

## Culture and Wildlife of India



### Day 1: Arrive Delhi

You will be met on arrival at Delhi Airport and transferred to the Hotel Jivitesh for one night in a deluxe room (B).



### **Hotel Jivitesh**

*Hotel Jivitesh is located at the hub of the commercial centre of New Delhi. It is a small hotel, with just 42 guest rooms, each of them spacious and attractively furnished.*

*The Deluxe rooms come with the following amenities: AC, Wi-Fi, tea/coffee facilities, room safe, LCD TV, mini bar, private en-suite bathroom, and turn-down service.*

After you have checked in to your room, set off on a half day sightseeing tour of Old Delhi in the company of a knowledgeable local guide.

Old and New Delhi offer stunning sights and sounds. The ancient city was built by Emperor Shah Jahan, who also commissioned the famous Taj Mahal, while the new garden was city built in 1911 by the British.

### **Your Financial Protection**

All monies paid by you for the air holiday package shown [or flights if appropriate] are ATOL protected by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 3145.

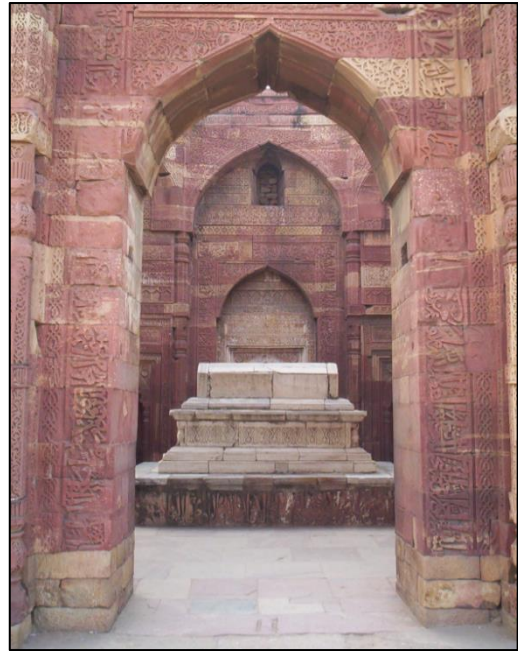
For more information see our booking terms and conditions.

Drive through the old city and visit the Red Fort and Jama Masjid, the largest mosque in India. Late morning, continue to the Qutub Minar, the tallest free standing minaret of stone in the world, and then on to Humayun's tomb, the first Mughal construction in India, dating back to 1565 AD. You will also have time to visit the India Gate, as well as the Raj Ghat and the Lutyen buildings.

Conclude the day with a walking tour of Old Delhi to really get a feel for this bustling city.

### **Day 2: Delhi - Agra**

You will be collected from your hotel after breakfast and transferred to Delhi railway station, where you board the Shatabdi Express (Executive Chair Car) to Agra (06:00/08:10). On arrival in Agra, you will be met by your guide and transferred to the Grand Imperial Hotel for one night in a deluxe room (B).



### **Grand Imperial**

*The Grand Imperial offers old-world charm and an enviable location in central Agra. Over a century old, the hotel was constructed using the same Lahori brick that was used in the construction of the Taj Mahal and the Red Fort.*

*The Grand Imperial provides 30 well-appointed en-suite guestrooms and suites, each with four-poster bed, terracotta-coloured walls and lavish bedding.*

After you have checked-in, embark on a half day sightseeing tour of Agra, beginning with Agra Fort, where you can explore the main public halls and the viewing points that look out over the city, before continuing to the Taj Mahal, Indian's most famous mausoleum.



### **Day 3: Agra - Jaipur**

Depart Agra after breakfast and travel by road to Jaipur (approx. 5 hours). En-route, you'll have the opportunity to stop at the deserted city of Fatehpur Sikri, former Mughal capital, for a tour of the old city palace, mosque and administrative lay out.



On arrival in Jaipur, check in at Shahpura House for two nights in a suite (B).



### **Shahpura House**

*Established as a hotel in 1956, Shahpura House was once the residence of the Shekhawat clan of Rajputs. Like many historical houses, Shahpura is a curious mixture of the old and new. Indeed, part of it is still a family home.*

*The rooms are all unique, luxurious and beautifully furnished, while also containing the expected modern amenities. Each room has a marble bathroom and opens out onto a private verandah.*

### **Day 4: Jaipur**

After breakfast, enjoy a full day sightseeing tour of the pink city of Jaipur with a local guide. Your tour will include visits to the Amber Fort, City Palace, Jantar Mantar and Hawa Mahal.

Start with the Palace of the Winds, or Hawa Mahal, a beautiful five-story palace constructed of red and pink sandstone (pictured).

From Hawa Mahal, continue to Jantar Mantar, an elaborate observatory built in 1727 for Sawai Maharaja Jai Singh II, a Rajput king famous in India for his contributions to astrology and music. He commissioned five observatories throughout India – in Jaipur, Ujjain, Varanasi, Mathura and Delhi – but only Jantar Mantar is still functional today.



End the morning with a visit to the City Palace of the Maharaja of Jaipur, with its fabulous collection of robes and saris in cotton and silk with gold lattice work. The City Palace also houses a collection of paintings.

After a lunch stop, your tour continues with a visit to the Amber fort, a unique combination of Mughal and Rajput architectural styles. Housed within the fort is the Sheesh Mahal, or the Hall of Mirrors, which was constructed in the early 17<sup>th</sup>-century and which blends Hindu and Islamic art to beautiful effect. Finally, explore the Hall of Public Audiences and Maharaja Man Singh's Palace, before returning to your hotel.

### **Day 5: Jaipur - Ranthambore**

Meet with your driver after breakfast and depart Jaipur for Ranthambore National Park – a drive of approx. 4 hours. On arrival at the National Park, check in to Nahargarh Fort for two nights (FB).



#### ***Nahargarh Fort***

*Nestled at the foot of the stunning Aravali Range, Nahargarh Fort is a fabulous hotel designed to resemble a 16<sup>th</sup>-century Mughal fort, complete with vast "Char Bagh" (a Mughal-style garden). It houses 68 luxurious rooms, furnished to the highest standards and housed within the main fort. The ground floor rooms open directly onto the courtyard, while the upper floor rooms feature private terraces.*

*Nahargarh Fort is situated just outside Ranthambore National Park, providing easy access for morning and afternoon game drives.*

This afternoon, embark on a shared game drive in Ranthambore.

Ranthambore National Park is India's most famous tiger park and offers perhaps the best tiger-viewing opportunities of any wildlife park in the country.

Your safari into Ranthambore will follow the tiger trails through deciduous jungle terrain, and will be led by an experienced guide.

Of course, there's more to Ranthambore than its tigers. Other mammals, including sloth bear, leopard, nilgai and spotted deer, are also found in the park, though sightings of many of these creatures are very rare. During the safari, you'll also have the chance to stop at Ranthambore Fort, with its impressive views of the park and lakes.



### **Day 6: Ranthambore**

Embark on an early morning game drive in Ranthambore National Park, before returning to the hotel for breakfast. The rest of the morning is at leisure to enjoy the hotel facilities and pool.

In the afternoon, head out on another game drive into the Ranthambore jungle.



### **Day 7: Ranthambore – Katni**

Start the day with a morning game drive in Ranthambore, before returning to your hotel in the early afternoon for lunch. Late this afternoon, meet with your driver and transfer to Sawai Madhopur Railway Station, where you board the Dayodaya Express to Katni (First AC Sleeper Class, 19:30/07:25).

### **Day 8: Katni**

On arrival in Katni you will be met by your driver and transferred to Kings Lodge for the following three nights in a standard cottage (FB).

#### **Kings Lodge**

*Kings lodge is nestled in the densely-wooded hills of Bandhavgarh National Park, where it forms part of the 8 hectare Ranza estate. The lodge is set in the heart of wild country and only ten minutes' drive from the Tala gate of the National Park. Guests benefit from the incredible location and the generous hospitality and knowledge of the naturalist team.*

*The lodge has 10 standard cottage rooms and 8 stilt-cottage rooms, carefully spaced out among the trees making for a very private atmosphere.*



After lunch, embark on an afternoon game drive into Bandhavgarh National Park by shared jeep with a local naturalist, returning to the lodge for dinner.

Bandhavgarh was established in 1968 as a National Park (and in 1993 recognised as a tiger reserve). It encompasses an area of over 1,000 sq. kms, comprised of dense jungle, forested hills and vast grasslands. Though smaller than many of India's wildlife parks, it has one of the highest densities of tiger in the world.



Jungle safaris into Bandhavgarh take place morning and afternoon and typically last 3-4 hours. The safaris are carried out in open 4x4 jeeps - not buses as at some other parks - and carry a limited number of guests. You have other means of exploring the park. To reduce the pressure from vehicles, Bandhavgarh lodge also offers guided cycling and walking tours. This is possible only in the periphery of the park and always accompanied by trained guides, so wildlife opportunities are more

limited. But it's a great chance to further explore the landscape (you won't encounter tigers during the walks!)

Tigers are not the only attraction of Bandhavgarh. The forests of Bandhavgarh feature heavily in Hindu legend, and there several historical monuments within the forest. Day walks can be organized to the Bandhavgarh Fort, situated in the heart of the park. It offers great birding opportunities and fantastic views (the forest surrounding the fort is also prime habitat for tiger). It is reached by a short jeep ride inside the park followed by a 1 hour walk to the top of the fort.

Village visits, bird walks and picnics can also be arranged.

For a longer day trip, it's possible to visit Sanjay National Park from Bandhavgarh, home to a large population of sloth bear – just let us know if you'd like to include this as an extension.

### **Days 9 & 10: Bandhavgarh**

Morning and afternoon game drives in Bandhavgarh National Park, accompanied by an experienced naturalist guide.

### **Day 11: Bandhavgarh – Satpura**

After breakfast, meet with your driver and depart Bandhavgarh for Jabalpur (approx. 4 hours drive). At Jabalpur railway station, board the Intercity Express for Pipariya (AC Chair Car – 16:10/18:30), where you will be met on arrival and transferred by private vehicle to Satpura (approx. 1½ hrs). Arrive at Forsyth Lodge in time for dinner; three nights in a cottage (FB).

#### ***Forsyth Lodge***

*Forsyth's is a stylish 12 cottage wilderness lodge set in 44 acres of jungle at the edge of the Satpura Tiger Reserve. The focus at Forsyth Lodge is very much on allowing guests to explore the surrounding wilderness. An exciting and comprehensive wildlife programme is included during your stay and led by experienced guides with an in-depth knowledge of the region.*



*The cottages at Forsyth Lodge are spacious and decorated in a wonderfully rustic style, with hardwood furnishings, traditional dhurrie rugs, and thatch. Each features a pleasant outside verandah area with seating area. A small number of cottages also open onto a rooftop terrace with double bed for sleeping out under the stars (please let us know in advance if you would like to ensure one of the cottages with rooftop terrace).*

*The main lodge building houses a comfortable lounge, dining room and balcony, which serves as a lovely spot for evening drinks.*

Evening at leisure.

### **Days 12 & 13: Satpura**

Morning and afternoon Jungle activities in Satpura Park with an experienced guide.

Covering an area of 524 km<sup>2</sup>, Satpura National Park was set up in 1981 mainly for the conservation of tigers. It is one of India's last true wilderness reserves. You have to cross a lake to reach the core of the park, and with very few visitors, the experience is quite different to that of the more popular tiger parks.

The terrain of Satpura is extremely rugged and consists of fascinating deep valleys, sandstone peaks, narrow gorges, dense green forest, and the vast Tawa reservoir. The bio-diversity of the park is equally stunning, with over 1,000 recorded species of plant, including rare woods (teak, tendu, sal and mahua, or Indian butter-tree), and tall bamboos and grasses.



Satpura's fauna is the highlight, however, and includes spotted deer, gaur, tiger, leopard, wild dog, sloth bear, black buck, porcupine, sambhar, four horned antelope, smooth otter, pangolin, marsh crocodile, langurs, and more. The Indian giant squirrel is arguably the standout wildlife attraction of Satpura NP, as it is an increasingly rare sight across the rest of the country. Sightings of leopard, gaur, wild dog, and sloth bear are very good compared to other national parks, though far from guaranteed. Tiger sightings, while not unusual, are not as good as they are in nearby Bandhavgarh, Kanha or Pench National Parks. By this stage of the tour, however, you should have had some good tiger sightings already!

The wildlife experience at Satpura is hugely varied, with options to explore the park by 4x4, boat, and on foot. The guides are excellent, and although tigers are hard to spot, you have a good chance of seeing both sloth bear and giant squirrel.

NB. Satpura National Park is closed to jeeps on Wednesday afternoons – we will plan your itinerary to ensure you visit at the right time.

#### **Day 14: Homeward**

After breakfast, depart for Bhopal by private vehicle (approx. 3 ½ hours). Transfer to the airport to check in for the flight to Mumbai by AI634 (15:55/17:25). In Mumbai, connect with your international flight home.





## Price Guide

*The cost of this itinerary is from **£1,845 per person**, based on twin share and subject to availability at the time of booking. For more information, or if you would like to enquire about a tailor-made holiday combining part or all of the above itinerary, please [contact us](#).*

### Includes:

- All domestic transfers including flights and train fares
- Accommodation and meals as described
- National Park entry fees
- Game viewing activities as mentioned
- Experienced English-speaking guides
- Portage at railway stations and airports only
- All currently applicable taxes

### Excludes:

- International Flights
- Drinks
- Meals not mentioned in itinerary (this includes meals on board trains)
- Camera fee wherever levied
- Tips and gratuities
- Travel Insurance – ask us for a quote
- Items of a personal nature

