



Highlights of India & Nepal Dossier

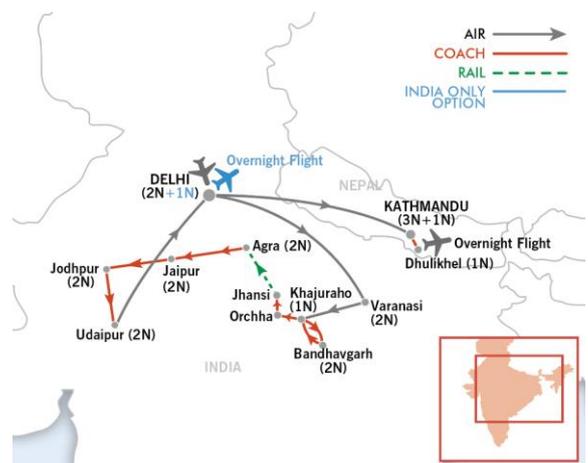
Classic Tour | 22 Days | Moderate

Delhi – Varanasi – Bandhavgarh – Khajuraho – Agra – Jaipur – Jodhpur – Udaipur – Kathmandu – Patan – Dhulikhel

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:

- Feel the buzz of Delhi
- Explore ancient Varanasi
- Marvel at the Taj Mahal
- Safari through a National Park
- Cruise on Lake Pichola
- Enjoy atmospheric Kathmandu



Highlights of India & Nepal tour inclusions

- Return international 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)

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

Classic Tour

These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of India & Nepal on an excellent value group tour while 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/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 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 & Nepal

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.

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, the price includes visa fees and your arrival/ departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to reservations. 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

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 maintaining the integrity of your trip.

Changes:

- Removed 2 nights in Ranthambore or Bharatpur / Added 2 nights in Bandhavgarh National Park
- Overnight in Khajuraho and touring moved from day 5 to day 7
- Agra overnights and touring moved from days 6 & 7 to days 8 & 9
- Instead of visiting Ranthambore National park or Bharatur (with Keoladeo National Park) all departures will visit Bandhavgarh National Park – The density of the Tiger population at Bandhavgarh is the highest known in India, making this stop a fantastic opportunity for wildlife spotting. You will travel here from Varanasi (flying to Khajuraho and transferring by coach the rest of the way). Touring in Khajuraho and Agra has been re-arranged accordingly but no touring will be missed
- **For 2018** in Bandhavgarh 2 Jeep safaris have been included on all departures. Based on previous client feedback this provides enough opportunity to spot the local wildlife and from a jeep you will get a more personal experience from your naturalist guide than you would have from a canter safari
- 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 changes as they are informed of them.
- 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.

Highlight of India & Nepal Itinerary

DAY 1: AUSTRALIA TO DELHI

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

Destination Information

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

Today starts with a brief tour introduction. This 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 enjoying a stroll through the fascinating Chandni Chowk Bazaar to Jama Masjid. Stop briefly for a photo opportunity at India Gate drive by Rashtrapati Bhavan and continue to Gandhi Smriti (closed on Mondays). End the day at Qutab Minar and also visit the Iron Pillar, which has withstood the ravages of time and has not rusted after 1,500 years.

Destination Information

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.

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.

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 One.

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.

DAY 3: DELHI TO VARANASI

In the morning, transfer 45 minutes to the airport to board your onward two hour flight to Varanasi. On arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel, approximately 45 minutes drive. This evening, 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.

In Varanasi, it would be unwise to wander around without your National Escort or Local Guide at night as there have been several reports of pickpockets.

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.

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 one to two 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. Return to the hotel for breakfast. The rest of the day's sightseeing is leisurely, involving approximately one 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.

Destination Information

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

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

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

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

DAY 5: VARANASI TO BANDHAVGARH

Transfer to the airport to board your onward 40 minute flight to Khajuraho. On arrival, transfer approximately five hours to Bandhavgarh National Park and check into your hotel.

Destination Information

Bandhavgarh – The National Park with the highest density of tiger population in India.

DAY 6: BANDHAVGARH

Today you will have both a morning and an afternoon shared Jeep safari in the park to look for the local wildlife. This involves two to three hours of driving through the park in Jeeps on uneven and unsealed tracks, returning to the hotel for lunch.

DAY 7: BANDHAVGARH TO KHAJURAHO

After breakfast, drive approximately five hours to Khajuraho and check in at the hotel on arrival. In the afternoon, commence your sightseeing tour of the Western Group of Khajuraho temples. The most important and one of the largest of the Western Group of temples is the Kandariya Mahadeo Temple, dedicated to Lord Shiva. You will also see the Vamana Temple, dedicated to the 'Vamana' or dwarf incarnation of Lord Vishnu as well as the Javari Temple. Later in the evening, enjoy a cultural dancing dance performance.

DAY 8: KHAJURAGO TO AGRA

Depart Khajuraho and drive approximately four to five hours to Jhansi, visiting the medieval city of 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 two and a half hours to Agra where, upon arrival, you will transfer to your hotel and check-in.

Please note: As your train is a day train, your seats will be in an AC Chair Car. More than likely you will not be able to purchase any food or drink on the train, so if you need snacks make sure to pre-purchase them before boarding. The train carriages are shared, so 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 9: AGRA

Today explore the impressive Agra Fort. Sightseeing here involves approximately one and a half hours on foot and climbing of stairs. Later, stroll Sadar Bazaar to the see Tirupati Temple.

Destination Information

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.

DAY 10: AGRA TO JAIPUR

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). Disembarking the coach you will board smaller electric carts to continue to the entrance gate. After clearing security and baggage checks you will be admitted to the complex. Usually two 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, drive to Jaipur, stopping en route at Fatehpur Sikri to visit the ancient capital city. Sightseeing here involves up to one hour of easy walking.

On arrival in Jaipur, 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: The Taj Mahal is currently undergoing renovations to its exterior. The work is estimated to be completed by December 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 favorite 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 prophesied 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.

Jaipur - Known as the 'Pink City' for the colour of the buildings in the old town. Jaipur was founded in 1727 as Mughal power within India was declining. The then Maharaja Jai Singh moved his capital from 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 rides up to the palace have not been included in your itinerary because of the concerns to the animals and the unreliability of this service. Sightseeing this morning involves two to three hours on foot and there are a number of steps within the fort. Next you have the opportunity to try your hand at

the local handicraft of block printing and carpet weaving at a nearby craft centre. Afterwards, tour the City Palace in Jaipur and Jantar Mantar, the UNESCO World Heritage listed ancient observatory, sightseeing here involves approximately two hours on foot. Later, enjoy dinner at a local restaurant and enjoy live music and traditional entertainment.

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 seven hours to Jodhpur. Upon arrival transfer to your hotel for a two night stay and check in. In the evening enjoy a leisurely walking tour exploring the local vegetable and spice market, Subzi Mandi.

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 two 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, a cluster of royal cenotaphs, before strolling through the museum located in the Umaid Bhawan Palace (now a luxury hotel). Sightseeing here involves approximately one hour of easy walking around the palace and museum. Later take an auto-rickshaw to a local restaurant for lunch before enjoying the rest of the afternoon at leisure.

Destination Information

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

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

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

DAY 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 three to four hours and sightseeing here involves 30 minutes of easy walking. Drive approximately another three to four hours 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 descendants who remain rulers of this independent state.

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 two hours of sightseeing on foot. Some stairs at this location are without handrails, so please be cautious. 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. The Lake Palace, formally known as Jag Niwas, was built between 1734 and 1751. It was once a royal summer retreat and is now one of the world's greatest hotels. It is also a popular location for film shoots, including James Bond's Octopussy.

DAY 16: UDAIPUR TO KATHMANDU

Rise early this morning. After checking out of your hotel, you will be transferred 45 minutes to the airport for your flight to Delhi which is approximately one and a half 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 one hour and 40 minutes. Upon arrival in Kathmandu, you will be met in the Arrivals Hall by your National Escort or Local Guide and transfer around half an

hour 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.

KATMANDU ALTITUDE 1,337M

Destination Information

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 medieval 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: KATMANDU – PATAN

This morning, visit the Dakshina Kali Temple. In the afternoon travel to Patan, the second largest city in Nepal. Spend approximately two hours on foot here. Visit Durbar Square, including the UNESCO World Heritage listed Royal Palace. Return to Kathmandu in the afternoon.

PATAN ALTITUDE 1,330M

Destination Information

Dakshina Kali Temple - The Dakshina Kali 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 - 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 Durbar Square and contains a series of courtyards, temples and a museum for the royal collection.

DAY 18: KATMANDU

Sightseeing today begins at Durbar Square and the Kumari Temple where you will have approximately two 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, cafés and restaurants.

DAY 19: KATMANDU TO DHULIKHEL

Today you will drive to Dhulikhel, visiting Changu Narayan Temple en route. Spend approximately one to two hours at this site, there are some uneven steps here. You will also stop at the small village of Thimi, known for its local pottery and manufacturing of masks. After lunch, drive to Dhulikhel, enjoying the spectacular views 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 - 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

Rise early this morning to view the sunrise. After breakfast, return to Kathmandu visiting Bhaktapur, the third of the ancient royal capitals, en route. At the original town gates, your group coach will drop you off and you will receive a ticket that allows you entry into several important sites within Bhaktapur. At Durbar Square you will visit the

Golden Gate at the Palace of 55 Windows as we weave our way through to the Taumadhi Tole Square. You will have a few hours to explore the alleys that link these squares. Depending on the time available to you, as well as the walking pace of your group, you may visit the wonderful Potter's Square located nearby before you return to Kathmandu. At dinner this evening, you 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. The absence of traffic makes this a treasure trove of antiquated sites. In markets and alleys, corn husks and handmade noodles are 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 craving.

DAYS 21-22: KATHMANDU TO AUSTRALIA

You will be transferred to the airport according to the departure time of your flight today. Any time before your flight will be at leisure.

HIGHLIGHTS OF INDIA & NEPAL TRAVEL INFORMATION

Visas

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

For 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 six months from the date of issue and allow you to stay in the country for up to six months. Visa application forms and all relevant documentation are due in our office 75 days prior to departure. Applications will not be accepted within 50 days of departure. Passports will be returned with your final documentation two to three weeks prior to your group tour's scheduled departure. If you require your passport to be returned earlier, a \$15AUD 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 two to three weeks prior to your group tour's scheduled departure. If you require your passport to be returned earlier, a \$15AUD 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 flavoursome culinary styles in the world. Indian dishes incorporate many spices and seasoning to create an explosion of flavours. Though Indian cuisine can vary greatly from the Indian food we get in Australia, it is important to keep an open mind and be adventurous. All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our fully inclusive Classic group tour, from the Breakfast on day 2 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, vegetable with meat mixed in, and a few will be solely+ 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 and late check out is not included in our India and Nepal group tours. If you wish to add early check-in and late check out 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. Due to Indian government regulations the use of curtains/tinted glass windows is prohibited in coaches/buses & taxis across India. 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 below are approximations only.

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.

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

Trains: Getting on and off the trains in India & Nepal 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 & Nepal are developing quickly, they 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.

Public Holidays in India & Nepal

If you are travelling within the below Indian Public Holidays please note that celebrations can last a couple of days and during these times some businesses will be closed and coach, air and train travel may be affected. Tourist attractions will be open, but may be crowded. India Republic Day is on 26th January, the Holi Festival 1st - 2nd March 2018 (The Hindu 'Festival of Colours' can include locals smearing coloured powder on one another. Every effort will be made to minimise the effect on passengers whilst touring). Diwali Festival is on 7th November 2018.

If you are travelling within the below Nepali Public Holidays please note that celebrations can last a couple of days and during these times some businesses will be closed and coach, air and train travel may be affected. Tourist attractions will be open, but may be crowded. The Holi Festival 1st - 2nd March 2018 (The Hindu 'Festival of Colours' can include locals smearing coloured powder on one another. Every effort will be made to minimise the effect on passengers whilst touring). Nepali New Year is celebrated on the 14th April and Dashain Festival on 19th October.

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 both a National Escort/Local Guides. 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

Local tipping is customary in Asia. However, this can often lead to awkwardness in knowing when it is appropriate to tip and how much, as well as ensuring you have a suitable amount of change available at the time. For your convenience, with years of experiences in providing the best customer service, Wendy Wu Tours operates a kitty system on our Group Tours so your National Escort will look after this aspect of your trip for you. It also ensures that the amounts paid are reasonable for you but still fair for the local people. The amount is stated on each Group Tour page will be advised again on your final documentation. Tipping is in US Dollars and will be collected by your National Escort on arrival and distributed throughout the tour on your behalf. Any additional tipping on any of our tours is welcomed at your discretion. Further guidance for tipping contributions will be outlined in your final documentation.

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 seven kilograms. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. Please note that authorities will only allow bottles onto the aircraft if they have been checked in as main baggage. Bottles in hand luggage may be confiscated.

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.

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

Personal Expense - 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 AUD\$250 per person, per week should be sufficient; however for those that can't resist a bargain or may wish to participate in all of the optional excursions, consider allocating a higher amount.

Optional Tours - May be offered in each city you visit during your tour. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits and if seats are available. In your Final Documentation an Optional Excursion Sheet will be included outlining the activities available in each city and local cost associated. Please ensure you have additional funds available

if you feel you may wish to participate in any extra activities. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide, participation and tipping for optional excursions is completely at your discretion.

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.

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 practice 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.

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 Dakshina Kali 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 & Nepal – 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 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

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 four weeks prior to departure.

Updated: 10th October 2017