

## **The Golden Triangle & Ranthambore**

### **Day 1 Departure**

Enjoy full-meal service on your scheduled flight to Delhi.

### **Day 2 Delhi**

You will be met by your guide and transferred to your hotel.

After time to settle in we will spend the afternoon on a leisurely introductory sightseeing tour of Delhi, India's capital city, which is divided into two parts: New and Old Delhi. With a thousand years of history, Delhi is a city of contrasts that combines a unique ambience of the ancient and the modern. An orderly plan of wide roads lined with sturdy colonial buildings was established soon after the imperial capital of British India moved here from Calcutta in 1911. This afternoon we will visit **Old Delhi** and drive past Chandni Chowk, the crowded bazaar and see the dramatic Red Fort. Built in 1648, this sprawling fort of red sand stones along the river Yamuna is surrounded by a wall of about 2.4 km in circumference. The **Jama Masjid Mosque** is the largest and one of the most magnificent mosques in India, built in 1658 with a capacity to hold over 20,000 people. We will step inside for a mesmeric look around. We will also have a chance to view Raj Ghat memorial of Mahatma Gandhi (Father of the Nation) before returning to our hotel.

### **Day 3 Delhi – Ranthambore**

We will spend this morning sightseeing in **New Delhi**. Some of the famous sights included in the sightseeing tour will include **Qutab Minar**, at 234 feet the highest individual tower in the world. We will have a chance to view Parliament House as we drive past, and stop at India Gate for an introduction and photo. Time permitting, we can visit Birla Mandir (Hindu Temple), the Sikh Temple or Lotus Temple.

After lunch we transfer to the railway station and catch the Kota Janshatabdi train. On arrival we will transfer to the hotel / resort. **Ranthambore**, offers a unique blend of history and forest. The Ranthambore Fort is one of the oldest forts in India. The Ranthambore National park, which surrounds the fort is reputed to be India's finest, and is famous for its Tigers.

### **Day 4 Ranthambore**

We will make an early morning visit to the **Ranthambore sanctuary** to view the wildlife (in canters). Ranthambore is among the few places in the world where tigers, this super-predator, symbol of power, strength and magnificence, can be observed at close quarters and we will search for these magnificent creatures. Ranthambore also has a large number of Sambhar, Chital, langur, wild boar and peafowl. A system of three pretty lakes Padam Talab, Rajbagh and Milak Talab, along with a number of anicuts are part of the biosphere. There are many water bodies located all over the park, which provide perfect relief during the extremely hot summer months for the forest inhabitants. There are about 264 species of birds found within the park included painted storks. Ranthambore is one of the most suitable places for wildlife photography in the world. We return to the resort for breakfast.

Later in the day we will visit the **Ranthambhore Fort**. The Fort was built by Chauhan rulers in the 10th century and it is known as the oldest fort of the Rajasthan. It was the envy of many rulers because of its strategic location. There are many temples, gates, tanks and curtain walls inside the fort.

Later in the afternoon we will visit again the **sanctuary** to view more wildlife (in canters).

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

This morning after a leisurely breakfast we depart for Jaipur. You will arrive in the afternoon and can check into and relax at your hotel. This evening we will transfer to Chowki Dhani, an ethnic village resort for dinner. The resort creates an ambience of a Indian village every night.

#### **Day 6 Jaipur**

This morning we will have an early breakfast and then our first visit will be to the **Amer Fort**, the former capital of the Kachhwaha Rajputs. This monument was originally conceived with the aim of enabling ladies of the royal household to watch the everyday life and royal processions of the city. Amer Fort is situated on a hillside overlooking Maatha Lake and you will have the unique experience of traveling on **elephant back** to the top of the hill on which the fort is situated.

Next, we will stop for a photo at Hawa Mahal or Palace of Winds. We will spend the afternoon visiting the **City Palace**. This is in the heart of the old city and is the former royal residence built in a blend of the Rajasthani and Mughal styles. Even today the City Palace is the principal residence of the ruling family. Afterwards we will make a fascinating visit to Jantar Mantar, the largest of Jai Singh's five remarkable observatories. Later this afternoon we will visit the main local bazaar.

#### **Day 7 Jaipur - Fatehpur Sikri - Agra**

After an early breakfast we will depart for Agra, stopping en route to visit **Fatehpur Sikri**. Built during the second half of the 16th century by the Emperor Akbar, Fatehpur Sikri (the City of Victory) was the capital of the Mughal Empire for only some 10 years. The complex of monuments and temples, all in a uniform architectural style, includes one of the largest mosques in India, the Jama Masjid, which was built by the Mughal Emperor Shahjahan.

This afternoon we arrive in Agra and transfer to our hotel. The remainder of the afternoon will be free to spend at our leisure.

#### **Day 8 Agra – Gwalior- Agra**

This morning we will transfer to the railway station, where we will depart on the Shatabdi Express for a day excursion to Gwalior. Gwalior is steeped in the splendour of its past, yet the ancient capital of Gwalior has made a successful transition into a modern Indian city, vibrant and bustling. We will visit the **Gwalior Fort**, which was built by Raja Man Singh Tomar in the 15th century. At noon proceed to a local restaurant for lunch.

After lunch we continue visiting other historical monuments. The **Jai Vilas Palace** was built in 1875 during the reign of Maharaja Jayaji Rao Scindia. The Scindias, who still occupy a part of the palace, have opened two wings to the public. The durbar hall museum was where the maharaja entertained important visitors, among them was the Prince of Wales.

In the evening we will transfer back to the railway station and leave for Agra by the Taj Express train.

### **Day 9 Agra – Delhi**

This morning we will visit the **Taj Mahal**, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, built by Shaha Jahan (Mughal Emperor) for his beloved wife Mumtaz. The monument took 20,000 workmen 22 years to build and cost 41 million rupees and 50 kilos of gold. The Taj Mahal sits on a high red sandstone platform topped with a marble terrace.

After plenty of time to explore the premises, we will proceed to **Agra Fort**, built by the great Mughal Emperor Akbar in 1565 A.D. The fort itself is a masterpiece of design and construction and within the fort are a number of exquisite buildings.

We continue this afternoon to Delhi where we will check into our hotel for our final night.

### **Day 10 Delhi To London**

We transfer to the airport for the flight back to London, which arrives the same evening.