaipur. Bharatpur was once considered to be an 'impenetrable city', and was the capital of the Jat Kingdom, whose people were pastoralists of the lower Indus river-valley area.

DAY 9:

RANTHAMBORE NATIONAL PARK

Today enjoy morning and afternoon canter safaris in the national park, involving 2-3 hours of driving through the park in canters, on uneven and unsealed tracks, returning to the hotel for lunch. Please remember to bring your passport to allow entry and please keep in mind that during the rickshaw safari there are no bathrooms.

OR

BHARATPUR

This morning drive to a Keoladeo National Park and enjoy a rickshaw safari for approximately 3 hours (rickshaws are used so the birds are not scared off by the noise a jeep may make). During the rickshaw safari there are no bathrooms, please keep this in mind. Later visit a nearby village where you will have the chance to view the everyday life of the local people.

Destination Information

Keoladeo National Park - Formerly known as the Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary. Declared a UNESCO World Heritage listed site in 1985, the park attracts hundreds of indigenous birds as well as migratory birds including the renowned Siberian Crane.

DAY 10:

RANTHAMBORE TO JAIPUR

This morning you have the option to rise early and enjoy a canter safari in the park. You will need your passport again to gain entry. After breakfast, drive approximately 3-4 hours (153 km) to Jaipur. Upon arrival check into your hotel and later enjoy some shopping inside the walled city, where villagers from around Jaipur come to sell and trade their produce. You will find everything here from saris, jewellery, clothing, shoes to spices. Please note, 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 your own arrangements in the city.

OR

BHARATPUR TO JAIPUR

After breakfast, drive approximately 4-5 hours (190km) to Jaipur. Upon arrival check into your hotel and later enjoy some shopping inside the walled city, where villagers from around Jaipur come to sell and trade their produce. You will find everything here from saris, jewellery, clothing, shoes to spices. Please note, 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 your own arrangements in the city.

Destination Information

Jaipur - Known as the 'Pink City' for the colour of the buildings in the old town. 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 11: 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 ride 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, sightseeing involves approximately 2 hours on foot and climbing of steps. This evening enjoy a traditional dance performance.

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 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 12: JAIPUR TO JODHPUR

This morning depart Jaipur and commence the drive to Jodhpur, the second largest city in Rajasthan. Drive approximately 7 hours (338km) to Jodhpur. Upon arrival transfer to your hotel for a two-night stay and enjoy the rest of the day at leisure.

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 13: JODHPUR

The first stop this morning is the imposing Mehrangarh Fort, which involves approximately 2 hours on foot and some steps of varying difficulty. The group bus will drop off and collect passengers at the same place, so anyone unable to complete this activity may return and wait for the group. Continue to Jaswant Thada, cluster of royal cenotaphs, before strolling through the museum located in the Umaid Bhawan Palace (now a luxury hotel). Sightseeing this afternoon involves approximately 1 hour of easy walking around the palace and museum. Later take an auto-rickshaw to a local restaurant for lunch before enjoying a walking tour through Subzi Mandi, the local vegetable and spice market.

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 14: JODHPUR TO UDAIPUR

Depart Jodhpur and begin the drive to Udaipur, stopping to explore the Jain temple complex of Ranakpur en route. The drive to Ranakpur is approximately 3-4 hours (168km) and sightseeing here involves 30 minutes of easy walking - refer to **Appropriate Dress** section below. Drive approximately another 3-4 hours (110km) to Udaipur. Upon arrival, proceed to your hotel for a two-night stay.

Destination Information

Ranakpur - A Jain temple complex built in the 15th century and located in the lovely valley of the Aravalli. The main temple in the complex is the Chaumukha (four-faced) Temple, built in 1439. Its 29 halls are supported by 1,444 pillars, of which no two are alike. Also visit the Surya Temple, dedicated to Surya the Sun God, and other Jain temples.

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. At the time, Chittorgarh was the capital of Mewar state, however in 1568 Chittorgarh was attacked by the Mughal emperor Akbar, and so Maharaja Udai Singh moved the capital to Udaipur. Today, the City Palace of Udaipur is still home to Maharaja Udai Singh's descendents who remain rulers of this independent state. We will be able to tell if the Maharaja is in residence by the flag hanging from the palace wall.

DAY 15: UDAIPUR

Begin the day with a drive around the Fateh Sagar Lake. Tour the city, visiting sites such as the Sahelion Ki Bari Gardens, the Folk Museum and Mewar Art Gallery. Later, explore the City Palace, which involves approximately 2 hours of sightseeing on foot. Some stairs at this location are without handrails, so please be cautious. At the palace there are many Pools, also known as gateways. The group will exit at a different gate to that which they entered (entry gate will be Bara Pol (Great Gate) while the exit gate will be Tripolia Pol (a triple arched gate). Before sunset, drive 30 minutes to Lake Pichola for a cruise and view the Lake Palace. Please note that the Lake Palace (now an exclusive hotel) does not allow visitors.

Destination Information

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.

Folk Museum and Mewar Art Gallery - Houses a remarkable collection of Rajasthani folk art that's well worth a visit.

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 Dilkush 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.

Lake Pichola and Lake Palace - The 4km long Lake Pichola is fringed with hills, palaces, havelis, ghats and temples. While on the cruise we will see the Lake Palace, formally known as Jag Niwas, 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 16: UDAIPUR TO KATHMANDU VIA DELHI

Rise early this morning. After checking out of your hotel, you will be transferred (approximately 45 minutes) to the airport for your flight to Delhi (approximately 1.5 hours).

Upon arrival in Delhi, complete the immigration and customs formalities and bid India goodbye as you board your connecting flight to Kathmandu, Nepal. Flight time is

approximately 1hour 40 minutes. Upon arrival in Kathmandu, you will be met in the Arrivals Hall by your National Escort/Local Guide and transfer (20-40 minute drive depending on traffic) to your hotel and check-in for a two night stay. The rest of the day is at leisure to acclimatise to the higher altitude. Our visit to Nepal concentrates on the Kathmandu Valley, which encapsulates the history of Nepal within the ancient capitals of Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur.

Destination Information

Kathmandu altitude 1,337m

Nepal - The small Kingdom of Nepal sits atop the Himalayas wedged between India, Tibet and China. It is renowned for its incredible landscapes and is home to 10 of the world's 14 tallest mountains. The mountaineering race of the early 20th century brought this tiny nation to the attention of the whole world. Even today, from the low lands of the Terai (the plain in the southwest), through the ancient and noble towns of the Kathmandu Valley, to the unrivalled heights of Mt. Everest, the country retains a mediaeval atmosphere. Markets thrive in town squares, alleys wind between temples, homes and water wells, and statues of Ganesh are covered in rice, tiny flowers and coloured powder.

DAY 17: KATHMANDU - PATAN

This morning drive 22km to visit the Dakshinkali Temple. In the afternoon travel to Patan, the second largest city in Nepal. Spend approximately 2 hours on foot here. Visit Durbur Square, including the UNESCO World Heritage listed Royal Palace. Return to Kathmandu in the afternoon.

Destination Information

Dakshinkali Temple - The Dakshinkali Temple is dedicated to the Hindu goddess Kali. This temple is 22km away from the city centre on the southern rim of the valley and is one of the most popular places for worshippers. On Tuesdays and Saturdays the ritual of animal sacrifice is performed before the deity. Please note that many foreigners find the temple confronting as they still make live animal sacrifices here (usually early morning) and can be crowded with pushing.

Patan altitude 1,330m

Patan - The second largest city in Nepal and located 5km from Kathmandu, on the southern bank of the Bagmati River. Until 1768, when King Prithvi Narayan Shah (a Gorka) unified the Kingdoms of Nepal into a single nation, the Kathmandu Valley supported three separate Kings - one in Kathmandu, one in Patan and another in Bhaktapur.

Durbar Square - Situated in the heart of the city, Durbar Square is the centre of Patan's religious and social life. The stunning display of Newari architecture houses three main

courtyards, an array of temples, shrines, houses and the Royal Palace.

Royal Palace - Though parts of the richly decorated Royal palace dates back to the 14th century, the majority of the construction was completed in the 17th century. The Royal Palace forms the eastern side of the Durbar Square and contains a series of courtyards, temples and a museum for the royal collection.

DAY 18: KATHMANDU

Sightseeing today begins at Durbar Square and the Kumari Temple where you will have approximately 2 hours of light sightseeing. Continue to two of the most important significant sites in Nepal, Swayambhunath Stupa and Bodhnath Stupa. Later, travel to Pashupatinath Temple and end the day with a stroll through Thamel Markets. There is very little sun protection, so bring hats and sunscreen. Keep a firm hold of cameras as monkeys have been known to steal them! Please note that here you may see the practice of animal sacrifice or cremation at Pashupatinath Temple. – Please refer to Nepalese Customs section for further information on touring.

Destination Information

Durbar Square - At heart of the Old City is the UNESCO World Heritage listed Durbar Square, a cluster of ancient temples, palaces and courtyards that date back to 12th and 18th centuries. The square is located on the site of Hanuman Dhoka Palace, which was the Royal Nepalese residence until the 19th Century.

Kumari Temple - Situated close to the palace is the Kumari Temple, the temple of the Living Goddess. The Living Goddess is a Weng girl who lives within the temple, acknowledging visitor's greetings from the central window.

Swayambhunath Stupa - Often called 'the monkey temple' because of the hundreds of monkeys that scamper about the place. Its location, atop a hill west of Kathmandu, makes the stupa visible for miles and is thought to have been a Buddhist pilgrimage site since the 5th century.

Bodhnath Stupa - The largest stupa in Nepal and the capital city's religious centre for ethnic Tibetans who form a significant proportion of Nepal's population. The Bodhnath Stupa is thought to have been originally built in 600AD, after the famous Tibetan King, Songtsen Gampo was converted to Buddhism.

Pashupatinath Temple - A Hindu temple of Lord Shiva situated 5km east of Kathmandu on the banks of the sacred

Bagmati River. Pashupatinath Temple has a two tiered golden roof and is famous for its superb architecture. It is a centre of annual pilgrimage on the day of Maha Shivaratri. Here one may also witness the cremations of the dead bodies of Hindus. Devotees from all over the world come here to pay their homage to Lord Shiva.

Please note: Entrance to Pashupatinath is permitted to the Hindus only, however visitors can clearly see the temple and the activities performed inside the temple from the eastern bank of the Bagmati.

Thamel Market - a local tourist area filled with mountaineering shops, café's restaurants, pubs and clubs.

DAY 19: KATHMANDU TO DHULIKHEL

Today you will drive to Dhulikhel, visiting Changu Narayan Temple en route. Spend approximately 1-2 hours at this site, there are some uneven steps here. We will also stop at the small village of Thimi, known for its local pottery and manufacturing of masks.

After lunch we drive to Dhulikhel, 30km east of Kathmandu, enjoying the spectacular view of the Himalayas.

Destination Information

Changu Narayan Temple - A UNESCO World Heritage listed site situated on a ridge overlooking the valley, this temple is dedicated to the Hindu God Vishnu and is one of the finest examples of pagoda architecture.

Thimi - A small village known for its local pottery and the manufacture of masks.

Dhulikhel altitude 1,600m

Dhulikhel - Dhulikhel is located 30km east of Kathmandu and offers spectacular views of the Himalayas. A well-preserved Newari town, Dhulikel offers an insight into traditional life in Nepal.

DAY 20: DHULIKHEL TO KATHMANDU VIA BHAKTAPUR

Rise early this morning to view the sunrise. After breakfast we return to Kathmandu visiting Bhaktapur, the third of the ancient royal capitals, en route. At Durbar Square we will visit the Golden Gate at the Palace of 55 Windows as we weave our way through to the Taumadhi Tole Square. We will have a few hours to explore the alleys that link these squares. Depending on the time available to us, as well as the walking pace of our group, we will try to visit the wonderful Potter's Square located nearby before we return to Kathmandu.

At dinner this evening we will enjoy a performance of traditional Nepalese dancing.

Destination Information

Bhaktapur - Traffic is prohibited in Bhaktapur, making it a wonderful place to explore on foot. At the original town gates, our group coach will drop us off and we will receive a ticket that allows us entry into several important sites within Bhaktapur. The absence of traffic makes this a treasure trove of antiquated sites. In markets and alleys we will see corn husks or handmade noodles all laid out on a sheet to dry in the sun, baskets of chillies, temples and shrines covered with offerings of food, brightly coloured powder or flowers.

Durbar Square - Founded in the 12th century and located in the heart of the city, Bhaktapur's charming Durbar Square is filled with monuments, palaces and temples with elaborately carved roofs.

Golden Gate - The splendid Golden Gate is entrance to the Palace of 55 Window. Completed in 1754, the gate is one of the finest examples of Nepal's repoussé metalwork.

Palace of 55 Windows - Built in the 17th century, the palace features a balcony of 55 intricate wooden windows, a masterpiece of wood carving.

DAY 21: DEPART KATHMANDU

This morning is at leisure. After check-out you will be transferred to Kathmandu airport to board your onward flight home.

DAY 22: ARRIVE HOME

Arrive home today.

HIGHLIGHTS OF INDIA & NEPAL TRAVEL INFORMATION

Visas

Entry visas are required by all visitors to India and Nepal. Please be advised that your passport must have at least 6 months validity left on it when you arrive back into Australia.

For India: Please be advised that all Visa Applications for India MUST be completed on-line at the VFS website: 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 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.

For Nepal: Please be advised that for all visa applications to Nepal, Wendy Wu Tours will provide passengers with forms to be completed by hand. Once the form is completed, the application and passport will need to be sent to Wendy Wu Tours. Visa application forms and all relevant documentation are due in our office 60 days prior to departure; if received after this date; urgent visa processing fees will apply.

Passports will be returned with your Final 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 & Nepal

Indian and Nepalese cuisine is one of the most influential, diverse and flavorsome culinary styles in the world. The dishes incorporate many spices and seasoning to create an explosion of flavors. Though the local cuisine can vary greatly from the Indian and Nepalese 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 Highlights of India & Nepal 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 and Nepal. 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. Please note double bed requests can be made at time of booking but cannot be guaranteed.

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.

Early Check-In/Late Check-Out

Early check-in and late check-out is not included in this Indian and Nepal group tour. If you wish to add this 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.

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 and Nepal 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 and Nepal 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.

Trains: This trip involves 1 day journey in AC class cars – refer to your Travel Guide’s TRANSPORT section for more information. Getting on and off the trains in India can be quite disordered and amusing 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.

Development in India & Nepal

Although India and Nepal are developing quickly, the countries still lack 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 and Nepal 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.

Luggage

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each; a suitcase with a maximum weight of 15kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of 7kgs. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. Please note that Indian and Nepalese 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, Jaipur, Agra, Kathmandu and other main cities that extra care and attention is paid when exchanging money. US Dollars are easily exchanged throughout India and Nepal 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.

Before departing Delhi for Kathmandu, all tour participants will need to change their large Indian Rupee denominations (INR500 and INR1,000 notes) into Nepalese Rupee (NPR) before boarding the flight. INR 500 and 1,000 notes are not accepted in foreign exchange centres in Nepal. If you are re-entering India after your time in Nepal, please make appropriate arrangements.

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

Visit wendywutours.com.au

Call 1300 727 998 to speak to a Reservations Consultant

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.

Nepalese Customs

Nepal has many special customs and rituals that tie into daily life, some of these may be surprising or unsettling for some passengers. While the guide will make every effort to forewarn passengers when visiting sites that may participate in the practise of animal sacrifice or cremation, there may be special local festivals within villages where such rituals are unavoidable. When visiting the Pashupatinath Temple in Kathmandu, please be aware that you may witness cremations taking place across the canal. Please note when visiting Dakshinkali Temple the ritual of animal sacrifice is performed before the deity on Tuesdays and Saturdays. If you would prefer not to participate in this touring, please let your National Escort/Local Guide know upon arrival in Nepal.

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.

Safari Bookings in Ranthambore National Park

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 a deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot confirm your safari arrangements without this information.

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 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.

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