



## Inspiring India Dossier

### Classic Tour | 14 Days | Moderate

Delhi – Agra – Ranthambore – Bundi – Udaipur - Pushkar – Jaipur – Gurgaon

India, with its diversity of colours, culture and heritage, is one of the world's most inspiring destinations. Explore the charms of Delhi, see the Taj Mahal at sunrise, search for tigers in Ranthambore and soak up the extravagance of Rajasthan on one extraordinary itinerary

#### TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:

- Feel the buzz of Delhi
- Marvel at the Taj Mahal
- Spot tigers in Ranthambore
- Explore Chittor Fort
- See the palaces of Udaipur
- Discover 'Pink City' Jaipur



## Inspiring India 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 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

'Inspiring India' is a moderate tour. This means that the itinerary requires a good level of fitness.

- There will be sightseeing on foot for both short and extended periods of time
- Sightseeing at nearly all of the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves climbing quite a number of steps, often without handrails
- You may be required to get on and off various sizes of boats, rickshaws and safari vehicles throughout the tour

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.

## Joining Your Tour

The tour is 14 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 13 in Gurgaon. 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.

- 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 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.

### 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.

## Inspiring India Itinerary

### DAY 1: AUSTRALIA TO DELHI

Fly to Delhi for a two-night stay. Your National Escort/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 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: DISCOVER DELHI

Today is a full day of sightseeing around Old and New Delhi, involving approximately four hours on foot. Your exploration of Delhi begins with a drive past the Red Fort, before strolling through the fascinating Chandni Chowk Bazaar to Jama Masjid. Stop briefly at India Gate to take some photos before visiting the Lakshmi Narayan Hindu Temple, Humayun's Tomb and Connaught Place Markets. Later this afternoon, visit the Qutab Minar Complex, visiting a myriad of monuments that combine both Islamic calligraphy and Hindu motifs, commemorating the onset of Islamic rule in India.

#### Destination Information

**Red Fort** - Home of the Mughal Emperor for many years, the fort is located in the center 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.

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

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

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

Depart Delhi this morning and commence the three hour drive to the historic city of Agra. On arrival, visit the Itmad-ud-Daulah, nicknamed the Baby Taj, an exquisite marble tomb that predates the Taj Mahal and is thought to have inspired it. You'll also explore the hulking mass of red sandstone that is Agra Fort, which sits on the banks of the Yamuna River. The Fort was established in the 16<sup>th</sup> century but has been much added to over time, making it an eclectic mix of architectural styles.

#### **Destination Information**

**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.

**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 19<sup>th</sup> century. A deep moat, once filled with water from the Yamuna River, surrounds the fort.

### **DAY 4: AGRA TO RANTHAMBORE**

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). 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 not many steps. For admission to the main mausoleum area, you are required to wear shoe covers (this may be provided on site – be prepared to bring an additional pair of socks). Return to your hotel to freshen up and have breakfast. Later, commence your drive of approximately six hours to Ranthambore, visiting the abandoned ghost city of Fatehpur Sikri en route.

*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.*

### **DAY 5: RANTHAMBORE**

Enjoy both morning and afternoon canter safaris through the national park, keeping your eyes peeled for tigers! There are around 50 majestic Bengal tigers that are living amongst Ranthambore's undulating landscapes, as well as leopards, nilgai, sloth bears, wild boar, hyena and over 300 species of bird.

*Please note: You will need your passport to gain entry to the NP.*

#### **Destination Information**

**Ranthambore National Park** - Is one of the prime examples of Project Tiger's conservation efforts in Rajasthan. The forest around Ranthambore was once the private hunting grounds of the Maharajas of Jaipur and is one of the largest national parks in Northern India. Ranthambore National Park is renowned for its tiger population, however you may also come across other wild animals such as leopard, nilgai, wild boar, sambar, hyena and sloth bear.

### **DAY 6: RANTHAMBORE – BUNDI**

Drive approximately three to four hours to one of Rajasthan's hidden gems, the captivating Bundi. Take a stroll through the town, discovering the unique step wells – a vital source of water in the past, and a breathtaking sight today.

#### **Destination Information**

**Bundi** - A town that is dominated by its immense fort. Within the fort walls is a beautiful palace, Badal Mahal, famous for its painted murals.

### **DAY 7: BUNDI – CHITTOR FORT – UDAIPUR**

Depart Bundi and drive approximately four and a half hours to Udaipur, with a stop en route at Chittor Fort. One of the largest forts in India, Chittor sprawls across a hilltop overlooking the town of Chittorgarh. Its precinct contains grand old palaces, gates, temples and towers – its magnificence has been inspiring travellers and artists alike for centuries. Continue to Udaipur where, later this afternoon, you'll cruise on Lake Pichola, admiring the city's palaces from the water, including the incredible Lake Palace.

#### **Destination Information**

**Chittor Fort** - A world heritage site, whose origin has many theories and legends surrounding it.

**Udaipur** - The origins of Udaipur are based on a legend which tells of a holy sage that Maharaja Udai Singh encountered while hunting in the foothills of the Aravalli Range in Mewar. The sage told the King to build a palace in

that exact spot and it would be well-protected and so with this advice, Maharaja Udai Singh built his residence there. At the time, Chittorgarh was the capital of Mewar state, however in 1568 Chittorgarh was attacked by the Mughal emperor Akbar, and so Maharaja Udai Singh moved the capital to Udaipur. Today, the City Palace of Udaipur is still home to Maharaja Udai Singh's descendents who remain rulers of this independent state. You will be able to tell if the Maharaja is in residence by the flag hanging from the palace wall.

#### **DAY 8: UDAIPUR**

Today you will explore the city, starting with a drive around Fateh Sagar Lake and stops at the Folk Museum, Mewar Art Gallery and Sahelion Ki Bari Garden. Later visit the ornate City Palace and take a stroll through the local shops.

##### **Destination Information**

**Sahelion Ki Bari** – A major garden in the northern part of the city, built for a group of 48 young women attendants who accompanied a princess to Udaipur as part of her dowry.

**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.

#### **DAY 9: UDAIPUR – PUSHKAR**

Drive approximately five hours to Pushkar. Sat on the banks of one of India's most sacred lakes, there are 52 ghats built on the edge of the water, used for bathing by Hindu pilgrims, which are backed by hundreds of blue-washed temples. Take a walking tour of the vibrant market and admire the Brahma Temple, the city's most important temple, and one of few in the world dedicated to the deity many Hindus believe is the creator of the universe.

##### **Destination Information**

**Pushkar** - The village of Pushkar lies 11km from Ajmer on the edge of the Thar Desert. At its heart is one of India's most sacred lakes, Pushkar Lake. There are 52 ghats around the lake and numerous temples. Apart from its religious significance, Pushkar is known for its 'Cattle and Camel' fair held every year in the festival month of Kartik (from October to November). It is one of the world's largest camel fairs, and apart from the buying and selling of livestock, it has become an important tourist attraction.

**Brahma Temple** - An important pilgrimage centre for Hindus. The temple is constructed of marble and houses a statue of Lord Brahma in the seated position.

#### **DAY 10: PUSHKAR – JAIPUR**

Drive three hours to Jaipur, the 'Pink City' and Rajasthan's capital. On arrival, visit two of the city's top sights, the Maharaja's City Palace, still the home of the city's royal family today, and Jantar Mantar Observatory, a fascinating collection of wonderful instruments designed to measure the heavens.

##### **Destination Information**

**Jaipur** - 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.

**Maharaja's City Palace** – the former Royal residence; part of the building has been converted into a museum, while the Royal family of Jaipur still uses the remaining sections of the palace.

**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 11: JAIPUR**

Begin the day with a brief photo stop at Hawa Mahal, the iconic 'Palace of the Winds' (viewed from the street side opposite as the entrance is not granted to tour groups) before travelling out of the city to admire the majestic Amer Fort, the colossal 16th century yellow and pink sandstone fort just 11 kilometres out of Jaipur. Back in the city, head to a craft centre to learn about traditional artistry such as block printing and carpet weaving before browsing the local bazaar at Choti Choper.

##### **Destination Information**

**Hawa Mahal (Palace of the Winds)** - A five-story palace erected in 1799 by the Sawai Pratap Singh so that the veiled ladies of his harem could observe, unnoticed, the lively street scenes below.

**Amer Fort** - Built from yellow and pink sandstone and white marble, Amer Fort was constructed in the 16th century by

Raja Man Singh. Inside the fort visit the Hall of Victory, which houses the famed Sheesh Mahal.

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

#### **DAY 12: JAIPUR TO GURGAON**

Depart Jaipur and travel approximately five hours to Gurgaon, only 30 km from Delhi, for an overnight stay. Later, experience the 'Kingdom of Dreams', a live entertainment venue where you will watch a magical Bollywood performance. For dinner tonight, you may be provided with a voucher to be used in the many food

outlets at the venue, or arrangements will be made at a local restaurant beforehand.

#### **Destination Information**

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

#### **DAY 13-14: GURGAON – DEPART DELHI FOR AUSTRALIA**

After breakfast, you may wish to be transferred to Delhi Haat, an open-air market, where you can enjoy some last minute shopping or you can decide to have this morning at leisure. 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.

## INSPIRING 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 six months validity left on it when you arrive back into Australia.

**Please be advised that all Visa Applications for India must be completed on-line at the VFS website: [www.vfsglobal.com/india/australia](http://www.vfsglobal.com/india/australia)** - Wendy Wu Tours will assist you with instructions. Once the form is completed, the application and passport must be sent to Wendy Wu Tours. Visas are valid for 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 70 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.

### 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 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 two until the groups' day of departure. Please be aware that dishes selected for your meals reflect the cooking styles and signature dishes of the local area you are in.

Dishes served in restaurants on our group tours are varied. Some will be vegetable based with meat mixed in, and a few will be 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 is not included in our Indian group tours. If you wish to add early check-in to your booking, please contact our reservations department who can confirm additional pricing and make this arrangement for you, subject to availability at the hotel. Late check-out until 1800hrs is included in this group tour for passengers travelling on our fully inclusive package in the last hotel of stay.

## Transport

**Coaches:** Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. 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.

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

## Development in India

Although India is 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

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 26<sup>th</sup> January, the Holi Festival 1<sup>st</sup> - 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018.



## 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](http://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 five 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.

## Safari Bookings in Ranthambore National Park

To ensure your safari booking at Ranthambore National Park we will require a scanned copy or photocopy of the bio page in your passport along with a deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot confirm your safari arrangements without this information.



## 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.

## 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 socks in your daypack, which you can wear to protect your feet from any rough or hot surfaces. The following itinerary will indicate when you need to consider this.

## Vaccinations and Your Health

We recommend that you contact either your GP or Travelvax (1300 360 164) for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Travelvax has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful [www.travelvax.com.au](http://www.travelvax.com.au)

## Before You Leave

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au) as in the event of an emergency, Australian Consular assistance will be more readily available. You can also access the Australian Government's travel advisory service for up to date information about your destination on the same website.

## After Your Booking

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice with deposit documentation via email. This includes important information and links to access the visa application form and instructions sheet online (if applicable). Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately four weeks prior to departure.

**Updated: 10<sup>th</sup> October 2017**