

TAJ & TIGERS

FROM Raja Hoon at *HERITAGE GETAWAYS*
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13 nights / 14 days

DAY 01 ARRIVE DELHI

Room is held on this day from 1200 hrs for immediate occupancy. Arrive late in the evening. You will be met and assisted on arrival in Delhi and transferred to your hotel.

Day 02 DELHI

Start late after overcoming the jet lag and enjoy a late breakfast. Later in the day proceed for the combined city city tour of Old & New Delhi. In Old city visit RED FORT built by Emperor Shah Jahan; Jama Masjid, one of the largest mosques in India; RAJ GHAT- the memorial of Mahatma Gandhi and enjoy a walking tour in CHANDNI CHOWK- the silver street of Delhi bustling with activity. In the afternoon visit QUTAB MINAR, the tallest stone tower in India; HUMAYUN'S TOMB built in the Indo Persian style and a predecessor to The Taj Mahal in Agra; India Gate - A War Memorial Arch. Also drive past the PRESIDENT'S HOUSE, PARLIAMENT HOUSE, GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT BUILDINGS and CONNAUGHT PLACE - the heart of New Delhi and a busy shopping center. Overnight is at the hotel.

DAY 03 TO JAIPUR

Drive for 4 hours, 250kms to JAIPUR today. Just before entering the walled city stop en route at AMBER FORT, the ancient capital of the State until 1728. Visit the TEMPLE OF KALI, the HALL OF VICTORY or JAI MAHAL and JAGMANDIR. You can have the unique experience of traveling on elephant back to and from the top of the hill on which the fort is situated. Later continue drive to Jaipur. Arrive and check-in at the hotel. Afternoon spend time in crowded lanes & by lanes of pink city, haggling and souvenir-hunting. Evening is at leisure to explore the local market. Overnight is at the hotel.

DAY 04 IN JAIPUR

During your city tour today you will visit THE OBSERVATORY, THE PALACE OF WINDS AND THE CITY PALACE AND MUSEUM. The museum has an interesting textile section, which contains dresses and costumes of the former Maharajas and Maharanis of Jaipur. Evening is free to explore the colorful town independently. Overnight stay is at your hotel.

DAY 05 TO RANTHAMBORE

This morning you will drive 3 hours to Ranthambore National Park and check in at the hotel for 02 nights stay in your lodge. The park is quite famous for good population of Tigers, which can be encountered in broad daylight, quite unperturbed by the human presence. Following dinner there may be a slide show and an orientation talk about the park and its wildlife by the lodge staff.

DAY 06 IN RANTHAMBORE

Early morning a safari into the park - one of the finest tiger reserves in the country. Spread over an area of 392 sq. km, the park is characterized by dry deciduous forests sprawling over the

Aravalli and Vindhyan ranges. If you are fortunate enough you can also see the tiger strolling in the jungle or near any of the three lakes namely, the Padam Talab, Raj Bagh Talab and Milak Talab. The park also houses some of the rare species of desert creature like the sambhar, chital, nilgai, chinkara, langur, wild boar and peafowl. After a visit to the Park you will return to your hotel for late breakfast. The afternoon is at leisure in the lodge. You will have another opportunity in the afternoon for tiger spotting during your second safari of the day. Overnight is at the lodge.

DAY 07 TO AGRA

After breakfast check-out of the hotel and drive to Agra. En route you will stop at FATEHPUR SIKRI, the 16th century capital of Moghul emperor Akbar. It is a complex of forts, palaces and mosques built in sandstone. The city had to be deserted because of lack of water. The white marble Tomb of Sheikh Salim Chisti, Akbar's spiritual adviser, is now observed as a Muslim pilgrimage spot here. Drive another 38 kms (45 min) to arrive in Agra. Rest of the day is at leisure.

DAY 08 TO UMARIA

Tour the city of AGRA this morning. Visit the red sandstone AGRA FORT, which stands like a crescent on the banks of the Jamuna River. Three successive Mughal emperors - Akbar, Jehangir and Shah Jehan - helped create this massive structure which contains Hindu and Muslim architecture. Then proceed for the famous white marble mausoleum, TAJ MAHAL which was built in the middle of the 17th century by the Moghul emperor Shah Jehan for his wife Mumtaz Mahal. Completed in 1652, skilled craftsmen from Persia, Turkey, France and Italy and some 20,000 laborers worked for 17 years to build this edifice. Later in the day check-out of the hotel and transfer to the railway station in time to board your train for Umaria. Overnight on board the train.

DAY 08 ARRIVE UMARIA TO BANDHAVGARH

Meet and assist upon arrival in UMARIA and drive 45 minutes to BANDHAVGARH. This is a small National Park; compact, yet full of game. The density of the Tiger population at Bandhavgarh is the highest known in India. The vegetation here is chiefly of Sal forest in the valleys and on the lower slopes, gradually changing to mixed deciduous forest on the hills and in the hotter, drier areas of the park in the south and west. Bamboo is found throughout. Bandhavgarh is densely populated with tiger and other wildlife species. The great Gaur, or Indian Bison, can be seen with ease, as they come onto the meadows to graze at dusk; Sambar and Barking Deer are a common sight, and Nilgai are to be seen in the more open areas of the park. There are more than 22 species of mammals and 250 species of birds. In the afternoon, enjoy a JEEP safari before retiring in our lodge for the overnight stay.

DAY 09 IN BANDHAVGARH

There will be two jungle safaris today. This is also White Tiger country. These have been found in the old state of Rewa for many years. The last known was captured by Maharajah Martand Singh in 1951. The forest of Bandhavgarh can be classified as moist deciduous, and the National Park holds all those animal species which are typical of this habitat in Central India. Certain areas of the park (particularly the south and the west) are drier in character, and hold such species as the Nilgai and the Chinkara.

DAY 10 TO KHAJURAHO

A 6 to 7 hours drive will bring us today to the world famous temples of KHAJURAHO, known for their erotic sculpture on the walls. In the temple architecture of India, the Khajuraho complex remains unique.. The amazingly short span of 100 years, from 950 AD - 1050 AD, saw the completion of all the temples, in an inspired burst of creativity. Today, of the original 85, only 22 have survived the ravages of time; these remain as a collective paean to life, to joy and to

creativity; to the ultimate fusion of man with his creator. Visit the temples in the afternoon. Return to the hotel in the evening for overnight stay.

DAY 11 IN KHAJURAHO

Spend the full day today walking around in the temple complex near your hotel. The architectural style of the Khajuraho temples is very different from the temple prototype of that period. Each stands, instead of within the customary enclosure, on a high masonry platform. The temples of Khajuraho are divided into three geographical groups: Western, Eastern and Southern. The Western group is certainly the best known, because it is to this group that the largest and most typical Khajuraho temple belongs: The Kandariya Mahadev. Though the four temples that stand at the corners of the main shrine are now in ruins, the main shrine has an exquisitely carved entrance arch with a multitude of themes. Celestial beings, lovers serenading musicians... movements captured in stone, frozen in time, yet retaining a quality of warm, pulsating life. The very stone seems to have taken on the living, breathing quality of the carved figures. Evening is at leisure. Overnight is at the hotel.

DAY 12 TO ORCHHA

Drive 170 kms to ORCHHA. In this medieval city, the hand of time has rested lightly and the palaces and temples built by its Bundela rulers in the 16th and 17th centuries retain much of their pristine perfection. Visit JEHANGIR MAHAL, a tiered palace crowned by graceful chhatris. In the LAXMINARAYAN TEMPLE and RAJ MAHAL, vibrant murals encompassing a variety of religious and secular themes, bring the walls and ceilings to rich life.

DAY 13 TO DELHI

Morning is at leisure. In the afternoon connect train SHATABDI EXPRESS to Delhi. In Delhi you will be met and transferred to International Airport for your onward flight.

DAY 14 DEPARTURE DELHI

Check in for your onward flight.

- End of Services -