



India - Cultural Delights of North India – 9N / 10 – (CODE – AT IND 04)
FROM R12,950 Per person sharing – LAND ARRANGEMENTS ONLY

Embark on the enchanting Cultural Delights of North India tour, a 10-day exploration spanning the diverse landscapes and historical wonders of the region. Commence your journey in Varanasi, the spiritual hub nestled along the sacred Ganges River. Traverse to Khajuraho, home to some of the world's finest art temples, and then immerse yourself in the vibrant streets of Delhi.

This tour crystallizes the charms of North India, guiding you from the eventful banks of the Ganges to the scenic jewels of Rajasthan. In just 10 days, witness the rich architectural styles in Varanasi, Khajuraho, Agra, Delhi, and Jaipur, unveiling the historical tapestry of each city. As you may dream, every corner of India holds heritage sites narrating the stories of its people and culture.

North India, with its rich historical background, promises an integral experience on any cultural tour. Consider planning your journey during festivals, as it provides a unique opportunity to delve deeper into the life and culture of diverse communities. This tour is a gateway to the soul-stirring pleasures, sights, and sounds that define the cultural allure of North India.

Right through the ages, Hiuen Tsang, Vasco Da Gama and a host of other explorers have considered it to be the ultimate goal of travel. Now it is your turn to see India sacred and mystic cities. India remains one of the most intriguing places on the planet.

At a glance

- Day 1 Welcome to India. Land in Delhi and transfer to hotel
- Day 2 Delhi to Varanasi (Flight)
- Day 3 Morning Ganges River boat ride and walking tour

- Day 4 Varanasi to Khajuraho (Flight). Afternoon Temple tour
Day 5 Travel to Jhansi and onwards to Agra by train
Day 6 Visit the famous Taj Mahal and Agra Fort
Day 7 Stop at Fatehpur Sikri before reaching Jaipur
Day 8 Jaipur city tour and Amber Fort on elephant back
Day 9 Return to Delhi
Day 10 Morning city tour and transfer to Delhi Airport

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 Delhi	Welcome to India. Clear customs and proceed to the Arrival Hall Our representative will meet you for transfer to your hotel and check-in The remainder of the day will be at leisure
Day 2 Varanasi (B)	After breakfast, you will be transferred to Delhi airport for your onward flight to Varanasi. Meet up with our representative in the arrival hall for transfer to your hotel. Overnight at your hotel in Varanasi.
Day 3 Varanasi (B)	We enjoy an early morning boat ride on the holy Ganges river (1;5 hours) Over three miles in length; steps lead down from a steep bank to the sacred river. The time to see the ghats is early dawn when out of the morning mist; forms descend the steps; their numbers increasing by the minute until a solemn silent multitude; lit by the sun's first rays; moves in the same direction to immerse itself in the holy stream and to salute the sun. These rituals remind one of the nature worship prevalent in India during the Aryan age; 3;000 years ago. The ghats extend to almost four miles of riverbank. During this particular sightseeing tour, no monuments are visited. See the Bathing Ghats and Cremation Ghats. The Gyanvapi Mosque built in the 17th century when the fanatical Emperor Aurangazeb pulled down the original Vishwanath Golden Temple and on its site raised a mosque. After the boat ride, visit the Golden Temple and walk through the narrow lanes of Varanasi. Afternoon tour to Sarnath – 10 kms. from Varanasi – (3 hours) The Buddha preached his first sermon to five disciples at the Deer Park here; enshrining the principals of his teaching into laws. The Dhamek Stupa marks the location of a once resplendent monastery. A large complex of ruined monasteries covers the area north of the stupas. Some of the buildings belong to the Kushan and Gupta period. The first monk communities probably settled here in the 3rd century BC.

	<p>Near the Dhamek Stupa is a new monastery built by the Buddhist Mahabodhi Society. The major events of Buddha's life are depicted here in wall paintings by a Japanese artist.</p> <p>Sarnath has an interesting archaeological museum which has preserved the famous Sarnath pillar whose capital forms India's national emblem.</p> <p>Visit the Dhamekh Stupa and Mulgandkuti Vihar.</p> <p>After the tour return to your hotel.</p> <p>Overnight at your hotel in Varanasi.</p>
<p>Day 4 Varanasi – Khajuraho (B)</p>	<p>After breakfast, you are transferred to Varanasi airport to board your flight for Khajuraho.</p> <p>You will be met and assisted; through the airport upon your arrival and then transferred to your hotel.</p> <p>Enjoy an afternoon sightseeing tour of the temple.</p> <p>Overnight at your hotel in Khajuraho</p>
<p>Day 5 Khujuraho – Orcha – Jhansi (B)</p>	<p>After breakfast, drive to Jhansi.</p> <p>En route visit Orcha and later in the day transfer to the station and board the train for Agra.</p> <p>You will be met and assisted; on your arrival and then transferred to your hotel.</p> <p>Overnight at your hotel in Agra.</p>
<p>Day 6 Agra (B)</p>	<p>Morning tour of the Taj Mahal & Fort.</p> <p>Visit the world famous Taj Mahal built by Shah Jahan in 1560 in memory of his queen Mumtaz Mahal to enshrine her mortal remains.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Overnight at your hotel in Agra.</p>
<p>Day 7 Agra – Jaipur (B)</p>	<p>Depart Agra for Jaipur by car.</p> <p>En route visit Fatehpur Sikri; built by Emperor Akbar in 1569 and abandoned after 15 years due to scarcity of water.</p>

	<p>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.</p> <p>On arrival in Jaipur; check-in at your hotel.</p> <p>The rest of the day is at your leisure to explore Jaipur.</p> <p>Overnight at your hotel in Jaipur</p>
<p>Day 8 Jaipur (B)</p>	<p>Morning excursion to the Amber Fort. Standing tall over a small hillock overlooking the Pink city; 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.</p> <p>A major attraction at Amber is the Elephant Ride; all the way up to the Fort entrance.</p> <p>Afternoon half day tour begins with a visit to the Maharaja's City Palace;- the former Royal residence;- part of it converted into a museum.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Also see the miniature items and old carpets at the Textile Museum.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Overnight at your hotel in Jaipur.</p>
<p>Day 9 Jaipur – Delhi (B)</p>	<p>In the morning we depart for Delhi by road and on arrival check-in at your hotel.</p> <p>The rest of the day is at your leisure .</p> <p>Overnight at your hotel in Delhi</p>
<p>Day 10 Leave Delhi (B)</p>	<p>Leave Delhi (B)</p> <p>Morning combined sightseeing tour of Old and New Delhi. Visit Qutab Minar; India Gate (War Memorial) Lakshmi Narayan Temple-Modern Hindu Temple; drive past President's House; Parliament House and Secretariat buildings.</p> <p>Also visit Raj Ghat– the cremation site of Mahatma Gandhi and drive past Jama Masjid; Red Fort and Chandni Chowk.</p> <p>Later in the day transfer to the airport to board your flight for onward destination.</p> <p>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