



PHOTOS BY TODD GUSTAFSON, GUSTAFSON PHOTO SAFARI

INDIA

India Quest: Temples, Tigers, and Natural Wonders

15 DAYS | Choose your dates | Travel dates: **OCT 1 - MAY 15**

India delights the imagination with layers of civilization that date back 7,000 years. Its deep spirituality finds expression in a riot of temples, palaces, bazaars and everyday devotion. It is saturated with colors, entrancing music, rich cuisine, and wild habitats of amazing biodiversity. Discover it all on our carefully curated itinerary that blends the iconic cities of the Golden Triangle (Delhi, Agra and Jaipur), visits to rural villages, and an unforgettable safari in search of the elusive Bengal tiger. From its dynastic origins to the Mughal era to the British Raj, come experience India's never-ending transformation on this diverse introduction to the subcontinent.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Achieve a travel milestone when you see the Taj Mahal.
- Ride an elephant to Jaipur's Amber Fort, then explore the Palace of the Winds, Johari Bazaar and other marvels of the "Pink City."
- Go on safari in Bandhavgarh and Kanha National Parks in search of Bengal tigers, and learn the challenges of protecting this species.
- Experience rural life during a school visit or cooking demonstration.
- Admire the UNESCO-listed monuments of Delhi, including Jama Masjid.
- Behold the 10th-century friezes of Khajuraho, which depict the intersection of eroticism and spirituality.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Bilingual local guide
- Driver
- Accommodations
- Activities
- Private transportation
- Meals
- Beverages with meals
- Carbon offsetting





BENGAL TIGERS BY TODD GUSTAFSON | GUSTAFSON PHOTO SAFARI

ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

DAY 1 - IN TRANSIT

Depart the U.S. and fly to India. *(Please note this program operates from October 1 - May 15 annually.)*

DAY 2 - DELHI

Arrive into Delhi, the capital of India. Your guide will meet you at the airport and transfer you to your hotel. This evening attend a welcome dinner and orientation at 7 pm at the hotel restaurant. *Overnight at The Claridges (Deluxe Room). (D)*

DAY 3 - DELHI

After breakfast spend a full day exploring the walled city called Old Delhi and the cosmopolitan New Delhi. Old Delhi pulses with energy and color; the hustle and bustle of thronged bazaars is laced by a maze of narrow lanes that twist and turn between tall, leaning houses full of the sights, sounds, and aromas of the Indian subcontinent. Visit Jama Masjid, with its tapering minarets and wonderful marble domes, and have the unique opportunity to enjoy a rickshaw ride. In the afternoon explore New Delhi, a city of wide boulevards offering changing perspectives of Lutyen's landscaped city. It is a city known for its formal parks, magnificent Parliament Building, the Rashtrapati Bhawan, the official residence of the President of India designed by Sir Edwin Lutyen, and India Gate. Also visit Qutab Minar, the 240-foot tower dating back to the 13th century, and Humayun's Tomb, built in the 16th century and architecturally the forerunner of the Taj Mahal. *Overnight at The Claridges (Deluxe Room). (BLD)*

DAY 4 - JAIPUR

After breakfast drive to Jaipur (5-6 hrs). Jaipur, the capital city of the state of Rajasthan, also known as the "Pink City," owes its name, its foundation, and its planning to the great warrior-

astronomer Maharaja Jai Singh II. The city sits on a dry lakebed in a wild and somewhat arid landscape, surrounded by barren hills surmounted by fortresses and crenellated walls. Upon arrival, have the remainder of the day free for leisure activities or go for a walking tour of the bazaar. The streets are redolent of spices—turmeric, cinnamon, cardamom, and more. Women haggle over the price of bangles and sarees, the faithful offer prayers in tiny roadside shrines, vendors sell sweetmeats and spicy delicacies, and the chai stalls do brisk business. Old arts and crafts still flourish in the bazaars. *Overnight at Alsisar Haveli (Standard Room). (BLD)*

DAY 5 - JAIPUR

After breakfast leave for the outskirts of Jaipur to walk through the grounds and structures of the Amber Fort. Originally constructed by a tribe called the Meenas and dedicated to "Amba" or the "Mother Goddess," it was built over the remains of an earlier structure. The present palace complex was commenced in 1592 under the reign of Raja Man Singh, commander of Akbar's army and a member of the emperor's inner circle of nine courtiers. The fort was modified by successive rulers over the next 150 years,



QUTAB MINAR BY ALEKSANDR ZYKOV

until the Kachwahas shifted their capital to Jaipur during the time of Maharaja (a great or high king) Jai Singh II. Have the choice of reaching the fort either on foot or atop an elephant! The short, steep ascent provides views of Jaipur, Maottha Lake, and the original city walls. One of the fort's most striking features is the Hall of Mirrors. When the palace was occupied by royalty, the hall could be lit at night by a single candle reflected in thousands of tiny, intricate mirrors. After lunch visit Jantar Mantar, an open-air astronomical observatory. Then stop for a photo at the Hawa Mahal "Palace of the Winds" facade, behind which the ladies of the court could watch the busy activities in the street below without being seen. Jaipur's main focus is the huge City Palace complex, home to the Maharaja, as well as numerous rooms, formal gardens and the fascinating Maharaja's Museum containing his personal collection of weaponry, miniature paintings, royal attire, and jewelry. The old city showcases the best of what Jaipur has to offer, and this experience has been designed to help you discover what makes it truly unique. Stroll through the labyrinth of colorful alleys where artisans make puppets, bangles, and other local handicrafts. You will visit the Johari Bazaar jewelry market, explore architecturally interesting havelis (mansions), and stop by bangle shops in Maniharo. *Overnight at Alsisar Haveli (Standard Room).* (BLD)

DAY 6 - AGRA

After breakfast drive to Agra. En route visit Fatehpur Sikri, the red sandstone city. Emperor Akbar built it as his capital and palace in the late 16th century. Also visit the Bulund Darwaza, the largest gateway in the world. Agra finds mention in the Mahabharata as Agraban and was established by Badal Singh in 1475 AD. Sikandar Lodi made Agra his capital but was defeated by Babur. Babur not only captured Agra but also laid the foundation of the Mughal Empire. In the mid-16th century and earlier 17th century AD, Agra witnessed frenzied building activity, and it was during this time the Taj Mahal was built as a symbol of love. Upon arrival, check in at the hotel. In the afternoon visit Red Fort. *Overnight at ITC Mughal.* (BLD)

DAY 7 - KHAJURAHO

This morning visit the Taj Mahal by sunrise. Built by Shah Jahan, the Taj is a white marble memorial to his beautiful wife, Mumtaz Mahal. This monument took 22 years to be completed and was designed and planned by Persian architect Ustad Isa. Apart from its stunning design, balance, and perfect symmetry, the Taj is also noted particularly for its elegant domes, intricately carved screens, and renowned inlay work. (Note: Closed on Fridays.) After your visit, return to the hotel and relax until your flight to Khajuraho. Khajuraho is well-known for its magnificent temples, which were built between 950 and 1050 AD. Khajuraho derives its

name from the Khajur tree (date palm), which can be found in abundance in the area. The divine sculptures in these temples are a tribute to life itself, embodying everything that is sublime and spontaneous about it. The murals depict the life and times of the Chandelas and celebrate the erotic state of being. They not only testify to the mastery of the craftsman, but also to the extraordinary breadth of vision of the Chandela Rajputs under whose reign these temples were constructed. *Overnight at Taj Chandela.* (BLD)

DAY 8 - BANDHAVGARH

This morning tour the Kamasutra Temples, then have an early lunch. Drive to Bandhavgarh, approximately 5 hours, passing through the villages and countryside of Madhya Pradesh. Upon arrival, check in at the lodge. Bandhavgarh National Park is set among the Vindhya Hills in Madhya Pradesh, and consists of 168 square miles of mixed forest of sal, bamboo, grassland, and a complex of deciduous forests. There are at least 150 species of birds in the park, along with mammals such as tigers, sloth bears, langur monkeys, wild boar, mongoose, and three kinds of deer—chital, sambar, and barking. *Overnight at Bandhavgarh Jungle Lodge.* (BLD)

DAY 9 - BANDHAVGARH

As soon as dawn breaks, leave for your jungle safari, accompanied by a resident naturalist and forest park guides in 4x4 Jeeps. Return to the lodge for lunch and then have a second visit to the park. Please note: India's famous tiger parks are quite popular and therefore visits are

tightly controlled. Upon arrival at the park gate, vehicles are assigned a prescribed route whether or not tigers have been seen on this track recently. The vehicles may only go forward, which can present a problem if a tiger appears out of photo range behind the vehicle. To ensure the best viewing and photo opportunities, there is an optional upgrade to a "Golden Permit," which allows entry into the park 15 minutes earlier than regular permit, access to all zones without any time restrictions, and allows 15 additional minutes in the park at the end of the day. Return to lodge for evening tea and free time to relax. *Overnight at Bandhavgarh Jungle Lodge.* (BLD)

DAY 10 - BANDHAVGARH

Continue with another early morning jungle safari by 4x4 Jeep. Return to the lodge for evening tea and the rest of your time free to relax. *Overnight at Bandhavgarh Jungle Lodge.* (BLD)

DAY 11 - KANHA

Embark on an early morning jungle safari, then drive approximately 7 hours to Kanha. The drive is through rural countryside and colorful towns and villages. Stop in the



KHAJURAHO BY PELIN KARACA

sleepy town of Mandla (sacred city for Gond tribes) where the Narmada River, second holiest to the Ganges, is the center of activity. Break up the long drive with a stop for a picnic lunch before arriving at the lodge. Kanha National Park, set on the Chhota Nagpur Plateau in Madhya Pradesh, provides breathtaking vistas of grassy plains and strands of sal forests. This 366-square-mile preserve was created to save two endangered species, the tiger and the barasingha. The park offers a variety of species including tigers and leopards, cheetah, gaur, barking deer, sambhar deer, and the endangered barasingha deer. *Overnight at Kanha Jungle Lodge. (BLD)*

DAY 12 - KANHA

This morning wake up to a misty morning and sounds of birds calling. As soon as dawn breaks, set out on a jungle safari accompanied by a resident naturalist and forest park guides in 4x4 Jeeps. Explore the area's abundant nature and enjoy a picnic breakfast. Spend the remainder of the morning at leisure or go for a nature walk, visit a nearby village/school, or watch a cooking demonstration. Have lunch at the lodge. This afternoon there is a second safari by 4x4 open Jeep. Return to the lodge for evening tea and free time for stargazing. *Overnight at Kanha Jungle Lodge. (BLD)*

DAY 13 - KANHA

Today explore the park's jungle again, with the afternoon at leisure. *Overnight at Kanha Jungle Lodge. (BLD)*

DAY 14 - DELHI

After one last morning game drive into the park, depart for Jabalpur. After lunch, proceed to Jabalpur airport and board the flight to Delhi. Upon arrival in Delhi, transfer to the hotel for time to freshen up before returning to the international terminal and boarding your flight back home. *Overnight at Lemon Tree Premier. (BLD)*

DAY 15 - U.S.

Arrive home.



LAND PRICING

\$5,525 (15 participants + 1 leader)

\$6,075 (10 participants + 1 leader)

Price includes accommodations, meals, entrance fees, and activities as indicated in the itinerary, private transportation unless otherwise noted in itinerary, non-alcoholic beverages with meals, full-time guide for duration of program, and carbon offset.

International airfare, visa fees, gratuities, alcoholic beverages, and items of a personal nature are not included.

Valid for travel through May 15, 2020. Valid dates of travel are Jan. 1 - May 15 and Oct. 1 - Dec. 31. Does not operate during the monsoon season.

TRAVEL PROTECTION

Holbrook Travel purchases Travel Protection on behalf of all participants traveling in 2018 or beyond. These plans help provide coverage once the trip has departed and offer benefits for Baggage/Personal Effects, Accident & Sickness Medical Expenses, Emergency Evacuation and more. Refer to the Plan Document for more details.

Optional additional coverage is available in the form of the Group Deluxe Plan, which offers benefits for Trip Cancellation/Interruption, in addition to many other insurance benefits and non-insurance assistance services. If interested in this optional plan, we can provide you with rates and plan details.

THE FINE PRINT

A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form is due to secure your reservation. This deposit is refundable until 95 days prior to departure excluding a \$100 cancellation fee. Final payments are due no later than 95 days prior to departure. Non-refundable final payment is due at 95 days prior to departure.

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