



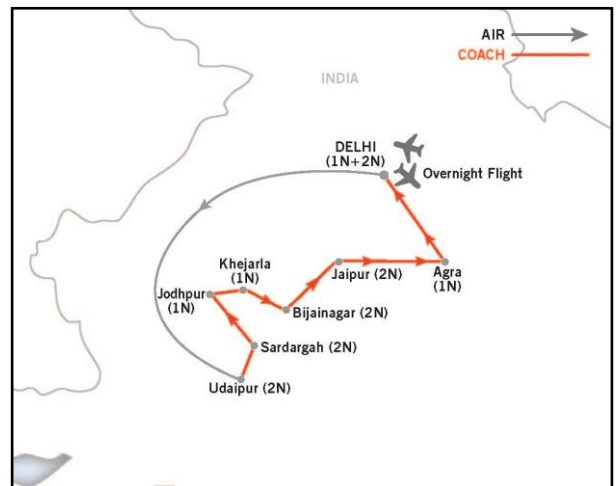
Vibrant India Tour Dossier

Discovery Tour | 16 Days | Active

Explore the colourful and lively Rajasthan state; from the big cities to the small, remote villages. Your imagination will be captured with the sights and sounds and engage with the people that make this such a magical region of India.

Tour Highlights:

- **Delhi** - India's capital consisting of a lively mix of historical monuments, modern day sky scrapers and colourful local bazaars
- **Udaipur** - Lake Pichola with its floating Lake Palace is the centrepiece among many treasures
- **Sardargarh** - Stay in a heritage hotel located in rural Rajasthan and explore the nearby area and remote villages by jeep
- **Jodhpur** - Majestic Mehrangarh Fort dominates this busy city
- **Bijaynager** - Discover rural Rajasthan by bicycle and bullock cart during your stay at a heritage hotel
- **Jaipur** - Capital of the Rajasthan State and often referred to as the 'pink city' due to pink sandstone used in the old quarter
- **Agra** - Home to the magnificent Taj Mahal, the famous monument to love



Vibrant India tour inclusions

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- Meals as stated on your itinerary
- 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, meals not stated in the itinerary, early check in or late checkout and other items not specified on the itinerary are at your own expense.

Discovery Tours

Designed for those who wish to be further immersed in the authentic charm of Asia; our Discovery Tours include more cultural and active experiences. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escorts or Local Guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience. Our Discovery tours include:

- Cycling and walking through classic sites
- Unique cultural experiences and encounters
- Off the beaten track destinations
- More evenings at leisure for independent exploration

Active

'Vibrant India' is an **active** tour. Active tours require a good level of fitness, as they are physically more demanding. They may involve hiking, and some travel to remote, high altitude areas where tourist facilities are less developed.

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.

Itinerary Changes

1. It is our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate. In these circumstances, we will make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.
2. The domestic airlines in this region have frequent schedule changes. For this reason, we have indicated morning, afternoon or evening flights only in the following section. Your Local Guide or National Escort will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them.
3. The Taj Mahal is currently undergoing renovations to its exterior. The work is estimated to be completed by March 2018 and will be done in phases so that visitors to the Taj will still be able to experience the beauty of this architectural wonder.
4. Enhancements to the itinerary have been made to 2017 departures to improve the passengers overall experience. The cycling tour on day 2 will now be altered to suit each group's capabilities. On Day 5, the short cycling tour will be replaced by a rural experience on a heritage train, on Day 8 a visit to a horse farm has been replaced with a visit to 1500-year-old temple and a cooking lesson has been added. Additions to the tour include a yoga session will be included on Day 11 and a walking tour of Old Delhi has been added to Day 14. On the morning of Day 15 there is an option cycling tour of Delhi that can be arranged locally (at your own expense).

Joining Your Tour

The tour is 16 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 15 in Delhi. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

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 to arrival time

Vibrant India Itinerary

DAY 1: AUSTRALIA TO DELHI

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

No meals are included today

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 TO UDAIPUR

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.

After breakfast transfer to Delhi airport and board your onward flight to Udaipur (flight duration 1.5 hours). This

afternoon enjoy a cycling tour of Udaipur through the backstreets of the old city, which will take approximately 3 hours. Your National escort will select the best route for today's cycle, taking in consideration the groups capabilities and interests. In the evening enjoy a sunset cruise along Lake Pichola.

Meals included: Breakfast and dinner

Destination Information

Udaipur - The origins of Udaipur are based on a legend which tells of a holy sage that Maharaja Udai Singh encountered while hunting in the foothills of the Aravalli Range in Mewar. The sage told the King to build a palace in that exact spot and it would be well-protected and so with this advice, Maharaja Udai Singh built his residence there. 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. You will be able to tell if the Maharaja is in residence by the flag hanging from the palace wall.

Lake Pichola - The 4km long Lake Pichola is fringed with hills, palaces, havelis, ghats and temples. While on the cruise you 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 3: UDAIPUR

This morning explore the stunning City Palace, which involves approximately 1 hour of sightseeing on foot. Some stairs at this location are without handrails, so please be cautious. At the palace, there are many Pals, 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).

Later drive around the Fateh Sagar Lake before travelling outside the city to visit Shilpgram, a small rural art and crafts village.

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Destination Information

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 crystal.

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

Shilpgram - A rural arts and crafts complex, located 3km west of the city of Udaipur and surrounded by the Aravali Mountain Range.

DAY 4: UDAIPUR TO SARDARGARH

Depart Udaipur and travel 4-5 hours (169km) to Sardargarh, stopping en route at Ranakpur to visit the largest Jain temple complex in India. Sightseeing here involves 30 minutes of easy walking - refer to **Appropriate Dress** section below. Check into your Sardargarh hotel upon arrival and enjoy some time at leisure.

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

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.

Sardargarh - A small rural village in Rajasthan, home to one of the most magnificent forts in India.

DAY 5: SARDARGARH

This morning enjoy a guided tour of the fort. In the afternoon, embark on a rural experience on a heritage train. Later, travel by jeep to remote villages near Sardargarh where you will have the opportunity to view the lifestyles of the locals and meet a Sadhu (a holy man). Learn about the local handicrafts at a marble workshop before admiring the spectacular sunset against the fort. Each jeep can sit six passengers and will take approximately 2-3 hours.

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Destination Information

Heritage Train Ride - Travel on a local train passing through the Aravali Mountain range, through tunnels built by the British. There are no pre-reserved seating available on the train, but you will be accompanied by your National Escort and hotel staff members.

DAY 6: SARDARGARH TO JODHPUR

Say goodbye to Sardargarh as you begin the 5 hour (204km) journey to India's blue city, Jodhpur. Upon arrival check into your hotel and enjoy the remainder of the day at leisure.

Meals included: Breakfast and lunch

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 7: JODHPUR TO FORT KHEJARLA

Begin the day exploring 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. Visit Jaswant Thada and later drive to 2.5 hours (100km) to Khejarla for an overnight stay.

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

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.

Fort Khejarla - Situated in a rural setting, the 400-year-old, Fort Khejarla offers guests an enlivening experience. The stunning red sandstone monument is a mesmerizing example of the architecture of the Rajputs. The rugged exterior contradicts an inner paradise with a striking blend of art and architecture leaving one with a magnificent aura! The unique feature of this family-run hotel is that the hosts and the royal family reside within the Fort. Some of the staff are descendants of the noblemen who served the royal family for generations.

DAY 8: FORT KHEJARLA TO BIJAYNAGAR

Explore Rajasthan's desert and village lifestyle this morning on a jeep safari. As well as a local villages, visit a step well, a 1,500-year-old temple of a form of the deity Durga, a block-printing mill and the old markets. This afternoon travel 3.5 hours (128km) to Bijaynagar for a two-night stay in Bijay Niwas Palace.

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Destination Information

Bijay Niwas Palace - A family-run heritage hotel located in the small Rajasthan village of Bijaynagar. Bijay Nawas was built almost 100 years ago, at the same time that the village was founded.

DAY 9: BIJAYNAGAR

Travel approximately 20 to 25 minutes to nearby village this morning by bullock cart, where you will discover rural Rajasthan. At the village, you will have the opportunity to view local mud houses, rural school and a local temple. Return to the hotel and partake in a cooking lesson at the hotel, where you will learn some delicious Indian recipes. In the evening take a camel cart ride (duration 15-20 minutes)

to a nearby lake where you can view the spectacular sunset while enjoying a High Tea.

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Destination Information

Bijaynagar - Encounter the real rural Rajasthan during your stay in this small village. Explore the surrounding villages and gain an insight into country life in India.

DAY 10: BIJAYNAGAR TO JAIPUR

After breakfast depart Bijaynagar and begin the 4 hour (185km) drive to Jaipur, the pink city. Upon arrival check into your hotel for a two-night stay.

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

Meals included: Breakfast and lunch

Destination Information

Jaipur - Was founded in 1727, at a time when Mughal power within India was declining. At this time 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 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

Start the day off with a 1 hour yoga session, which will be held at the hotel or by the pool lawn at your hotel. Sightseeing 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. Tour a rug factory to learn more of this local handicraft and visit a gem-cutting workshop, another handicraft of the region.

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Destination Information

Hawa Mahal (Palace of the Winds) - Hawa Mahal is 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 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.

DAY 12: JAIPUR TO AGRA

Say goodbye to the pink city and commence the 7 hour (296km) drive to Agra, stopping en route to explore Fatehpur Sikri. Continue to Agra and in the late afternoon enjoy an auto-rickshaw tour of the city (approximately 1-2 hours). The tour will take you through old bazaars, Jama Masjid and the spice and Ayurveda market.

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Destination Information

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. While here 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.

Agra - Home to the world famous Taj Mahal. Agra rose to fame in the mediaeval 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.

Auto-rickshaw tour - The rickshaw tour takes you through the old bazaars, traditional eating joints and places of worship. Agra is a melting point of three cultures - Hindu, Muslim, and Christian. The tour takes you such sites as Hazuri Bhawan, the headquarters of the Radhasoami faith, the ancient Manka Meshwar temple, Jama Masjid, one of the largest Mosques in Agra and to the Spice & Ayurveda market.

DAY 13: AGRA TO DELHI

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

Return to your hotel to freshen up and have breakfast. Explore the magnificent Agra Fort, sightseeing here involves approximately 1.5 hours on foot and there are some stairs to walk up. Later, drive 4 hours (204km) to Delhi for an overnight stay.

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.

Meals included: Breakfast and lunch

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.

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.

DAY 14: DELHI

Today is a full day of sightseeing around Old and New Delhi, involving approximately 3 hours on foot. Begin with a walking tour of Old Delhi, visiting Jama Masjid, the bustling streets of Chandni Chowk and Khar Baoli, the spice market, where you can learn about the various uses of spices. Visit some perfume stores and enjoy a rickshaw ride through the narrow lanes. Enjoy lunch at an Old Haveli called Haveli Dhurampura. This afternoon continue to Qutab Minar before heading to New Delhi. Drive past the Rashtrapati Bhawan, Parliament House and the India Gate and end the day with a visit to Humayun's Tomb. This evening enjoy a Kathak Dance performance and an Indian BBQ for dinner.

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.

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Destination Information

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

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

Qutab Minar - Built in the 12th century, this tower of victory is gracefully hand-carved along its entire height of 73m. Also visit the Iron Pillar, which has withstood the ravages of time and has not rusted after 1,500 years

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.

DAY 15: DEPART DELHI

Discover Delhi as it wakes up this morning on an optional cycling tour (at your own expense). After breakfast, you will be transferred to Delhi Haat, an open-air market, where you can enjoy some last minute shopping. Return to your hotel where you will have a late check out until 18:00 before being met and transferred to Delhi airport to board your overnight flight to Australia.

Meals included: Breakfast

DAY 16: ARRIVE AUSTRALIA

Arrive home today.

VIBRANT INDIA TRAVEL INFORMATION

Visas

Entry visas are required by all visitors to India and Wendy Wu Tours Visa Department can assist you with the process of obtaining a visa. Please be advised that your passport must have at least 6 months validity left on it when you arrive back into Australia.

Please be advised that all Visa Applications for India MUST be completed on-line at the VFS website: www.vfsglobal.com/india/australia. Wendy Wu Tours will assist you with instructions. Once the form is completed, the

Visit wendywutours.com.au

Call 1300 727 998 to speak to a Reservations Consultant

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.

Insurance

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

Eating in India

Indian cuisine is one of the most influential, diverse and flavorful culinary styles in the world. Indian dishes incorporate many spices and seasoning to create an explosion of flavors. Though Indian cuisine can vary greatly from the Indian food we get in Australia, it is important to keep an open mind and be adventurous. Meals as listed on the above itinerary (excluding drinks) are included in our Vibrant India group tour. 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 that 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.

Throughout Rajasthan state, you will get the opportunity to stay in heritage properties that are restored palaces or forts. As these properties were not originally designed to be hotels, the room sizes will vary in the same accommodation category, as will the décor and layout. This uniqueness only adds to your experience in India.

Early Check-In/Late Check-Out

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

Transport

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

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

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

Development in India

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

Souvenirs

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions which demonstrates a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone so we aim to take you to places that 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. There will usually be no more than 18 travellers in each group although you may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 8 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so. For groups with fewer than 10 travellers, departures will operate with Local Guides only.

Tipping Policy

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

This nominated tipping amount is to be given to your National Escort at the beginning of your tour, who will then distribute it amongst your main service providers – guides, drivers and coach attendants – on your behalf during the tour. Any other tipping, such as tips for camera and video fees, bathroom attendants or hotel porters that are taking luggage to your room, is at your discretion as are gratuities for additional requested special services. We encourage passengers to have a supply of small denominations of local currency to distribute for personal tipping. The tipping amount is determined based on the total number of passengers travelling in the group. The amount is designed to be at a reasonable level for travellers while being fair to the local people and includes a gratuity for the National Escort. The final tipping amount will be outlined in your final documentation, which is distributed 2 weeks prior to your tour's 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 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.

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\$350 per week should be sufficient; however for those that cannot resist a bargain, consider allocating a higher amount.

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

Climbing Steps

Sightseeing at nearly all of the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves climbing quite a number of steps. These palaces were built to provide defense against potential invaders so nearly all of them stand on top of a hill, while the interiors have layers of narrow hallways and steps to slow down the advance of enemies once they were inside. The steps tend to be quite

large, not level and sometimes without handrails. Hindu and Buddhist temples or pagodas also tend to be built at an elevation, as this is the most auspicious position according to ancient beliefs. This means you sometimes need to walk from the bus park to the entrance, and/or need to climb some steps inside.

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

Cultural Differences

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

Appropriate Dress

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

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

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

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.traveltax.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 2 weeks prior to departure.

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