



India - Jewels of Kerala and North India – 9N / 10D – (CODE – AT IND 08)
FROM R13 450 Per person sharing – LAND ARRANGEMENTS ONLY

Embark on a captivating journey that seamlessly combines the best of both worlds with the Jewels of Kerala and North India tour. This expedition unveils the charm of well-known cities, including Cochin, Periyar, Kumarakom, Agra, Delhi, and Jaipur, offering a diverse blend of experiences.

In the southern part of the tour, immerse yourself in the natural wonders of Kerala, exploring wildlife reserves, spice plantations, and the tranquil backwaters. Indulge in the authentic and marvellous cuisine of Kerala, where meals are served traditionally on banana leaves. Take a moment to rejuvenate and calm your senses with an Ayurveda treatment during your stay in Kumarakom.

As you journey northwards, encounter the royal heritage cities that form the renowned 'Golden Triangle'—Agra, Delhi, and Jaipur. Witness the architectural marvels, cultural richness, and historical significance of each city, creating a seamless connection between the vibrant landscapes of Kerala and the regal splendour of North India.

This tour promises a harmonious blend of diverse experiences, from the laid-back charm of Kerala's backwaters to the grandeur of the Golden Triangle, providing you with an enriching and comprehensive exploration of two distinct facets of India

Periyar's Nature Beauties

Go on a scenic drive to Periyar, the wildlife and spice plantation hub of Kerala. The afternoon spice plantation tour will open the mystery and history of Indian spices. Stop at a local market and shop for fragrant spices.

Delhi Delights

Discover the history and heritage of Delhi with a visit to the Qutab Minar, a fine example of Indo-Islamic architecture. Continue to the old part of the city and walk through the busy streets of the Chandni Chowk, Delhi's largest bazaar. Visit the Jama Masjid, the largest mosque in India. Drive past the splendid Red Fort, the India Gate, President's and Parliament Houses and other Government Secretariat Buildings of Lutyen's Delhi.

Agra's Romantic sites

See the spectacular Taj Mahal. This inimitable poem in white marble was built over a period of 22 years by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan for his Queen Mumtaz Mahal to enshrine her mortal remains. Afterwards visit the splendid Agra Fort, built in red sandstone.

Jaipur the Pink City

Full day guided tour of the 'Pink City'. Start at the Amber Fort, a marvellous example of Rajput architecture, ascending the hill by an elephant. Continue to the City Palace, the Jantar Mantar Astronomical Observatory and the Hawa Mahal or 'Palace of Winds'.

At a glance

- Day 1 Welcome to India. Transfer Cochin Airport to hotel
- Day 2 Morning tour of Cochin
- Day 3 Depart for Periyar followed by a sanctuary tour
- Day 4 Continue to Kumarakom & enjoy the backwaters
- Day 5 Return to Cochin for flight to Delhi
- Day 6 Morning tour of Delhi and travel to Agra
- Day 7 Visit the world famous Taj Mahal and Agra Fort
- Day 8 See Fatehpur Sikri before arriving in Jaipur
- Day 9 Tour of Jaipur with Elephant ride to the Amber Fort
- Day 10 Return to Delhi Airport for onward/return flight

Highlights

- > Start your India Holiday in Cochin (Kerala) a city influenced by medieval Portugal, Holland and England
- > Drive to Periyar, a unique wildlife sanctuary
- > Spend a night in Kumarakom, famous for its backwaters
- > Continue your journey to Delhi
- > Onwards to Agra, home to the famous and legendary Taj Mahal
- > See Jaipur's most important sites such as the Amber Fort, City Palace and the observatory

Inclusions

- Meet and assist on arrival and departure by our local representative
- Sightseeing tours and intercity transfers as per itinerary in AC vehicle
- 9 Nights' Accommodation at selected hotels in a double room sharing
- Meals: as mentioned
- Local English Speaking Guide
- Jaipur offers sightseeing tour with an elephant ride/jeep ride

Exclusions

- International/Domestic flights – Departure & Fuel taxes (Contact us for best airfares)
- Personal expenses, meals and drinks unless otherwise specified
- Travel insurance
- India visa fee
- Tips
- Entrance fees
- Services not stated in the itinerary

Validity

- Rate valid for travel between 16 APR and 30 SEP 2024

Contact us for any other date of travel required

ITINERARY

Day City	Day to Day Itinerary
Day 1 Arrive Cochin	You will be met and assisted; through the airport upon your arrival and then transferred to your hotel. Check-in at your hotel by 12h00 noon. Overnight at your hotel in Cochin.
Day 2 Cochin (B)	After breakfast you will have a morning sightseeing tour of Cochin; a city till today influenced by medieval Portugal; Holland and England. You visit St. Francis Church; built-in 1503 by Portuguese Franciscan friars where Vasco da Gama was buried for 14 years before his remains were transferred to Lisvon. His tombstone still stands. Nearby is the Mattancherry Palace or Dutch Palace. The central hall on the first floor was the coronation hall of the Rajahs of Cochin. Other rooms depict scenes from the Ramayana and Puranic legends connected with Hindu gods. You will see the amazing Chinese fishing nets. These cantilevered fishing nets line the entrance to the harbor mouth. They were introduced by traders from the courts of Kublai Khan. You also see the Jew City with the Jewish Synagogue; constructed in 1568; with hand-painted; willow-pattern floor tiles brought from Canton in the mid-18th century by a Rabbi; who had trading interest in that city. Overnight at your hotel in Cochin.
Day 3 Cochin – Periyar (B)	After breakfast, drive to Periyar National Park. This unique wildlife sanctuary is about 780 sq. km centered around an artificial lake fed by the Periyar River. Different nature trails traversing diverse habitats form the trekking routes; generally 4 to 5 km. in length. This is an interactive program offering an excellent opportunity to watch birds; butterflies and other wildlife. After the tour; check in to your hotel in Periyar. Overnight at your hotel in Periyar.

<p>Day 4 Periyar – Kumarakom (B)</p>	<p>After breakfast, leave for Kumarakom. In the afternoon enjoy the backwaters of Kumarakom. Overnight at your hotel in Kumarakom.</p>
<p>Day 5 Kumarakom – Cochin (B)</p>	<p>After breakfast, return to Cochin airport and board your flight for Delhi. You will be met at the airport on your arrival and then transferred to your hotel. Overnight in Delhi.</p>
<p>Day 6 Delhi – Agra (B)</p>	<p>Morning half day combined sightseeing tour of Old and New Delhi. Visit Qutab Minar; India Gate (War Memorial) Lakshmi Narayan Temple-Modern Hindu Temple; drive past Presidents House; Parliament House and Secretariat buildings. Also, visit Raj Ghat the cremation site of Mahatma Gandhi and drive past Jama Masjid; Red Fort and Chandni Chowk. After the tour continue to Agra. On arrival check-in at your hotel. Remainder of the day will be at leisure.</p>
<p>Day 7 Agra (B)</p>	<p>Morning sightseeing tour of the Taj Mahal & Fort. Visit the world famous Taj Mahal built by Shah Jahan in 1560 in memory of his queen Mumtaz Mahal to enshrine her mortal remains. This architectural marvel is a perfectly proportioned masterpiece fashioned from white marble that stands testimony to the skill of 20;000 craftsmen brought together from Persia; Turkey; France and Italy and who took 17 years to complete this 'Love Poem in Marble'. (Friday closed). Later visit the Agra Fort containing the halls of private & public audiences & other palaces. Shah Jahan spent years of confinement here at the hands of his son Aurangzeb; looking wistfully at the Taj Mahal from the Fort. After the tour return to your hotel. Overnight at your hotel in Agra.</p>

<p>Day 8 Agra – Jaipur (B)</p>	<p>Depart Agra for Jaipur by car. En route visit Fatehpur Sikri; built by Emperor Akbar in 1569 and abandoned after 15 years due to a scarcity of water. The Fatehpur Sikri complex houses tomb of Salim Chisti; Panch Mahal and other palaces; which surprisingly have withstood the ravages of time and are still in good condition. On arrival in Jaipur; check-in at your hotel. The rest of the day is at your leisure to explore Jaipur. Overnight at your hotel in Jaipur.</p>
<p>Day 9 Jaipur (B)</p>	<p>Amber is a classic; romantic Rajasthani Fort-Palace. Miniatures painted on the walls depict hunting and war scenes; apart from festivals. Precious stones and mirrors are embedded into the plaster. A major attraction at Amber is the Elephant Ride; all the way up to the Fort entrance. Afternoon half day sightseeing tour. The tour begins with a visit to the Maharaja’s City Palace;- the former Royal residence;- part of it converted into a museum. One of the major attractions in the museum is the portion known as Armory Museum; housing an impressive array of weaponry-pistols; blunderbusses; flintlocks; swords; rifles and daggers. Also see the miniature items and old carpets at the Textile Museum. Later visit the Jantar Mantar; which is the largest stone-and-marble-crafted Observatory in the world. Situated near the gate of the city palace; the Observatory has 17 large instruments; many of them still in working condition. After the tour; return to your hotel. Overnight at your hotel in Jaipur.</p>
<p>Day 10 Jaipur – Delhi (B)</p>	<p>After breakfast, leave Jaipur for Delhi. On arrival in Delhi you will be transferred to the airport to board your flight for your onward destination. Services end at Delhi airport.</p>

Thank you for choosing **Sure Mirage Travel** for your **Indian** experience.
We value your patronage & look forward to serving you again in the near future

Country information

India's Different Seasons

India climate is considered hot; however, the weather varies a lot depending on which part of the country you visit. The South has Monsoons whereas the North may be covered in snow. The best time to travel is between October and March (except for the Far North, where you will encounter winter conditions from November onwards)

- **Overview of food & drink**

India's food is tantalizing and spicy and comes in so many varieties. Rice is the foundation of each dish. This does not exclude a number for breads from light to roasted. Northern Indian food mostly consists of meaty stews and kebabs. Southern India is known for its spiced vegetarian curries and dosas. Goa and Kerala will serve you the best seafood dishes.

Drink only bottled water during your stay in India. Nimbu Pani (Lemonade) is a traditional and most common Indian drink, made of lemon and ginger juice. Coconut water is preferred by many locals across India. Toddy is a famous alcoholic drink in Madhya Pradesh that is made from various palm plants. Jal Jeera, the magical drink to survive the hot Indian Summers

- **Tipping**

Usually, add 10 to 15% when eating out. Restaurants in Delhi and Mumbai often charge a 'service charge', not to be confused with 'service tax' (which is a government-levied tax). When a 'service charge' is levied no tip is expected. When you have a driver over multiple days you should tip him between 150 – 300 INR per day. Again, base this on how happy you were with his service and local knowledge

- **Culture and Language**

It's traditional to greet people using 'Namaste'; place both hands together and bow slightly. In urban areas this is often overlooked. Indian culture is based on a hierarchical system, so elders and superior are greeted first. Avoid standing too close to others. Use your right hand to touch, accept or give something. Do not use public displays of affection. Hindi is the official language, but English is widely spoken throughout the country

- **Getting around in India**

Air carriers serve all major cities and large towns. There are several domestic "low Budget" options. Taxis and auto rickshaws are a very popular way of getting around the major cities. These rides are charged by the kilometre. Insist that your vehicle has a meter before going on your journey.

Kolkata, Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai have metro systems. Rail in India is widely available. Shatabdi Express connects major and secondary cities. Advanced reservations are essential

Here are some traditional dishes

Alu Gobi: a dish made with potatoes (aloo), cauliflower (gobi) and Indian spices

Butter Chicken: traditionally cooked in a tandoor; but may be grilled, roasted or pan-fried with a special gravy

Rogan Josh: consists of braised lamb chunks cooked with a gravy based on browned onions or shallots, yogurt, garlic, ginger and aromatic spices

Malai Kofta: cooked in a creamy gravy made of tomatoes and cashew nuts

Naan: leavened, oven-baked flatbread normally served with all meals.